

# Co-Operative Learning Techniques

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### Abstract

*In the process of learning, the learners have to meet several criteria like collecting information, understanding the material, relating new ideas to prior knowledge, mental effort and strategy use. The teacher has to design the tasks guiding the student to carry out the learning steps. The tasks must prompt the students to engage in a strategic activity. Instruction, demonstration and practice with feedback alone cannot mold the students' behavior but independent practice, multiple tasks, use of strategies yield positive results. The teacher's foremost role is to make the students understand the different type of techniques in learning, what they are for, when to use it and why it is important.*

**Keywords:** Cooperative Learning Techniques- Jigsaw- Inside-outside Circle- Numbered Heads Together.

Every reform in education centers on the teachers, their intelligence, and skills. The standard of any educational institution depends on the level of its teachers and the progress and standard of any nation closely related to its educational institution. As the role of a teacher in society is more significant and valuable, they have to update themselves to role keeps expanding to meet the changing need of the present environment. They have to play a crucial role to play in building social cohesion. As teaching is a noble profession, the teachers should try to find out the best, using their enthusiasm and interest in Pedagogy. They are not characterized by their high academic performance, but by a thirst for teaching.

Comparing with other subject teachers, English teachers have more responsibilities because of the required language skills to carry forward instruction and learning in other subjects. The Primary aim of an English teacher is to develop language proficiency concentrating all the four language skills like Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Nowadays the students continue to be defective in effective communication in English even after their school education. If we analysis the disregard towards English subjects by the students, the following Points may be reasons; Students are learning English subjects without aptitude, with defective proficiency in the language and without imagination.

The above observations show that both the students and teachers should think seriously about the role played by them. The foremost aim of the English language teacher is to work hard until the students skill come to full bloom, while the students must be ready to work under the guidance of the teachers. In the process of bringing the skills of the students, acquiring proficiency and competency in the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing is given much importance.

## Importance of Reading

Reading is fundamental to function in today's society. It helps to develop the language skills and teaches to listen. Lack of listening skills can result in misunderstanding. To discover new things, one has to read books, magazines, and newspapers. Nowadays internet sources overflow with information, and they are serving as effective learning tools. While reading develops the imagination, it nourishes the creative side of the people too. As reading leads to achieve success, everyone has to develop that it at an early age.

English language teaching mainly aims to develop the reading skill of the learners, so it is essential to adopt various pedagogical interventions and techniques. The planned teaching on the part of the teachers using innovative teaching methodology becomes very important. Many types of research focus on the effectiveness and advantages of task-based activities in developing the reading skills of the students in English. They also suggest cooperative language learning approach which will be more effective in improving the reading skills, and it enables the learners to achieve mastery level in reacting English.

Cooperative learning is an educational approach which aims to organize classroom activities into an academic and social learning experience. According to a cooperative learning technique, students must work in groups to complete tasks collectively towards their goals. When the teachers assign a team work in learning, they can share information among them, evaluate one another's ideas, etc. Here the teachers can take the role of facilitating student's learning skill. In this process majority of the students can be active by discussing information and answers in groups.

Formal cooperative learning is structured, facilitated and monitored by the educator and is used to achieve group goals. Groups can vary from 2-6 students. Discussions may last for a few minutes up to an entire period. The strategies followed in this type of learning are

1. Group Problem Solving.
2. Laboratory or Experiment Assignments.
3. Peer Review Work.

Informal cooperative learning involves group learning by discussion at the end of a lesson, or by involving two groups. Discussions can have various components such as formulating a response to questions asked by the teacher, sharing answers to the questions asked by a partner, listening to a partner's reply to the same question and finding out a new well-developed answer.

Five Basic and Essential elements are pointed out by Brown & Ciuffetelli Parker Stella in the process of Cooperative Learning.

1. Positive Interdependence: Students participation and effort is essential within their group, and each student of the group must understand their responsibility.
2. Face-to-face Promote Interaction: Students must promote each other's success assisting one another in the completion of the assignment and other activities.
3. Individual and Group Accountability: Students should understand that they are accountable for their learning and work.
4. The focus is on social skills like Leadership Quality, Decision Making, Trust Building, Friendship-Development, Communication, and Conflict-Management Skills.
5. Group Processing: Group members must decide on the action, which has to be continued or changed to achieve the group a goal.

Hundreds of Techniques have been created in cooperative learning. Easy to implement in classrooms are few.

## Think-Pair-Share

Frank T-Lyman introduced this technique. According to this method, a student has to contemplate a posed question or problem. He has to write down his points by brainstorming. Each student is paired with another student or a small group to share his views. After students discussions, their ideas are shared with the other students. The teacher role is to frame some questions or prompt that target key content concepts describing the purpose of the strategy, providing guidelines for discussion, making students understand how to use the technique and supporting the students.

### **Jigsaw**

Jigsaw is a grouping strategy, in which the students are organized into groups then rearranged into new groups to share their points. This method helps to improve students' teamwork and communication skills. The "jigsaw" group is formed involving all students. Then they are reorganized finding out the expert in each group. The expert group works together to read and understand the material; then they have to share their findings with their group members. This method helps to learn a lot of material quickly, share information with other groups, and minimize listening time.

### **Inside –Outside Circle**

The teacher has to divide the class into two equal groups as an inner and outer group. Students in the inside circle stand facing the students on the outside. When the teacher asks a particular question, the students of various circles take time for discussing and sharing ideas with their own or other group members. Students can have adequate time to take new ideas and information. On the teacher's signal, the students are allowed to have a quick discussion with their new partner of the outside circle.

### **Reciprocal Teaching**

Reciprocal Teaching is an instructional activity in which students play the role of the teacher in small group reading sessions. Teachers help students in group discussions following four strategies, summarising, question generating, clarifying and practicing. After learning those strategies, the students take the role of teacher. As it encourages students to think about their thought process, they can actively involve in asking questions and summarising. For this activity, students are grouped, distributing the role of summarising, questioner, clarifier and predictor. After listening to a paragraph the summarises will highlight the key ideas, the questioner will pose questions, the clarifier will address confusing parts and attempt to answers, and the predictor will suggest the next events.

### **Numbered Heads Together**

By practicing Number Heads Together Tragedy, each student can have the accountability for learning. The students are grouped and when the teacher poses a question, the students have to put their heads together to figure out the answers. The teacher selects one spokesperson for the groups. This strategy ensures that the students work together and knows the answer to the questions and solutions to the problem. All members must be ready with the answer. Involving the other groups by expressing agreement or disagreement with the reply by showing thumbs up or thumbs down and then explaining their reason, everyone can use this strategy effectively.

In general, a Cooperative Learning strategy helps the students to achieve their goal, build a positive relationship among students, and develop learning skills and social skills. Research also shows this learning helps to produce:

- Greater intrinsic motivation
- High self-esteem
- Great Social Support
- Task Behaviour
- Best attitude towards teachers.

To acquire skills in Cooperative Learning, patience is essential. To be better in those strategies, learning and practicing the skills play a vital role.

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