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**“EFFECTIVENESS OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN
TEACHING ENGLISH”**

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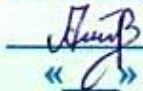
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EFFECTIVENESS OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN TEACHING ENGLISH

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INTRODUCTION

“We have enough power and possibility, knowledge and ability, definite determination, aspiration and bravery in order to teach special subjects, the history of our country and civilization of the world, foreign languages and modern computer technologies perfectly to our children and youth”.

The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Sh.M.Mirziyoyev.

Actuality of the work: President Shavkat Mirziyoyev in his annual message to the parliament on Friday declared 2019 as The Year of Active Investments and Social Development¹.

He underscored that in the next year the projects and programs started in 2018 will continue.

“World experience shows that those countries that conduct active investment policies achieve successes,” he stated.

He named investments as the driver of economic growth, which contribute to the development of other areas and provinces, attracting new technologies and highly qualified specialists.

The ultimate goal of investments is to increase the standard of living of people in Uzbekistan, said Shavkat Mirziyoyev.

The current qualification paper has a primary aim at attempting to analyze one of dilemmas in the sphere of ELT methodology; the effectiveness of using cooperative learning of teaching English. The problem of using cooperative learning methods in teaching English is of great importance. The culture of cooperative learning are characterized as one of the most effective methods of teaching and learning a foreign language through research and communication, different types of this method allow us to use it in all the spheres of the educational process. They involve activities which focus on a theme of interest rather than of specific language tasks and helps the students to develop their imagination and

¹ <http://tashkenttimes.uz/national/3337-shavkat-mirziyoyev-declared-2019-as-the-year-of-active-investments-and-social-development>

creativity. The main idea of intensive methods of teaching English are considered to be based on teaching students through research activities and stimulating their personal interest.

The Decree of the first President of Republic of Uzbekistan “Measures on the further development of the system in teaching foreign languages” adopted on December 10 in 2012 put some actual problems: in teaching foreign languages, mainly English. Teaching English as a foreign language demands different methods and techniques. In purpose of the cardinal improvement the system of the teaching growing generations to foreign languages preparation specialists, freely mastered them, by introducing the leading methods of the teaching with use modern pedagogical and information-communication technology and on this base of the making the conditions and possibilities for broad their access to achievements of the world civilization and world information resource, developments international cooperation and contacts.

Every child is an individual, developing at his/her own pace and differing in needs, abilities, interests, cultural influence, learning patterns, and behaviors. Some children are primarily visual learners, whereas others are auditory learners. Some prefer individualistic learning, whereas others learn best in groups.

In addition, different learning styles and strategies are exhibited at different ages, when learning different subjects, or when confronted with different kinds of problems. These differences, therefore, must be taken into account in choosing appropriate teaching methods and activities in the classroom.

There are many methods of teaching languages. Some have fallen into relative obscurity and others are widely used; still others have a small following, but offer useful insights. English is widely spoken in the world. It is the language of art, humanities and social sciences. International trade, commerce and diplomacy are conducted in English. However, many people around the world fail to enhance their English proficiency, especially speaking skills.

In many countries English is taught from the primary high-school traditionally using the grammar translation method, ignoring students' speaking skills. This method was widely used in the past and even now many teachers do follow this tradition. By the development of the technology, the methods of teaching and learning have been developed, too. Nowadays, there are many methods that are being used by the teachers in class.

I would like to tell about the process of teaching and cooperative learning in improving students' speaking skill by using methods. Cooperative learning method of teaching is an important tool in learning process. This method is designed to improve the ability to communicate in English by improving grammatical knowledge, language skills and confidence to communicate effectively in real life situations. The main objectives of this method is to develop learner's communication skills in English; to improve grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation; and to work on the key language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing, according to learners own needs.

Therefore I have chosen the topic of cooperative learning teaching English for my qualification paper, as it can be considered one of the most controversial topics existing in teaching English. Since it is an up – to date issue, I decided to choose the topic on the purpose of making a certain contribution to find solution to the problem.

Last years the imperative need of using the English language appears in all areas of a science, manufacture and culture.

My interest in this topic began arising when I had EFL teaching practice, English is prescribed general education course for students. Here comes problem: most of methods of teaching English are conducted in boring, teacher presents new topic by lecturing, distributes exercises to work on and assess students' learning through conducting quizzes. As a result, the classroom dynamic is centered on the teacher. Whereas students listen to the teacher and take notes.

From the student's perspective the class centered on the teacher are not productive because students do not take an active part in classroom discussions. They were completely in the hands of their teachers, to be molded into a certain pattern set by formal education, and to emerge as school leavers full of facts which, they had all too often learnt off by heart and parrot-woes

From my point of view, traditional methods can be changed by using intensive methods of teaching English. My aim is to collect effective methods in teaching that encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning and a more active role in and out of the classroom. This teaching methods are gaining popularity over traditional teaching methods.

The purpose of this research study is to investigate that methodology of cooperative learning method can be designed in such a way that language and academic skills can be developed by encouraging students to deal with target language in EFL context by involving them in cognitive task that promote their interest to work cooperatively. This study attempts to discover how to make the lesson more interesting and useful at the same time and help students learn without a conscious analysis or understanding of the learning process |while they acquire communicative competence as |second language users.

The research tasks are set as follows: to describe the principal characteristics of cooperative learning, to identify the types and to analyze their benefits and peculiarities.

From the current research can be included that each student is unique and will respond well to a particular method. The most effective teaching methods are those that maximize instruction opportunities, keep students actively engaged and minimize disruptions or off-task student behavior. Learn about the most effective teaching methods you can bring to your classroom so your students will work to their highest potential.

The associated questions of the research also set the following goals: to establish effective methods, to structure activities, to communicate the material and to create a dynamic classroom where students will feel motivated to learn.

Besides it, intensive methods of teaching English give special prominence to learners: promote communicative competence, create a meaningful context for language use, increase learning motivation, construct a cooperative learning environment, encourage creative and spontaneous use of language. As result of, many researchers and teachers try to apply numerous teaching methods not only to increase students ability, but also to help them comprehend the academic subject matter at the institute.

The main objectives of this qualification paper are to develop learner's communication skills in English;

- a.) To improve the ability to communicate in English by improving grammatical knowledge, language skills and confidence to communicate effectively in real life situations
- b.) To work on the key language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing, according to learners own needs.
- c.) To develop skills relevant to modern business such as making presentations, participating in business meetings, conducting negotiations and communicating at all levels. The methods are highly interactive, with intensive use of role-playing, case studies, discussion groups and cross-cultural analysis of business practices
- d.) To enable students to communicate and understand what is said or written, and be understood by others, when they say or write something

Method: Subjects of the research to be conducted people of different ages. The level of their English proficiency varies from intermediate level up to upper intermediate.

In the research paper are involved interpersonal activities. Group activity, interactive methods, communicative approach, integrated approach, language

acquisition, content-based learning, and cooperative learning methods of teaching English

The structure of the research is the following: introduction, two main chapters, conclusion, and the list of references

Introduction states the topicality of the issue, the purpose and objectives of the research, defines the object and the subject of the qualification paper, enumerates methods applied in the process of research, expounds its practical and theoretical value and lays out the structure of the work.

Chapter I outlines history of cooperative learning, beliefs about cooperative learning and social benefits of cooperative Learning.

In chapter II we characterize **theory into practice** of cooperative learning, types and elements of cooperative learning and analyze peculiarities of techniques and strategies of cooperative Learning.

Conclusion generalizes the results of the research and summarizes all the information provided in the qualification paper.

List of references comprises bibliography of literature used during the research.

CHAPTER I. AN OVERVIEW OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING

1.1 History of cooperative learning

The topic of the paper “The culture of cooperative learning in teaching English comprises the following key points: history, elements, and techniques of cooperative learning.

Cooperative learning is a successful teaching strategy in which small teams, each with students of different ability levels, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. Each member of a team is responsible, not only for learning what is taught, but also for helping his or her teammates learn-thus creating an atmosphere of achievement.

Cooperative learning is generally considered to be an effective way of improving students’ academic achievement as well as their interpersonal, intercultural and higher level thinking skills . Johnson and Johnson postulate, moreover, that experience in cooperative education is essential for an individual’s healthy psychological development. Researchers suggest also that cooperative learning prepares students for the modern workforce where there is an increased emphasis on team work and for their meaningful participation in a democratic society².

Subsequent research suggested that the implementation of cooperative learning techniques presents teachers with a variety of new challenges. Johnson and Johnson warned that simply putting students in groups and telling them to cooperate would not produce the desired outcomes; there were certain pre conditions that must be present for real learning to occur; these pre conditions are positive interdependence, individual accountability, primitive interaction, social skills and group processing. Researchers began to highlight the need for students to be trained in handling group work and the need for teachers themselves to be given guidance in training students for group work. ³

² Baker, T., & Clark, J (2008). Cooperative learning: a double edged sword: A cooperative learning model for use with diverse student groups. 2008, University of Torino, Italy. Italy: Conference Organising Committee for the International IAIE/IASCE Conference.

As English language learners, we often forget that many of the strategies that our discipline embraces as the most appropriate means for reaching our students are, in fact, culturally specific and driven by assumptions about communication that, at times, need to be taught explicitly in order for such activities to succeed. Often there are cultural elements to our expectations of how English learners should interact in groups, and depending on the students' familiarity with those norms, interactions may have varying degrees of success.⁴

For example, not all students are used to working in groups to accomplish a task, especially if they are accustomed to a more teacher-centered form of instruction. In addition, students have culturally specific communication styles that can impede cooperation within a group.

Why are cooperative learning methods effective?

