

# THE EFFECT OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGY ON ENGLISH READING SKILLS OF 9<sup>TH</sup> GRADE YEMENI STUDENTS AND THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE STRATEGY

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## ABSTRACT

This study aimed at finding out the effect of cooperative learning strategy on English reading skills of 9<sup>th</sup> grade Yemeni students and their attitudes towards the strategy. For the purpose of achieving this aim, two groups were selected as the sample of the study (control and experimental groups 40 students, 20 in each group). The *experimental* group was taught for two months by using Cooperative Learning Strategy for two months. The control group was taught by using the traditional method. Two instruments were used (the reading comprehension test (pre-posttest) and a questionnaire of attitudes towards cooperative learning). Results indicated that the students obtained higher reading comprehension scores than the control groups' scores at .05 level of significance. It was also concluded that most students have positive attitudes towards the cooperative learning. Also, there is no significant differences in the scores of the experimental group according to their gender.

**KEYWORDS:** Cooperative Learning Strategy; An Attitude; English Reading Skills

## INTRODUCTION

English is an essential language since it is the international language in the world. It is taught in all public schools from the seventh grade and in all the universities and colleges. To teach the four skills it is important to use different strategies of teaching. Most teachers of English use traditional methods for teaching the four English language skills. Some other teachers try to use some modern methods and strategies that are considered to be learner-centered strategies as communicative approach, cooperative learning strategies.

As it has already been known, teaching a language is a multidimensional task which requires different techniques and methods compared with teaching other subjects. In order to study a language either as a first or second language, one makes an effort to develop and integrate four basic skills which are listening, speaking, reading and writing. However, it is difficult to improve all these skills all at once in terms of teaching a foreign language proficiency. According to (Bolukbas, 2011), learning a foreign language differs because of the individual differences and this is not in the case of native learners. So, such problem can be overcome by using different and modern techniques.

Kupaczynski, 2011; Sear, 2012; and Salman, 2004 enhanced the idea that modern teaching strategies should be used in teaching the different classes and levels in which they help in motivating learners to learn and this will improve their achievement. They also said that these strategies in which cooperative learning strategy is one of them give learners

the chance to learn in teams and pairs. This idea was supported by Wichadee, 2012 and Yi-Zeng, 2012.

Before twenty years, cooperative learning was unknown by the educators. Teaching in schools was dominated by competitive and individualistic learning. Then, thought of the educators are changed and cooperative learning was highly accepted and the cooperative learning work were translated into different languages.

Typically in Yemeni classrooms at all educational levels, a teacher-centered approach seems to be utilized. In such classrooms, the lecturer is typically seen as the repository of knowledge with students passively taking notes, asking very few or no questions. Cooperative learning has been suggested as the solution for an astonishing array of educational problem (Wachyuni, 2015 and Slavin,1991). Also, this strategy can develop positive attitudes towards learning process and high achievement. As it was mentioned by (Slavin, E ,1991) what group goals and individual accountability do is to motivate students to give explanation and to take one another's learning seriously, instead of simply giving answers. Taking this into account, this study was conducted to investigate students' attitude towards using cooperative learning techniques for teaching English reading comprehension in Iranian private language schools.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It was noticed by the researcher as an expert in teaching and learning English that Yemeni students' (Al-aman a private school Students) was somehow weak in reading skills. This study was as a result of his notice of the results of students in such area and classroom feedback when supervising university students during their practicum work in schools. This might be because teachers of English use only traditional methods in teaching language skills (teacher-centered strategy). So, this study is an attempt to overcome this problem by applying different method in teaching reading skill which depends on students in class more than teachers (the cooperative learning strategy learner-centered). The study problem was achieved through answering the following questions:-

- What is the effect of using cooperative learning strategy on English reading skills of 9<sup>th</sup> grade students in the English course?
- What is the effect of using cooperative learning strategy in English classes on students' developing students' positive attitudes towards it?
- Is there any statistical significant differences between the means of the students' scores of the experimental group's reading test related to their gender?
- Is there any statistical significant differences between the means of the two groups (experimental and control) in the questionnaire of the attitudes towards the strategy related to their gender?

### **Hypotheses of the Study**

- Using the cooperative learning strategy has no effect on 9<sup>th</sup> grade students English reading skills in Yemeni Private schools (Alamana).
- Learning by using cooperative learning strategy has an effect on enhancing the positive attitudes towards the strategy.
- There is no statistical significant difference between the means of the scores of the students of the reading posttest

of the experimental group related to their gender.