There is no way that will always produce satisfying results. Any of these theories can work and practice. All methods can work however they differ in the effect and in speed which they work. The immersion, the content based learning, the natural approach, the integrated approach and the total physical response are all modern and effective methods because they are relevant, proven and updated most of them make use of the cutting edge method which helps them to be more updated. The cutting edge method is the most updated and the most technological method applying the updated effective and successful ways .It also helps other methods by using the most technological means to achieve successful results. The basic values of activating the intensive methods can be summed up in the following: topic based learning states that students learn language better when he is about a real situation, the four skills < listening, reading, speaking and writing and the two sub skills vocabulary and grammar are totally and wholly integrated, students and learners should take responsibility for their own learning and develop their skills, learners and students need the learned information to be continuously recycled in order to acquire more skills, if learners and students are trained to be

⁴ Cohen, E.G., Lotan, R.A., Abram, P.L., Scarloss, B.A., & Schultz, S.E. (2002). Can groups learn? Teachers College Record, 104 (6).

good and fast accurate readers, they'll gain more marks and their answers will be more correctly and effectively.

Prior to World War II, social theorists such as Allport, Watson, Shaw, and Mead began establishing cooperative learning theory after finding that group work was more effective and efficient in quantity, quality, and overall productivity when compared to working alone.

However, it wasn't until 1937 when researchers May and Doob found that people who cooperate and work together to achieve shared goals, were more successful in attaining outcomes, than those who strived independently to complete the same goals. Furthermore, they found that independent achievers had a greater likelihood of displaying competitive behaviours.

Philosophers and psychologists in the 1930s and 40's such as John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, and Morton Deutsch also influenced the cooperative learning theory practiced today. Dewey believed it was important that students develop knowledge and social skills that could be used outside of the classroom, and in the democratic society.⁵

This theory portrayed students as active recipients of knowledge by discussing information and answers in groups, engaging in the learning process together rather than being passive receivers of information (e.g., teacher talking, students listening).

Lewin's contributions to cooperative learning were based on the ideas of establishing relationships between group members in order to successfully carry out and achieve the learning goal. Deutsch's contribution to cooperative learning was positive social interdependence, the idea that the student is responsible for contributing to group knowledge.

Since then, David and Roger Johnson have been actively contributing to the cooperative learning theory. In 1975, they identified that cooperative learning promoted mutual liking, better communication, high acceptance and support, as

⁵ Chiu, M. M. (2004). [Adapting teacher interventions to student needs during cooperative learning](#). American Educational Research Journal, 41, 365-399.

well as demonstrated an increase in a variety of thinking strategies among individuals in the group. Students who showed to be more competitive lacked in their interaction and trust with others, as well as in their emotional involvement with other students.⁶

In 1994 Johnson and Johnson published the 5 elements (positive interdependence, individual accountability, face-to-face interaction, social skills, and processing) essential for effective group learning, achievement, and higher-order social, personal and cognitive skills (e.g., problem solving, reasoning, and decision-making, planning, organizing, and reflecting).

⁶ Cohen, E.G., Lotan, R.A., Abram, P.L., Scarloss, B.A., & Schultz, S.E. (2002). Can groups learn? *Teachers College Record*, 104 (6), 1045-1068.

1.2 Beliefs about cooperative learning

In writing this chapter we were guided by three beliefs about the importance of cooperative learning: 1) it benefits all students, 2) it is an integral part of current school reform efforts, and 3) it promotes collaboration between educators who have traditionally worked in isolation from others.

1. Cooperative Learning Is Good for All Students. Cooperative learning makes sense in inclusive classrooms because it builds upon heterogeneity and formalizes and encourages peer support and connection. However, cooperative learning is not of value only to children with disabilities. Cooperative learning is of value for all students including those who have been identified as "at risk," "bilingual," "gifted," and "normal." *All* students need to learn and work in environments where their individual strengths are recognized and individual needs are addressed. *All* students need to learn within a supportive community in order to feel safe enough to take risks.

Some educators have challenged the use of cooperative learning in classrooms with students who are identified as "gifted," claiming that gifted students become permanent tutors and are resentful of having to work with students of differing abilities. Such arguments must be examined critically; we must ask ourselves what we want students to learn in school. Beyond academic subjects, don't we want all students to be comfortable with and accepting of individual differences (their own and others) Don't we want all students to have sophisticated social skills that will enable them to work with people they perceive as "different" or even "difficult"? Furthermore, don't we want to model inclusion and community and demonstrate in the microcosm of the classroom what a society in which all people are valued would look like?

If teachers or students are uncomfortable with cooperative learning, it is often because they have adopted a technique without a firm understanding of the underlying principles and without sufficient support to implement creative, multilevel cooperative learning activities. Teachers must be encouraged to be

thoughtful about all aspects of cooperative learning and to garner enough support for themselves so that they are not isolated and overwhelmed by the truly complex task of meeting the needs of many different children within the same environment.⁷

2. Cooperative Learning Is Part of Comprehensive School Reform.

Teachers are confronted on a regular basis with educational innovations that must be incorporated into their teaching: whole language, critical thinking, authentic assessment, and so forth. Some teachers (and administrators) hope they can ignore these "fads" in education, and, by waiting for them to pass and be replaced by "the next thing," save themselves the time and energy needed to learn about and implement new practices. Yet, not only is cooperative learning supported by a compelling research base, it is also fully compatible with other "best practices" currently being promoted.

Whole language, which involves having students read literature and write stories, has been implemented very successfully in cooperative groups, and many of the practices promoted by whole language experts are inherently cooperative (e.g., editing conferences, book sharing, collaborative writing). One teacher, for example, had lug each student in the class write an "I like" book; some of the students wrote long narratives—"I like walking in the rain in my new boots"—whereas others cut out pictures of things they liked and pasted them in the book.

Every child was able to complete a book, engaging in the literacy activity. Every child was able to partner with another and share his or her book by "reading" it to an attentive listener. In contrast to grouping children into homogeneous reading groups by skill, this activity was structured in heterogeneous cooperative groups so that all children could succeed at their own level.

Important skills such as critical thinking, creative problem solving, and the synthesis of knowledge can easily be accomplished through cooperative group activities in inclusive classrooms. In addition, authentic assessment (anecdotal

⁷ De Vita, G. (2000). Inclusive approaches to effective communication and active participation in the multicultural classroom: An international business management context. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 1(2), 168-180.

reporting, portfolio assessment, and observational recording) is fully compatible with cooperative learning and inclusion.

Teachers need not envision cooperative learning as "one more thing" they need to do, but rather as an organizing value and principle for all the instruction in their classroom. Building a cooperative, inclusive classroom community can be the framework within which other teaching strategies and practices are woven.

3. Cooperative Learning Means Teachers Cooperating. In order for cooperative learning to be successful in inclusive classrooms; teachers who have traditionally worked in isolation will need to find new ways of collaborating and sharing their expertise. This kind of collaboration can be challenging because it involves sharing responsibilities and communicating with others, but it can also be exciting and rewarding. One teacher commented that planning cooperative learning lessons was stimulating: "For us, it really gets the creative juices flowing." Another teacher said, "It's fun, there are no two ways about it, it's fun. How can it not be fun? Plus [the students] get to know each other's abilities and they can get excited about each other's growth, even though it's not the same as theirs"⁸.

Not only can students get to know each other's abilities within a cooperative process, but teachers can as well. A general education teacher and a special education teacher planning together often find that they have unique skills and ideas to contribute to the process. The general education teacher may have a broader perspective on the curriculum and on curriculum integration, whereas the special education teacher may have special skills in modifying instruction and developing adaptations that benefit many children. General education teachers who are used to working with larger groups of children often can contribute important classroom management and organizational strategies to balance some of the individualized approaches proposed by the special education teacher.

It is often acknowledged that when students are learning to work in groups they need support and encouragement to get them over the rough spots. "I don't

⁸ De Vita, G. (2001). The use of group work in large and diverse business management classes: Some critical issues. *The International Journal of Management Education*, 1 (3), 27-35.

want to work with Pam," or "Danny's taking over the whole project" are indications that time and attention must be devoted to developing appropriate social skills for negotiating conflict and moving toward consensus. Similarly, teachers learning to work together may encounter struggles over turf, expertise, ownership, and responsibility—these also need to be negotiated. Teachers must find ways to support one another as they learn to be cooperative, inclusive educators at the same time they support their students in this goal. Learning how to use the expertise of the speech therapist or physical therapist, for example, or how to balance a child's individualized education program (IEP) objectives with broader classroom objectives requires time for teachers to meet, talk, listen, plan, and develop a trusting working relationship. Implementing cooperative learning in inclusive classrooms can benefit not only the students, but also provide an important opportunity for educators to develop their own teaching skills. Supportive administrators have found creative ways of providing teachers with adequate planning and preparation time so that inclusion becomes an opportunity for better teaching rather than an imposed burden.

Once teachers have decided that they will begin to implement formal cooperative group lessons in their classrooms, there are many decisions that must be made. Teachers must decide how they will incorporate cooperative learning lessons within their classroom structure, how they will decide the content to be taught using cooperative learning, how they will form groups, how they will ensure active participation for all students, and how they will evaluate students' learning. On the following pages we explore some principles of inclusive cooperative learning that must be taken into consideration for successful implementation.

For cooperative learning to be maximally effective, it must take place within an overall context of cooperation and peer support. Attempts to implement cooperative learning activities when the classroom norms are those of isolation, competition, or interpersonal indifference are apt to result in contradictory

messages to students and have limited positive impact on the goal of creating a safe, inclusive community.

Creating a safe, caring community for all students within which cooperative learning is simply the formalized expression of classroom values and orientations involves attention to overall community and connections, open communication about differences and classroom practices, and helping.

Cooperative learning should not be something that is done on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 to 10, nor should it be something we do only when we have children with disabilities included. For example, in one school, a sign on a wall announced "Cooperative Learning, May 14th." When a visitor inquired about the sign, she was told, "That's the day the trainable mentally retarded students go into the third grade classroom to work."

A feeling of cooperation, community, and connection should be part of everything that happens in the classroom. For example, hanging up for display only those papers graded with "As" communicates to students that not everyone's work is valued. Teachers might instead want to hang up a "proud paper" from every student or let students decide what they would like to display. Having students line up for music and gym in a girls' line and a boys' line communicates that gender divisions are important ones (and pity the boy who accidentally gets in the girls' line). There are an infinite number of other ways to line students up that encourage them to interact with a variety of their classmates across boundaries of race, gender, and ability.⁹ Behavior management strategies that single students out for praise or punishment (names on the board, statements such as "I like the way Nicole is sitting") must be challenged with reference to how such practices affect the way students look at one another and their differences. Classroom holiday celebrations, posters on the wall, and the racial and ethnic representation of the books in the classroom library all affect the school community and the extent to which students feel that they are (or are not) a valued part of the classroom.

⁹ De Vita, G. (2001). The use of group work in large and diverse business management classes: Some critical issues. *The International Journal of Management Education*, 1 (3), 27-35.

Teachers must be encouraged to think about all aspects of their classroom practice in reference to questions such as the following:

Will this practice contribute to or detract from a sense of classroom community?

Will what I say or do in this situation encourage students to see each

Similarly, teachers who implement more formal cooperative learning strategies should also talk to students about why they are doing so, what they hope to accomplish, and what some of the barriers might be. Students who are involved in the process of cooperative learning, as opposed to those who are simply doing what the teacher told them to, are far more likely to take ownership of cooperative activities and generalize them to other areas of classroom and home life.

Helping establishing norms about when, how, and why we help others is critical to the full implementation of cooperative learning. Because many teachers and students have received cultural messages that say that "needing help is bad or shameful" and "offering help to others will embarrass them," it is important to establish new classroom norms. Two of the most critical values are: 1) Everyone is good at something and can help others, and 2) Everyone is entitled to and can benefit from help and support from others. Teachers may want to help students structure a "Classroom Classifieds" in which students identify their own strengths and skills and name these as "Help Offered" (can help with multiplication, good at jumping rope, can teach sign language, know a lot about frogs). Concurrently, they can identify their needs and learning goals and identify these as "Help Wanted" (want to learn to make friendship bracelets, need help with spelling, want to learn how to play ball games at recess). It is important that such activities be structured so that every child is both a teacher and a learner, as a way of challenging rigid notions that there are some people who give help and some people who need help. It is important to create a classroom space for people to proudly claim what they are good at and safely ask for the help and support they need without fear or embarrassment, humiliation, or isolation.

Unfortunately, neither deciding to have an inclusive classroom nor implementing cooperative learning guarantees that the curriculum will be creative or meaningful. Teachers who feel constrained by or limited to a fixed curriculum or set of materials often try to "bend" the child to fit the curriculum, and we have seen cooperative learning used to encourage children to complete unimaginative worksheets and dittos.

Including a child with a significant disability in an activity and structuring that activity cooperatively gives us an opportunity (and sometimes forces us) to examine the curriculum critically and unleash our creative pedagogical and curricular inventiveness. Not only is memorizing the states and their capitals an inappropriate curriculum objective for Manuel, but neither is it the best way to teach map skills and geography to other students. Combining a commitment to inclusion with an orientation toward cooperative learning can be a catalyst for thinking carefully about the following questions; what is really important for students to learn? How can I make learning meaningful and functional for all students?

One of the often unexpected but welcome benefits of including children with specific behavioral and educational challenges in the classroom is that teachers are encouraged to rethink previous beliefs and practices related to the curriculum and pedagogy. The teacher who decides to use manipulatives (instead of worksheets) because one child quite clearly requires that approach often finds that many other students also benefit from this hands-on, participatory approach. Teachers who move away from text-based question-and-answer approaches to teaching in order to accommodate students who require more active involvement in the curriculum are generally pleased to find that such an orientation is of benefit to all students.

Cooperative learning in inclusive classrooms will be more effective when it is multilevel, multimodal, and integrated across subject areas. Multilevel teaching involves students working on similar objectives or with the same material, but at different levels. All students may be using the telephone book, for example, but

some students might be learning to dial 911 in case of an emergency while others learn to compute and compare long distance charges and optimum calling times. Or, all students may be working on map skills, but at different levels. Perhaps Maria is learning about lines of latitude and longitude while Robin is learning the directions "up" and "down," "left" and "right."

Multimodality teaching involves moving away from pencil and paper tasks to other forms of active involvement. Writing and performing a puppet show, for example, might involve writing, reading, building a set, singing, cutting, talking, dancing, and so forth. An activity like a puppet show or a unit on space can also be used to integrate curriculum across subject matter. When one class studied the moon, for example, they incorporated science (facts about the moon and astronomy), creative writing (poems and stories about the moon), social studies (cross-cultural beliefs and traditions around the moon), math (computing distance, density, air pressure), and much more. Broadening the curriculum in these ways provides many opportunities both to include students who work at significantly different levels and to design cooperative learning activities in which students can help and support one another in their learning while still maintaining a common theme and a sense of community.

Cooperative Learning Depends on Supportive Heterogeneous Groups. In classrooms where teachers are working to communicate norms of cooperation, students can work together in a number of different ways. In many cooperative classrooms, students sit in heterogeneous base groups so that teachers can structure both informal and formal opportunities for cooperation between students throughout the day. For example, students can start their day with an informal group activity at their desk clusters; complete class jobs with a partner from their group; and engage in formal, structured cooperative learning activities with group members. In most classrooms, teachers leave cooperative learning groups together for 1 month or 6 weeks so that students have an opportunity to get to know and work together with group members, but then also have an opportunity to learn to

work with other classmates throughout the year. The goal is for students to have worked in cooperative groups with all their classmates by the end of the year.¹⁰

One important aspect of creating cooperative learning groups is maximizing the heterogeneity of the students within the small groups. Students should be placed in groups that are mixed by academic skills, social skills, personality, race, and sex. It is often helpful for teachers to work with others who are familiar with their students when groups are being formed. With all of the different aspects of student diversity that need to be taken into consideration, forming groups can seem like an onerous task that will be too difficult for any one person.

Many teachers structure cooperative groups very deliberately. In classrooms where students are functioning at different levels in regard to academic and social abilities, it is important that the teacher structures the groups to ensure heterogeneity, particularly in the beginning of the year or when new students enter. Two first grade teachers who team teach in a classroom that includes the full range of learners work together to plan cooperative learning groups. They begin the process by identifying one aspect of student diversity and placing one student with this quality in each group.

For example, they start with academic diversity and place one student in each group who is able to read. Next they look at the students who are nonreaders and place them into groups. As they place this second student they always consider how this student and the first student match up in regard to supporting one another socially. For the third student in each group they also consider social aspects—they look for a student who can complement the other two students and help pull the group together. One day their discussion when forming groups went as follows:

This is a nice combination but Katie and Andrew are both quiet. I was thinking about Rachel and Katie because of Rachel's style--she may be more assertive with Katie to help stimulate her involvement.

¹⁰ Johnson, D.W., & Johnson, F. (2000). *Joining together: Group theory and group skills* (4th ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

What about Doug and Brent? I'm thinking of this because of Doug's abilities. In many ways Brent is similar but it may build some self-esteem for Brent in that setting. He can really do things but he doesn't think he can do as much as he can.

Maybe Madeline should be with Brad because she is so strong in everything—and in that group it is going to take a little more work from two people instead of three Plus, she is comfortable with Brad and I think she will come up with strategies to involve him -- she is real bright and she is good at modifying things. This group is going to have to be able to change and not have to be doing exactly what every other group is doing, and not get upset about it.

The comments made by these teachers illustrate the level of complexity of thought that goes into structuring supportive heterogeneous groups. Through careful planning, students have a greater opportunity to receive the social support that is important for establishing a sense of belonging and group membership in the classroom.¹¹

In forming groups, some teachers focus on student choice, asking students who they would *like* to work with. Although it makes sense for teachers to provide students with multiple opportunities to choose within the school day, student choice may not be the best way to form groups. When students choose their own groups and work only with others they already know, the groups often tend to be same gender, race, and ability. These more homogeneous groups work against the broader goals of cooperative learning in which teachers are striving to help the students learn to value the diversity that exists in the classroom and in society.

There are ways, however, that teachers can incorporate some aspects of student choice into group formation. For example, Deborah Quick, a fourth grade teacher, forms new groups periodically throughout the year and asks each student to respond (privately) to a number of questions including: "Who are two people you think you could work well with?", "Who are two people you don't know well

¹¹ Johnson, U.W., Johnson, H., Stanne, M., & Garibaldi, A. (2004). Impact of group processing on achievement in cooperative groups. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 130, 507-516.

and would like to know?" By asking students these questions, she is allowing them to participate in group formation, but also emphasizing that although it is important to work with students they already know, it is also important to learn to accept, value, and work with others they do not know well yet. Once students have learned to work with many others, allowing more choice in group formation may be appropriate.

Equally important to establishing supportive heterogeneous groups is ensuring the active participation of all students within inclusive cooperative learning lessons. All too often students are placed into groups and given a task to complete without the provision of structures that will promote the active, equitable participation of all members. Key components of participation include the division of labor and materials, flexible interpretation of roles, and individualized student responsibilities.

The participation of all group members is more likely when teachers carefully structure the cooperative group task. Through the division of labor and materials, the students are given a clear message that each student has an important contribution to make toward the completion of the group's task. In the beginning, or when new groups have formed, it is important that teachers structure this interdependence among the group members. Planning for equitable participation becomes especially important in inclusive classrooms where the participation of some students may be dependent on the structure that is provided. For example, with a student who is reserved and responds more slowly than her classmates due to a physical disability, if labor and materials are not divided it is possible that group members will do the task for her. As was mentioned previously in this chapter, it is also important for teachers to talk with students about the goals of working together and the importance of everyone contributing. In one classroom, the teacher talked to individual groups and asked the students how they were going to make sure that all group members were given a turn.

Flexible Interpretation of Roles lb promote active, equitable participation within groups, roles must be interpreted flexibly. Instead of creating static roles for students, flexible roles allow for the individualization that will ensure that all group members are able to assume each role at some point in time. For example, in one classroom, the roles remained the same across time (e.g., writer, reader/questioner, checker), but the responsibilities of the roles changed depending on the task and the students who would be given the role on that particular day. Through these flexible roles, a student who is unable to write the letters of the alphabet could be the writer when the task is designed so that the writers are gluing something instead of writing words. Another aspect of individualizing roles occurs when teachers think of creative ways for students to fulfill the role responsibilities. Teachers might ask themselves, "What are the different ways that students could encourage group members for this lesson?" or "How could Rachel, who doesn't speak, encourage others?" When teachers work to broaden their thinking about the equitable participation of students, they can come up with many different ways for students to be active contributors (e.g., encourage others by giving a "high five," passing a card with a positive statement or a smiley face written on it to a group member).

Individualized Student Responsibilities Adaptations can be made within groups to promote the active, equitable participation of all members. Sometimes adaptations are necessary to promote the participation of an individual student. For example, heterogeneous cooperative learning groups worked together on math story problems. One student, Kris, whose goals for math included writing numbers from 1 to 50 and using a calculator to compute problems, was given the role of writer/checker within her group. The other students in the group determined what mathematical function to use for the problem, helped Kris write down the problem on the worksheet by dictating the numbers, solved the problem, and dictated to Kris the numbers to write down for the answer. Kris was then responsible for checking the group's response on her calculator. In another classroom, Brad was a

first grade student whose educational objectives include grasping and holding objects and indicating his preference by choosing between two objects. During a lesson on community helpers, Brad's group was given the role of a doctor to study so that he would be able to use a play doctor's kit to learn about medical instruments. The addition of the hands-on materials provided an opportunity to address his educational objectives of grasping objects and indicating preference.

When students are placed in supportive heterogeneous groups and issues of active, equitable participation are addressed by teachers, all students can benefit from the use of cooperative learning in the classroom. Through these considerations and individualized adaptations, all students are seen as important group members in the eyes of their peers. Although these components initially require more thought and time on the part of teachers, they will reap the rewards as students begin to support and expect the maximum involvement of all group members.

Cooperative Learning Provides Opportunities for Ongoing Evaluation. One important and often complex aspect of instruction with cooperative learning is evaluation. How can educators be certain that students are attaining their educational goals within cooperative groups? How should students be evaluated and how should that evaluation be communicated? How can an evaluation system help modify and refine cooperative learning instructional programs? These questions can guide educators as they work to design appropriate evaluation methods for cooperative learning activities. Effective evaluation of cooperative learning in inclusive classrooms must focus on both the content and the process of the group experience.

The issue of grading in inclusive cooperative classrooms is difficult. Educators who are concerned about the self-esteem of all learners reject the use of practices that promote competition between students. Group grades or group rankings work against encouraging cooperation among students and may make group members less willing to support a classmate with a disability. Evaluation

should not be structured so that one student's difficulty becomes a group's liability or the cause (real or perceived) of group failure. It is imperative to avoid situations in which students can accurately report that "Tyrone brought our grade down." Teachers must be careful that the structure of group evaluation accounts for differing abilities.¹²

In inclusive cooperative classrooms, teacher-made tests of subject matter or standardized tests with norm-referenced criteria may not be sufficient or appropriate for assessing achievement. The students who have IEPs may be working at different levels than their peers, a modification we wish to encourage, rather than discourage, through excessive standardization. Separating students into fixed ability groups that are evaluated through a variety of criterion-referenced tests is not the solution either, particularly as such a process tends to isolate and stigmatize individuals ("You're only on the red book.").

Teachers must find ways to assess students who are engaging in significantly different activities within a common structure and begin to describe and evaluate what students have learned and how they are working with their peers. Cooperative learning provides an opportunity for students to complete an activity with an emphasis on group dynamics and interpersonal skills as well as the academic goals of the lesson. Cooperative learning also allows for ongoing evaluation on the part of students and teachers, both during and after group activities.

If we intend to evaluate students on their group process and product, it is crucial that cooperative learning lessons are designed to be just that—cooperative. This can be accomplished through the creation of activities that incorporate many of the principles presented in this chapter, including teaching meaningful content, creating supportive heterogeneous groups, and using structures that ensure the active participation of all students. Many different types of activities are appropriate for the evaluation of students who are working in cooperative groups.

¹² Kagan, S. (2011). Cooperative learning. San Clemente: Kagan Cooperative Publishing.

Dippong advocates for evaluation through activities such as group reports, problem solving, seminars and debates, and simulations and role-plays.

In inclusive cooperative classrooms, teachers may want to assess individual as well as group effort and, perhaps, grade students on individual goals and/or on the basis of improvement. Individual goals can be both academically oriented and social skill related. For example, one of Martin's objectives might be to say encouraging things to his classmates during the group lesson; Kara's objectives might relate to her writing skills or organizational leadership.

During cooperative learning activities both teachers and students can assume responsibility for evaluating the skills and contributions of group members. While students are engaging in group activities, educators often collect and share information on how groups are functioning in regard to the academic and social aspects of the lesson. This information is shared with groups both during and after the lesson. Direct observation is a valuable tool for teachers who are concerned about a student's performance in a specific area. For example, do all group members have a chance to talk, including the child who uses an alternative communication device? If not, equitable participation can be addressed with this group at the time they most need the feedback -- when they are working together to complete a task. In addition, as part of cooperative learning lessons, students are often asked to discuss how they worked together to accomplish the task. This information is shared within small groups and then with the entire class. An important part of cooperative learning includes the instruction of students in how to observe, evaluate, and provide feedback to group members in positive ways. Peer evaluation affords students a chance to appreciate and critique the efforts of their peers with the group project in mind. Self-evaluation can also be a part of cooperative learning activities in which students set their own goals and share them with group members.

There are several strategies that can be used to provide a more comprehensive examination of progress within cooperative learning activities. The

following methods are more qualitative in nature and provide rich information about students that could not be ascertained as readily through traditional testing. For example, some teachers use a cumulative record file review system that outlines teachers' comments in subject areas, patterns of strengths as well as areas that need improvement, and affective observations. This information includes observations of students in cooperative learning groups and comments about their growth in academic and social skills. Other teachers collect both individual and group work in portfolios that can be reviewed by teachers, parents, and students on a periodic basis. The student—teacher interview is another option. Through interviews the teacher can glean much information about students' interests, motivation, knowledge, and perspectives on their contribution to the group. All of these approaches are compatible with cooperative learning and the use of authentic assessment, which is gaining attention as an important approach to determining whether students have acquired skills to select and use important concepts in authentic open-ended situations ¹³.

Cooperative learning activities provide a unique opportunity to evaluate important collaborative outcomes, such as interactive communication, active listening, taking the perspective of others, acceptance and accommodation of individual differences, and the evaluation of a final product developed through group effort.

¹³ Oakley, B., Felder, R. M., Brent, R., & Elhadj, I. (2004). Turning student groups into effective teams. *Journal of Student Centred Learning*, 2 (1), 9-34.

1.3. Social benefits of cooperative learning

Cooperative learning produces greater student achievement than traditional learning methodologies. Slavin found that 63% of the cooperative learning groups analyzed had an increase in achievement. Students who work individually must compete against their peers to gain praise or other forms of rewards and reinforcements. In this type of competition many individuals attempt to accomplish a goal with only a few winners.¹⁴

The success of these individuals can mean failures for others. There are more winners in a cooperative team because all members reap from the success of an achievement. Low achieving students tend to work harder when grouped with higher achieving students. There is competition among groups in cooperative learning. Some forms of group competition promote cohesiveness among group members and group spirit. Cooperative learning has social benefits as well as academic.

The success of cooperative learning is based on three interrelated factors:

- **Group goals.** Cooperative learning teams work to earn recognition for the improvement of each member of a group.
- **Individual accountability.** Each member of a team is assessed individually. Teammates work together, but the learning gains of individuals form the basis of a team score.
- **Equal opportunities for success.** Individual improvement over prior performance is more important than reaching a pre-established score (90 percent on a test, for example). A student who moves from 60 percent on a test one week to 68 percent (8 percent improvement) the next week contributes just as much to a group as a student who moves from 82 percent to 90 percent (also 8 percent improvement).

One of the essential elements of cooperative learning is the development of social skills. Children learn to take risks and are praise for their contribution. They

¹⁴ Slavin, R. (1999). Cooperative learning: Theory, research and practice. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

are able to see points of view other than their own. Such benefits contribute to the overall satisfaction of learning and schooling.

Students work with classmates who have different learning skills, cultural background, attitudes, and personalities. Heterogeneous groups promote student learning. This difference forces them to deal with conflicts and interact with others. Social interaction improves communication skills that become a necessity to functioning in society.

Based on the experiences of thousands of classroom teachers, these are the benefits of cooperative learning:

- **Student achievement.** The effects on student achievement are positive and long-lasting, regardless of grade level or subject matter.
- **Student retention.** Students are more apt to stay in school and not drop out because their contributions are solicited, respected, and celebrated.
- **Improved relations.** One of the most positive benefits is that students who cooperate with each other also tend to understand and like each other more. This is particularly true for members of different ethnic groups. Relationships between students with learning disabilities and other students in the class improve dramatically as well.
- **Improved critical thinking skills.** More opportunities for critical thinking skills are provided, and students show a significant improvement in those thinking skills.
- **Oral communication improvement.** Students improve in their oral communication skills with members of their peer group.
- **Promoted social skills.** Students' social skills are enhanced.
- **Heightened self-esteem.** When students' work is valued by team members, their individual self-esteem and respect escalate dramatically.

Less material is needed in cooperative learning. One of the social skill taught in cooperative learning is sharing. Teachers usually purchase a class set of materials for the groups to share. Reduction of materials does not hinder the

educational process but teaches children the value of time, division of lab, or and sharing. Schools are moving towards implementing higher technology and computers have become a norm. Students are able to gain more skills through computer peer tutoring in a cooperative setting. Students who work on computers have a natural tendency to help their peers even without suggestion by the teacher. By using cooperative learning less equipment is necessary therefore money is saved without sacrificing the quality of education.

The role of the teacher is very important in cooperative learning. To have effective cooperative learning group teachers must know their students well. Grouping of students can be a difficult process and must be decided with care. Teachers must consider the different learning skills, cultural background, personalities, and even gender when arranging cooperative groups. Much time is devoted to prepare the lesson for cooperative learning.

However, teachers fade in the background and become a coach, facilitator, or and sometimes a spectator after the lesson is implemented. Teachers who set up a good cooperative lesson teach children to teach themselves and each other. Students learn from their peers and become less dependent on the teacher for help. One of the goal of cooperative learning is to teach students initiative and self-reliance. Teachers want to see students seek out their peers for assistance rather than them.

Materials should then be made available so students do not need to search for them or ask the teacher for help. Students also work more effectively in well organized classrooms rather than one that is clutter. Students are expected to be organized. However, if the physical environment is not the same, the example for the students is not consistent.

With traditional teaching methodologies students sit in pre-arranged rows. Class size may be as large as 30 students or more. Cooperative learning works best when group size is smaller. The ideal cooperative learning classroom has about 15 to 20 students.

Students are usually grouped in clusters of 3 to 5. The larger the group size the more difficult it is to organize tasks, manage different skills, and reach a consensus. Because the ideal class size is hard to obtain there will be groups with more members than others.

Within each group students should be properly spaced to maintain eye-to-eye contact, share materials without bumping elbows, and communicate without disturbing other groups. Students working in cooperative groups do not always sit in one place. They usually move around the room to gather information. Barriers should be minimized to facilitate movement. Different groups should be spaced far enough to avoid conflict, provide enough room for the teacher to aid students and to monitor group action and behavior. The group configurations must allow the groups to take instruction from the teacher. This means They must be able to hear and see the teachers instructions from their workstations. Students do not always work in cooperative groups. Teachers may want students, to work individually on some projects. The class set up should be flexible enough for students to work separately when necessary.

Within each group students still need to have a sense of personal space. Each group member does a task to meet the group's common goal. Personal space gives each student within the group room and freedom to perform the task that the group allocated. Each student should also be provided with a storage space for their materials and books. These materials should be accessible but out of the way when not in use.

Uncomfortable furniture distracts students from focusing on their work. Today, students sit in hard desks that do not always fit them. Students in the middle school are still growing and vary in size. Much of the day students sit in chairs and are expected to stay quiet. Students move from class to class approximately every hour. This leaves fitting each student with a individually sized space as a very unlikely option.

Cooperative learning aids in the mainstreaming of physically disabled students. Students take pride in making a contribution to group goals and share in accomplishments. Because physically disabled students are part of the mainstream classroom accommodations should be made to facilitate their learning.

The learning environment should not be dangerous for the students. Students should be able to maneuver around the classroom without harmful effects. The arrangement of the classroom furniture should be done to avoid the destructive impulses of children.

CHAPTER II– COOPERATIVE LEARNING: THEORY INTO PRACTICE

2.1 Types and elements of cooperative Learning The theory of learning

Formal cooperative learning is structured, facilitated, and monitored by the educator over time and is used to achieve group goals in task work (e.g. completing a unit). Any course material or assignment can be adapted to this type of learning, and groups can vary from 2-6 people with discussions lasting from a few minutes up to an entire period. Types of formal cooperative learning strategies include:

1. The jigsaw technique
2. Assignments that involve group problem solving and decision making
3. Laboratory or experiment assignments
4. Peer review work (e.g. editing writing assignments).

Having experience and developing skill with this type of learning often facilitates informal and base learning.^[13] Jigsaw activities are wonderful because the student assumes the role of the teacher on a given topic and is in charge of teaching the topic to a classmate. The idea is that if students can teach something, they have already learned the material.

Informal cooperative learning incorporates group learning with passive teaching by drawing attention to material through small groups throughout the lesson or by discussion at the end of a lesson, and typically involves groups of two (e.g. turn-to-your-partner discussions). These groups are often temporary and can change from lesson to lesson (very much unlike formal learning where 2 students may be lab partners throughout the entire semester contributing to one another's knowledge of science).

Discussions typically have four components that include formulating a response to questions asked by the educator, sharing responses to the questions asked with a partner, listening to a partner's responses to the same question, and creating a new well-developed answer. This type of learning enables the student to process, consolidate, and retain more information.

In group-based cooperative learning, these peer groups gather together over the long term (e.g. over the course of a year, or several years such as in high school or post-secondary studies) to develop and contribute to one another's knowledge mastery on a topic by regularly discussing material, encouraging one another, and supporting the academic and personal success of group members.¹⁵

Base group learning (e.g., a long term study group) is effective for learning complex subject matter over the course or semester and establishes caring, supportive peer relationships, which in turn motivates and strengthens the student's commitment to the group's education while increasing self-esteem and self-worth. Base group approaches also make the students accountable to educating their peer group in the event that a member was absent for a lesson. This is effective both for individual learning, as well as social support.

It is only under certain conditions that cooperative efforts may be expected to be more productive. Those conditions are:

1. Clearly perceived positive interdependence
2. Considerable promotive (face-to-face) interaction
3. Clearly perceived individual accountability and personal responsibility to achieve the group's goals
4. Frequent use of the relevant interpersonal and small-group skills
5. Frequent and regular group processing of current functioning to improve the group's future effectiveness

All healthy cooperative relationships have these five basic elements present. This is true of peer tutoring, partner learning, peer mediation, adult work groups, families, and other cooperative relationships. This conceptual "yardstick" should define any cooperative relationship.

The first requirement for an effectively structured cooperative lesson is that students believe that they "sink or swim together." Within cooperative learning situations, students have two responsibilities: 1) learn the assigned material, and 2)

¹⁵ <http://e.usia.gov/forum/vols/vol34/no2/p22.htm> note-taking .

ensure that all members of the group learn the assigned material. The technical term for that dual responsibility is *positive interdependence*. Positive interdependence exists when students perceive that they are linked with group mates in such a way that they cannot succeed unless their group mates do (and vice versa) and/or that they must coordinate their efforts with the efforts of their group mates to complete a task [30, 341-347]. Positive interdependence promotes a situation in which students: 1) see that their work benefits group mates and their group mates' work benefits them, and 2) work together in small groups to maximize the learning of all members by sharing their resources to provide mutual support and encouragement and to celebrate their joint success. When positive interdependence is clearly understood, it establishes that:

1. Each group member's efforts are required and indispensable for group success (i.e., there can be no "free-riders").
2. Each group member has a unique contribution to make to the joint effort because of his or her resources and/or role and task responsibilities.

There are a number of ways of structuring positive interdependence within a learning group.

Positive Goal Interdependence. Students perceive that they can achieve their learning goals if and only if all the members of their group also attain their goals. The group is united around a common goal -- a concrete reason for being. To ensure that students believe they "sink or swim together" and care about how much each other learns, the teacher has to structure a clear group or mutual goal, such as "learn the assigned material and make sure that all members of the group learn the assigned material." The group goal always has to be a part of the lesson.

Positive Reward -- Celebrate Interdependence. Each group member receives the same reward when the group achieves its goals. To supplement goal interdependence, teachers may wish to add joint rewards (e.g., if all members of the group score 90% correct or better on the test, each receives 5 bonus points). Sometimes teachers give students: 1) a group grade for the overall production of

their group, 2) an individual grade resulting from tests, and 3) bonus points if all members of the group achieve the criterion on tests. Regular celebrations of group efforts and success enhance the quality of cooperation.

Positive Resource Interdependence. Each group member has only a portion of the resources, information, or materials necessary for the task to be completed; the members' resources have to be combined for the group to achieve its goals. Teachers may wish to highlight the cooperative relationships by giving students limited resources that must be shared (one copy of the problem or task per group) or giving each student part of the required resources that the group must then fit together (the Jigsaw procedure).

Positive Role Interdependence. Each member is assigned complementary and interconnected roles that specify responsibilities that the group needs in order to complete the joint task. Teachers create role interdependence among students when they assign them complementary roles such as reader, recorder, checker of understanding, encourager of participation, and elaborator of knowledge. Such roles are vital to high-quality learning. The role of checker, for example, focuses on periodically asking each group mate to explain what is being learned. Rosenshine and Stevens reviewed a large body of well-controlled research on teaching effectiveness at the pre-collegiate level and found "checking for comprehension" to be one specific teaching behavior that was significantly associated with higher levels of student learning and achievement. Although the teacher cannot continually check the understanding of every student, the teacher can engineer such checking by having students work in cooperative groups and assigning one member the role of checker. [46, 376- 391]

There are other types of positive interdependence. Positive task interdependence exists when a division of labor is created so that the actions of one group member have to be completed if the next member is to complete his or her responsibility. Positive identity interdependence exists when a mutual identity is established through a name or motto. Outside threat interdependence exists when

groups are placed in competition with each other. Fantasy interdependence exists when a task is given that requires group members to imagine that they are in a hypothetical situation.

We have conducted a series of studies investigating the nature of positive interdependence and the relative power of the different types of positive interdependence¹⁶. Our research indicates that positive interdependence provides the context within which promotive interaction takes place.

Group membership and interpersonal interaction among students do not produce higher achievement unless positive interdependence is clearly structured. The combination of goal and reward interdependence increases achievement over goal interdependence alone and resource interdependence does not increase achievement unless goal interdependence is present also.

2. Face-to-Face Promotive Interaction. Positive interdependence results in promotive interaction. Promotive interaction may be defined as individuals encouraging and facilitating each other's efforts to achieve, complete tasks, and produce in order to reach the group's goals. Although positive interdependence in and of itself may have some effect on outcomes, it is the face-to-face promotive interaction among individuals fostered by the positive inter-relationships, and psychological adjustment and social competence.

Promotive interaction is characterized by individuals providing each other with efficient and effective help and assistance; exchanging needed resources, such as information and materials, *and* processing information more efficiently and effectively; providing each other with feedback in order to improve their subsequent performance; challenging each other's conclusions and reasoning in order to promote higher quality decision making and greater insight into the problems being considered; advocating the exertion of effort to achieve mutual goals; influencing each other's efforts to achieve the group's goals; acting in

¹⁶ www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglish.

trusting and trustworthy ways; being motivated to strive for mutual benefit; and maintaining a moderate level of arousal characterized by low anxiety and stress.

3. Individual Accountability/Personal Responsibility. The third essential element of cooperative learning is individual accountability, which exists when the performance of individual students is assessed, the results are given back to the individual and the group, and the student is held responsible by group mates for contributing his or her fair share to the group's success.

It is important that the group-knows who needs more assistance, support, and encouragement in completing the assignment. It is also important that group members know they cannot "hitchhike" on the work of others. When it is difficult to identify members' contributions, when members' contributions are redundant, and when members are not responsible for the final group outcome, they may be seeking a free ride¹⁷. This is called social loafing.

The purpose of cooperative learning groups is to make each member a stronger individual in his or her own right. Individual accountability is the key to ensuring that all group members are, in fact, strengthened by learning cooperatively. After participating in a cooperative lesson, group members should be better prepared *to* complete similar tasks by themselves.

To ensure that each student is individually accountable to do his or her fair share of the group's work, teachers need to assess how much effort each member is contributing to the group's work, provide feedback to groups and individual students, help groups avoid redundant efforts by members, and ensure that every member is responsible for the final outcome. Common ways to structure individual accountability include:

1. Keeping the size of the group small. The smaller the size of the group, the greater the individual accountability may be.
2. Giving an individual test to each student.

¹⁷ www.britishcouncil.org/kids.htm.

3. Randomly examining students orally by calling on one student to present his or her group's work to the teacher (in the presence of the group) or to the entire class.
4. Observing each group and recording the frequency with which each member-contributes to the group's work.
5. Assigning one student in each group the role of checker. The checker asks other group members to explain the reasoning and rationale underlying group answers.
6. Having students teach what they learned to someone else. When all students do this, it is called *simultaneous explaining*.

There is a pattern to classroom learning. First, students learn knowledge, skills, strategies, or procedures in a cooperative group. Second, students apply the knowledge or perform the skill, strategy, or procedure alone to demonstrate their personal mastery of the material. Students learn it together and then perform it alone.

4. Interpersonal and Small-Group Skills. The fourth essential element of cooperative learning is the appropriate use of interpersonal and small-group skills. In order to coordinate efforts to achieve mutual goals, students must: 1) get to know and trust each other, 2) communicate accurately and unambiguously, 3) accept and support each other, and 4) resolve conflict constructively.

Placing socially unskilled students in a group and telling them to cooperate does not guarantee that they have the ability to do so effectively. We are not born instinctively knowing how to interact effectively with others. Interpersonal and small-group skills do not magically appear when they are needed. Students must be taught the social skills required for high quality collaboration and be motivated to use them if cooperative groups are to be productive. The whole field of group dynamics is based on the premise that social skills are the key to group productivity¹⁸.

¹⁸ Watson, W.E., Scott, B., & Marshall, J. (2005). Heterogeneous grouping as an element of cooperative learning in an elementary education science course. *School science and mathematics*, 95(8), 401.

The more socially skillful students are and the more attention teachers pay to teaching and rewarding the use of social skills, the higher the achievement that can be expected within cooperative learning groups.

In their studies on the long-term implementation of cooperative learning, Lew and Mesch [37, 476-488] investigated the impact of a reward contingency for using social skills as well as positive interdependence and a contingency for academic achievement on performance within cooperative learning groups. In the cooperative skills conditions, students were trained weekly in four social skills and each member of a cooperative group was given two bonus points toward the quiz grade if all group members were observed by the teacher to demonstrate three out of four cooperative skills.

The results indicated that the combination of positive interdependence, an academic contingency for high performance by all group members, and a social skills contingency promoted the highest achievement.

5. Group Processing. The fifth essential component of cooperative learning is group processing. Effective group work is influenced by whether or not groups reflect on (i.e., process) how well they are functioning. A process is an identifiable sequence of events taking place over time, and process goals refer to the sequence of events instrumental in achieving outcome goals. Group processing may be defined as reflecting on a group session to: 1) describe what member actions were helpful and unhelpful, and 2) make decisions about what actions to continue or change.

The purpose of group processing is to clarify and improve the effectiveness of the members in contributing to the collaborative efforts to achieve the group's goals.

While the teacher systematically observes the cooperative learning groups, he or she attains a "window" into what students do and do not understand as they explain to each other how to complete the assignment. Listening in on the students' explanations provides valuable information about how well the students

understand the instructions, the major concepts and strategies being learned, and the basic elements of cooperative learning.

There are two levels of processing -- small group and whole class. In order to ensure that small-group processing takes place, teachers allocate some time at the end of each class session for each cooperative group to process how effectively members worked together. Groups need to describe what member actions were helpful and not helpful in completing the group's work and make decisions about what behaviors to continue or change.

Such processing: 1) enables learning groups to focus on maintaining good working relationships among members, 2) facilitates the learning of cooperative skills, 3) ensures that members receive feedback on their participation, 4) ensures that students think on the metacognitive as well as the cognitive level, and 5) provides the means to celebrate the success of the group and reinforce the positive behaviors of group members.

Some of the keys to successful small-group processing are allowing sufficient time for it to take place, providing a structure for processing (e.g., "List three things your group is doing well today and one thing you could improve."), emphasizing positive feedback, making the processing specific rather than general, maintaining student involvement in processing, reminding students to use their cooperative skills while they process, and communicating clear expectations as to the purpose of processing.

In addition to small-group processing, the teacher should periodically engage in whole-class processing. When cooperative learning groups are used, the teacher observes the groups, analyzes the problems they have working together, and gives feedback to each group on how well they are working together.

The teacher systematically moves from group to group and observes them at work. A formal observation sheet may be used to gather specific data on each group. At the end of the class period the teacher can then conduct a whole-class processing session by sharing with the class the results of his or her observations.

If each group has a peer observer, the results of their observations may be added together to get overall class data.

An important aspect of both small-group and whole-class processing is group and class celebrations. It is feeling successful, appreciated, and respected that builds commitment to learning, enthusiasm about working in cooperative groups, and a sense of self-efficacy in terms of subject-matter mastery and working cooperatively with classmates.

2.2 Techniques and Strategies of cooperative Learning

There are a great number of cooperative learning techniques available. Some cooperative learning techniques utilize student pairing, while others utilize small groups of four or five students. Hundreds of techniques have been created into structures to use in any content area. Among the easy to implement structures are Think-Pair-Share, Think-Pair-Write, variations of Round Robin, and the Reciprocal Teaching Technique. A well known cooperative learning technique is the Jigsaw, Jigsaw II and Reverse Jigsaw.

Think-Pair-Share allows for students to contemplate a posed question or problem silently. The student may write down thoughts or simply just brainstorm in his or her head. When prompted, the student pairs up with a peer and discusses his or her idea(s) and then listens to the ideas of his or her partner. Following pair dialogue, the teacher solicits responses from the whole group.

Jigsaw. Students are members of two groups: home group and expert group. In the heterogeneous home group, students are each assigned a different topic. Once a topic has been identified, students leave the home group and group with the other students with their assigned topic. In the new group, students learn the material together before returning to their home group. Once back in their home group, each student is accountable for teaching his or her assigned topic.

Jigsaw II. **Jigsaw II** is Robert Slavin's variation of Jigsaw in which members of the home group are assigned the same material, but focus on separate portions of the material. Each member must become an "expert" on his or her assigned portion and teach the other members of the home group. [48, 34-46]

Reverse Jigsaw. This variation was created by Timothy Hedeem (2003)^[22] It differs from the original Jigsaw during the teaching portion of the activity. In the Reverse Jigsaw technique, students in the expert groups teach the whole class rather than return to their home groups to teach the content.

Reciprocal Teaching. Brown & Paliscar developed reciprocal teaching. It is a cooperative technique that allows for student pairs to participate in a dialogue

about text [6, 508]. Partners take turns reading and asking questions of each other, receiving immediate feedback. Such a model allows for students to use important metacognitive techniques such as clarifying, questioning, predicting, and summarizing. It embraces the idea that students can effectively learn from each other.

The Williams. Students collaborate to answer a big question that is the learning objective. Each group has differentiated questions that increases in cognitive ability to allow students to progress and meet the learning objective.

STAD (or Student-Teams-Achievement Divisions). Students are placed in small groups (or [teams](#)). The class in its entirety is presented with a lesson and the students are subsequently tested. Individuals are graded on the team's performance. Although the tests are taken individually, students are encouraged to work together to improve the overall performance of the group.

Research evidence. Research on cooperative learning demonstrated “overwhelmingly positive” results and confirmed that cooperative modes are [cross-curricular](#). Cooperative learning requires students to engage in group activities that increase learning and adds other important dimensions. The positive outcomes include academic gains, improved race relations and increased personal and social development ¹⁹. Students who fully participate in group activities, exhibit collaborative behaviors, provide constructive feedback, and cooperate with their groups have a higher likelihood of receiving higher test scores and course grades at the end of the semester. Cooperative learning is an active pedagogy that fosters higher academic achievement.

We analyzed some cooperative learning games for elementary school. For ex:

Showdown.

Showdown is a cooperative learning strategy that allows students to work together or in groups to answer questions. First, the teacher comes up with

¹⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cooperative_learning - cite_note-Brown.

questions pertaining to the class's current unit of study. To play Showdown as a group, divide students into groups of four. A true cooperative learning classroom will have students already divided into groups of three to five. These cooperative learning groups work together throughout the day on a variety of tasks. Next, choose one student to be the recorder.

Then, ask a question and have the students work with their groups to answer the question. When the recorder writes down his group's answer, he should turn over his piece of paper. Once every group has an answer, the teacher says, "1-2-3 Showdown!" The recorders flip over their papers. The entire class can then see whether there is a consensus on the answer. If not, the class can have a discussion and decide what the correct answer is. Students can also play this game independently. Each student should record his own answer and show it when the teacher says, "Showdown!"

Mix-Freeze

Students in a cooperative learning classroom can play Mix-Freeze-Pair or Mix-Freeze-Group. Spencer Kagan, author of "Cooperative Learning," says that these structures work well with get-to-know-you questions and content mastery. To use the structure Mix-Freeze-Pair, students walk around the classroom. When the teacher says, "Freeze!" they stop and find the closest person. The teacher then asks a question and the students answer it with their partner. To play Mix-Freeze-Group, have students walk around the classroom again. When the teacher says, "Freeze!" students form groups of five. Leftover students go near the teacher in what Kagan calls the "lost and found." These students get a break and don't have to answer any questions that round. Only allow students to go to the lost and found twice per Mix-Freeze-Group session. After students are in groups of five, the teacher then gives a harder content mastery question and the team deliberates.

Fact or Fiction

Fact or Fiction is a game that works well for content mastery. One student from each group thinks of two true content-related statements and one false

content-related statement. For instance, when studying the Civil War, his three statements might be, “The Civil War was fought in the early 1900s, the North and South were on opposing sides and Abraham Lincoln wrote the Emancipation Proclamation.” The members of his team would then determine which statement is fiction. Students should also be able to explain why certain statements are fact or fiction.

The jigsaw strategy is a remarkably efficient way to learn the material. More importantly, the jigsaw process encourages listening, engagement, and empathy by giving each member of the group an essential part to play in the academic activity.

Group members must work together as a team to accomplish a common goal--each person depends on all the others. No student can succeed completely unless everyone works well together as a team. This "cooperation by design" facilitates interaction among all students in the class, leading them to value each other as contributors to their common task.

Lastly, the jigsaw strategy can be used effectively in any core academic area.

As we mentioned above, the jigsaw strategy is a unique cooperative learning approach. With this approach, students work together as a team toward learning the target material--particularly when that material contains several chunks of related information.

Although many students will arrive in your classroom with some jigsawing experience, there's always going to be several who will have no idea how to proceed.

For that reason, we would strongly suggest doing a simple one-class-period jigsaw activity before proceeding to more challenging and involved assignments.

Step 1: Start by determining your target material. What is it that you want your kids to learn? Obviously that could be anything that you want to choose, but for this example, I will choose as the target material the question, "What does it

take to become a successful student?" The answer to that question will become the completed jigsaw at the conclusion of the activity.

Step 2: Determine how many pieces there will be in that puzzle. I'm using the term "pieces" to indicate separate chunks of information regarding the target material (the completed puzzle). For this example, those pieces might include the following:

Supplies and organization

- Preparing to enter the classroom
- Positive classroom behavior
- Study and homework techniques
- Other factors affecting school success

Step 3: Once you have determined the specific pieces, it's time to divide your class into groups (jigsaws) of four or five depending on the number of students in the class and the number of "pieces" for the puzzle. Have your kids sit together in their groups and explain to them that this is their home group or jigsaw group. Tell them that they are all about to become experts on one aspect of the question, and in order to do, that they will have to temporarily leave their new group and join an expert group. Note: I've found that this it's helpful to have numbered signs in each group area so that kids know what group they started in, what group they're going to, and what group they return to at the conclusion of the activity. Remind them to note the numbered group area in which they are currently sitting before temporarily dividing them into expert groups.

Step 4: To form the expert groups, you can pick the simple and straightforward method of having your kids count off one thru five until everyone has a number and then group all the ones in an expert group (or piece group), all of the twos in another expert group, and so forth. Obviously, you may use your own favorite grouping strategy.

Step 5: After the kids have relocated to the expert groups, visit each expert group with a note card containing the numbered pieces of the puzzle. Explain to the class that each expert group is to brainstorm ideas related to their particular topic, but NOT ideas related to any of the other topics listed. So, expert group number one does Supplies and Organization, expert group number two does Preparing to Enter the Classroom, and so on. Remind them that they will need to take notes on what they are discussing so that when they return to their original jigsaw group, they can "teach" the other members of their jigsaw group what they learned.

Step 6: After an appropriate time is allowed for brainstorming, ask students to reassemble in their original jigsaw groups. Each group leader, then calls on each expert to share ideas from his or her notes.

Step 7: Once all experts have shared their ideas, the jigsaw puzzle is now completely assembled and they will be able to see the overall picture of what it takes to become a successful student--the target material.

Step 8: Now it's time for the evaluation. For this simple introductory example activity, you may want to go with a very informal assessment. For instance you may ask each jigsaw group to summarize in one sentence what it takes to become a successful student. Those summaries then could be displayed for the entire class to compare, contrast, and synthesize. Of course, with more complex and demanding jigsaws, other methods of evaluation would probably be more effective.

A Language Arts Grammar Jigsaw. This example of a language arts grammar jigsaw will probably require a longer period of time than the example activity outlined above. I would think that you would need at least two class periods or perhaps three. As you know, grammar seems to be a difficult area for many students.

This jigsaw activity may increase retention time. This takes very little preparation. All that you would need are resource books with examples of the parts

of speech. And, if you're a language arts teacher, you probably have these readily available in your classroom.

Step 1: Form teams and assign a leader. Each group should be four students. There are eight parts of speech and each student will become an expert on two of the parts of speech.

Step 2: The leader should help the group members each choose 2 parts of speech. You will probably need to group the parts of speech into two sections. Although you may determine what goes in each section, I prefer to use the following:

- noun, pronoun, adjective, verb
- adverb, preposition, conjunction, interjection

Then tell your kids that they are to find out the following about each part of speech:

Definition

- 10 examples words
- Rules about using the part of speech
- Unique qualities about the part of speech
- Use two examples of a part of speech in a sentence and underline the part of speech.

Step 3: Once the students have found out the information about the two parts of speech, you may want to set up four stations in the room (noun, verb, adjective, and adverb). Then, you can have four of the eight part of speech experts meet together and then switch to (pronoun, preposition, conjunction, interjection). The experts need to talk to each other and make sure that they have their information correct.

Step 4: Students go back to their original group after the two expert group sessions. Each expert then shares what he or she learned. I strongly urge you to have group members take notes.

Step 5: After each group member or expert has presented, ask students to study their notes for a quiz over the information on the following day. The jigsaw lesson strategy can be used in the language arts classroom any time there is a great deal of information to be learned.

For example, Renaissance poetry can easily be organized into a Jigsaw lesson. It just takes a little planning, but students will learn how to work together to learn a great deal of information quickly.

Cooperative Learning Games. Educators often neglect the concept of cooperation. When students learn only how to satisfy their own individual learning goals, they fail to recognize the value of helping one another to succeed. In the real world, people cannot afford to ignore the needs of their coworkers and neighbors. Thus, children need encouragement to coordinate their efforts in appropriate ways and for appropriate reasons. Cooperative learning games let children know that the learning process can be fun if it's a shared experience.

Cooperative Memorization. This game requires students to broadcast information, receive information and repeat information. The best time to play this game is on the first day of school, in order to help students learn about each other. Call on one student to state his name, and to introduce himself in a couple of sentences. Next, call on a second student seated beside the first to state the name of the first student, plus his own. He will also introduce himself. Then choose a third student to state the names of the other two and his own, plus a short introduction. The game continues until you challenge the last student in the class to state the names of everyone present. This game combines basic memory skills with complex memory skills to help students tackle a wealth of information. You can also use it to introduce students to new vocabulary or other material.

Big Fat Liar. This game allows students to showcase their storytelling powers (see references). Choose four students to stand before their class, and allow each to tell a brief story filled with descriptive details. Upon picking these four students, discreetly provide each of them with a slip of paper that simply says "Truth" or "Lie." These slips let each speaker know whether his story should be factual or fictional in nature. Only one of the four should be given a slip that says "Lie." The four students shouldn't show these slips to anyone else, not even fellow speakers. As each student tells his story, fellow students should try to determine whether or not he's the liar. After all stories have been told, poll the class and record results on an overhead projector or blackboard.

Write a Test. Allowing student to write a test together helps them to practice valuable critical thinking skills. Teach them to construct test questions that will both pique the interest of their fellow classmates and evaluate the depth of their knowledge. You can divide students into groups, each of which will develop a different type of questions, such multiple-choice, true/false or essay format.

What Has Changed? Attention to detail plays an essential role in mastering new educational concepts. To help students develop an eye for detail, play a game in which you alter small details within a room, picture or even a text, and the students must decide what has been changed. The game uses the same concept as the "Hocus-Focus" feature in the funny pages (see references). First, ask all of your students to observe details within the room. Next, ask them to put their heads on their desks and cover their eyes. Then change the position of a single object within the room, such as a chalkboard eraser. The change should be neither major nor so minor that it will never be noticed. Finally, tell your students to lift their heads up and look around. Ask them to raise their hands if they know what has changed. You can also play this game with literature. Read a couple of paragraphs to familiarize students with a piece of work, then carry on with regular class business. After 30 minutes, read the paragraphs again, except in a slightly altered format. Ask the students to identify the changes.

One Minute to Team Up Tests should not only assess your students' comprehension of information, but also provide evidence of their abilities to recall and arrange this information. Students don't necessarily need testing in isolation to demonstrate these capabilities. One way to let your students work together during a test is to permit them to freely exchange information for a single minute. Do this close to the end of a testing period. Emphasize your reasons for letting them work together cooperatively. Ask the students to tell you why this differs from cheating. Letting them know they can work together for a single minute will help to calm worried students who may normally suffer from test anxiety. Plus, you will indirectly teach your students how to make the most of their time by giving them this opportunity to communicate during a brief window of time.

Body Letters Call out a letter and have all the children work together to create the letter using their bodies standing up or sitting down. If you have a large group, divide the children into smaller groups. If you have two groups, call out two-letters words and have the children make the word. If you have three groups, call out three letter words. Other variations include numbers and objects. Objects include things like a sun, star or a tree.

Balloon Games. Hang a string or rope between two poles or use a volleyball net. Have all the players stand on one side of the net and give one player a balloon. That player must hit the balloon in the air and crawl under the net. The next player must bump it in the air and go under the net. The last player to bump the balloon has to bump it over the net and the players will begin the process again, working their way to the other side. For another balloon game, have all the players stand in a circle and give them two or three balloons to hit in the air. Tell the players to try not to let the balloons touch the ground. Keep adding one or two balloons make it harder for the children.

Knot Games. Get a long rope and tie a knot every three feet. You need one knot for each player and no more than six players to a rope. Have the players place one hand on either side of their knot. When you say "Go," the players must untie

the knots by working with only their free hand and working with others. Another knot game is "Human Knots." The game works best with 10 or fewer people. If you have more than 10 players create groups of no more than 10 in each group. Have all the players stand in a circle and place their hands in the middle. They must reach out and grab the hands of two different players across the circle. The players must untangle themselves without letting go of each other's hands. The players will have to go over and under each other to "untangle" themselves. Some players may be facing in and some facing out after everyone is untangled.

Straw Games. Pour a box of straws on the ground. Tell the children to take turns trying to remove a straw from the stack without disturbing the other straws. The children can help each other out and give each other hints on which straw to move. For another straw game, have teams work together to build a straw structure using only straws. Give each team a box of straws to use to build the structure. The first team to build a structure that stands on its own for 30 seconds wins the game.

Cooperative learning groups help students think together. Cooperative learning groups give students the opportunity to get up and move in the classroom, socialize with their peers and think together to solve problems and learn new material. In cooperative learning groups, all students are given a role or specific activity, in which they can build off one another to complete the task.

Literature Circles. Place students in groups of four and assign them an article, a short story or a passage from a novel or textbook to read together. After students have read the text, have one student draw a picture related to the reading, another write five discussion questions, a third student write a summary of the reading and the fourth student make five connections between the text and real-life or other texts. Students should then share their responses to each individual activity with the other group members. Providing a group with multiple activities allows students to interact with a book in multiple ways and analyze more elements of a text in a shorter period of time than if all activities were completed individually.

Group Test Review. Students can review for a major test using cooperative learning groups. Provide students with a sample test. Students work in their groups to decide on the correct answer for each question, with one student reading the question and the other members of the group discussing each choice and why it is or is not the right answer. Give each group pieces of paper with A, B, C and D written on them. Question by question, have each group hold up their answer choice. Award a point for each correct answer and give a prize to the group with the most points at the end of the test review. Mix higher level and lower level students in groups so the higher-level students can help lower-level students in coming up with the answers.

Think-Pair-Share Place students in groups of four. Pose a question to students or provide them with a problem to solve. Students spend two minutes answering the question or thinking about how to solve the problem on their own. After the two minutes are up, students pair up with another group member and discuss the question or problem for another two minutes. Finally, two pairs come together to form a group of four to share their answers to the question or problem and come up with an answer to share with the class.

Rubrics for Cooperative Group Activities. Rubrics help students understand what is expected of them in cooperative group activities. Rubrics provide a consistent and objective method of assessing subjective tasks. They explain expectations and define the way performance will be evaluated. Well designed rubrics help both teachers and students define quality by identifying objective characteristics to be assessed. Performance-based rubrics facilitate accomplishment of specific end products or academic goals. Cooperative group activities teach students and others to work together to accomplish common goals. Students benefit academically and socially through participation in such learning groups.

Group or Team You can use a rubric to evaluate a cooperative learning group as a whole. Since teamwork is so important in this type of learning situation,

each member must make a contribution. You can grade the group on a scale of one to four, with four being excellent and one being poor. Rubric scores reflect how well the group works together. If the group stays on task, involved all of its members, was highly productive, explored different strategies and approaches, went above and beyond expectations by discussing ideas, listening attentively and offering constructive feedback, the group merits a four.

Self-Assessment. Assessing own participation in cooperative group activities helps a student gain a better understanding of the learning process. Active reflection involves looking at your own achievements from a perspective that employs higher thinking skills. This is a way for people to demonstrate problem-solving ability and build communication skills. Honesty is an important component of self-assessment. The scores range from one to a best score of five.

A score of one suggests the student rarely contributes ideas, participates little, and does everything at the last minute. A group member who gives himself a score of two recognizes that he contributes only when prompted and does not put forth much effort. A score of three reflects a proficient performance, which means ideas are contributed and a conscious effort made to complete the group learning task. A good performance score of four indicates that all tasks are completed with a cooperative attitude. An exemplary performance receives a score of five. This score indicates active participation, a positive attitude, and contributions of useful ideas and positive criticism.

Peer Evaluation. Group members obtain important feedback when all are given the opportunity to assess the performance of their peers in a cooperative learning group. One objective assessment method is a rubric. Each group member takes on the responsibility of rating her peers by completing the rubric. The scores range from zero to three for each selected criterion.

A three indicates a member who exceeds standards, completes assigned tasks on time, makes sure all other members do the same, freely shares ideas and consistently refocuses the group when needed. A score of two is given to group

members who successfully perform their assigned roles, stay on task, listen to others and complete most tasks on time. Group members earning a score of one attempt to complete tasks, but do not always carry their load. Those who show no sense of responsibility, do not attempt to help with tasks and may sometimes be disruptive or uncooperative cannot earn a score above zero.

CONCLUSION

From the beginning of our research we have known that cooperative learning method of teaching English is designed to improve the ability to communicate in English by improving grammatical knowledge, language skills and confidence to communicate effectively in real life situations. The methods are highly interactive, with intensive use of jigsaw, role-playing, case studies, group discussion.

In formation of interest to a subject the huge role is played by the person of the teacher. Therefore a pledge of successful mastering a foreign language by the pupil's professionalism of the teacher which should in the work not only take into account the methodical principles underlying teaching, but also to be in constant search of new methods and means of teaching which will recover a lesson, will make it fascinating.

The most useful for this purpose are the following methods: methods of cooperative learning method group works, games jigsaw.

Our experience showed that cooperative learning is a progressive style of group education that has many advantages. For example, while learning a concept, students participating in cooperative learning also learn to work with others in a group setting. Cooperative learning has many advantages, one of its biggest disadvantages is that grouping students together will almost always form a group in which some students are faster learners or workers than others. The students who need more time to understand the work may feel frustrated at being left behind. Alternately, students who learn faster may feel delayed or held back by having to wait for the ones that learn more slowly. We suggest that cooperative learning is good for all students and that it is part of comprehensive school reform efforts.

To achieve this aim, teachers must work together to build networks within their school community. Teachers must also establish a cooperative classroom ethic that emphasizes overall community building, open communication about differences and classroom practices, and reciprocal helping relationships.

Meaningful content in cooperative lessons is critical for the success of all students. For students to succeed within their groups, careful consideration regarding group heterogeneity must be given in conjunction with roles that ensure active, equal participation by all students. Creative assessment practices must be developed to document achievement of meaningful outcomes for students. All of these considerations require planning and structure in order for the teaching to be successful.

We found out that the cooperative learning games should be planned into the day's lesson right along with exercises, dialogues and reading practice. Games are a lively way of maintaining students' interest in the language, they are fun but also part of the learning process, and students should be encouraged to take them seriously. Well-chosen games are invaluable as they give students a break and at the same time allow students to practice language skills. Games are highly motivating since they are amusing and at the same time challenging. Furthermore, they employ meaningful and useful language in real contexts. They also encourage and increase cooperation and they can be used to give practice in all language skills and be used to practice many types of communication.

Cooperative learning games have been shown to have advantages and effectiveness in learning vocabulary in various ways. First, games bring in relaxation and fun for students, thus help them learn and retain new words more easily. Second, games usually involve friendly competition and they keep learners interested. These create the motivation for learners of English to get involved and participate actively in the learning activities. Third, vocabulary games bring real world context into the classroom, and enhance students' use of English in a flexible, communicative way. The results of this research suggest that games are used not only for mere fun, but more importantly, for the useful practice and - view of language lessons, thus leading toward the goal of improving learners' communicative competence.

We can come to the following conclusions that in cooperative learning

project work has advantages like the increased motivation when learners become personally involved in the project; all four skills, reading, writing, listening and speaking, are integrated; autonomous learning is promoted as learners become more responsible for their own learning; there are learning outcomes -learners have an end product; authentic tasks and therefore the language input are more authentic; interpersonal relations are developed through working as a group; content and methodology can be decided between the learners and the teacher and within the group themselves so it is more learner-centered; learners often get help from parents for project work thus involving the parent more in the child's learning; if the project is also displayed parents can see it at open days or when they pick the child up from the school; a break from routine and the chance to do something different.

The organization of cooperative learning project work may seem difficult but if teachers do it step by step it should be easy. We should define a theme, determine the final outcome, structure the project, identify language skills and strategies, gather information, compile and analyze the information, present the final product and finally evaluate the project. Project work demands a lot of hard work from the teacher and the students; nevertheless, the final outcome is worth the effort.

Throughout the qualification paper we can see that jigsaw, project work, games have more positive sides than negative and is effective during the educational process. Students are likely to learn the language with the help of projects and have more fun.

To conclude, cooperative learning method is effective, interesting, entertaining and should be used at the lesson.

As our research proceed that some of the early literature on mainstreaming assumed that children with special education needs could be considered eligible for participation in the general education classroom when they were able to *compete* successfully with other children. This orientation implies that the

burden of change is on the child and that the general education classroom is a fixed, immutable environment in which some practices, such as competition, are unamenable to change or modification. A more exciting and far-reaching way of thinking about inclusion and cooperation is based on the belief that all children belong in the general education classroom. By creating a community that is cooperative and inclusive, children's acceptance and success in the general education environment will be greatly enhanced. All students and all teachers have much to gain by structuring the classroom and school environment so that it provides generous support for learning, connecting, and caring.

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