- There is no statistical significant difference between the means of the scores of the experimental group students in the questionnaire of the attitude towards the strategy related to gender.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This study aims at

- Finding out the effect of using cooperative learning strategy on English reading skills of first secondary students in Alamana Private schools.
- Discovering the extent of the effect of using cooperative learning strategy on developing students' positive attitudes towards this strategy.
- Highlighting the attitudes of 9<sup>th</sup> grade students in Alamana public schools towards it.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

### **This Study is Significant in Sense it**

- Helps curriculum designers when designing the textbooks to design some activities as group work activities so that they can work in groups and not as individuals. Accordingly, such activities will motivate student to learn.
- Helps teachers of English to be motivated to use such strategy to make English class more interesting and active and give students more opportunities to participate and has active roles.

## **DEFINITIONS OF TERMS**

### **Cooperative Learning Strategy**

Bolukbas & et. Al (2011) defined cooperative learning as : " a process through which students with various abilities, gender, nationalities and different levels of social skills carry out their learning process by working in small groups and helping each other

Wichadee (2012)defined Cooperative learning is one strategy for group instruction which is under the learner-centred approach.

According to Johnson,et al. (2000) cooperative learning is —the instructional use of small groups so thatstudents work together to maximize their own and each other’s learning.

In this study, of all those cooperative learning techniques, “Ask Together - Learn Together” is used because this technique consists of instructional tasks which help the development and evaluation of comprehension skills.

## **ATTITUDES**

### **Hashemi (2005) Defines Attitude Towards the Subject as" The Acceptance of the Subject**

According to Collins English Dictionary (2003) , an attitudeis defined as the way a person views something or tends to behave towards it, often in an evaluative way.

**Attitude Towards the Strategy:** It is defined by the researcher as the attitude which the researcher attempts to develop in this study is students' attitude towards the strategy as a result of teaching reading skill depending on the cooperative learning strategy. Or it is the way the person views or evaluate something.

## READING SKILL

### Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to:-

- using Cooperative learning Strategy in for the experimental group and using the traditional method in teaching the control group.
- the ninth grade private schools (Alamana) (Aljeel Aljadeed (girls) and Al-Rasala private (boys) schools)
- Units (fourth, fifth and sixth) of Crescent book of the English course (Book 3).
- It was limited to the second semester of the academic year (2014 –2015).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### What is Cooperative Learning?

According to (Johnson, David W. - And Others , 1992) , Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning.

Cooperative Learning is a part of a group of teaching/learning techniques where students interact with each other to acquire and practice the elements of a subject matter and to meet common learning goals. It is much more than just putting students into groups and hoping for the best. (Macpherson, 2007).

Panitz, (1996) also defined it as a set of processes which help people interact together in order to accomplish a specific goal or develop an end product which is usually content specific. It is a learner-centered more than it is teacher-centered.

### Principles of Cooperative Learning

Cooperative Learning models according to Macpherson (2007) include a lot of things as: group task, positive independence, interpersonal cooperative skill building, participation, learners and teachers.

### Types of Cooperative Learning

There are 3 basic types of cooperative learning groups: *base, formal and informal*. *Base groups* are structured after the instructor knows the learners and can choose the most socially isolated learners in the classroom. These learners are then placed in groups with 2 or 3 supportive, caring, and task-oriented learners. The function of base groups is mostly for social support. They meet on a regular basis and remain intact for weeks, a semester, an entire school year, or longer.

*Formal groups* may be randomly chosen or assigned by the instructor based on academic ability , with a high, medium and low achieving learner in each group. These groups stay together for a curriculum unit in length, approximately 2-3 weeks.

*Informal groups* are randomly selected by the instructor using any number of methods. Informal groups stay together for a day or two. The message to the learners is that they will get to work with everyone in the class sooner or later (Jones&et al, 1994).

### **Techniques of Cooperative Learning**

- Seminar
- Syndicates
- Three-Step Interview Kagan (1989).
- Think-Pair-SHARE Frank Layan (1981).
- Dyadic Essay Confrontation (DEC). Shernan (1991).
- Jigsaw Elliot Aronson (1960).
- Buzz Groups
- Snowball
- Paired Annotations
- Fishbowl
- Structured Problem Solving
- Roundtable
- Stand Up and Share
- Three-Stay One-Stray
- Gallery Walk
- Send or Pass a Problem
- A Student Summary of another Student's Answer
- Note Comparison or Sharing

### **The Role of the Teacher in Cooperative Learning**

- Determining the instructional objectives.
- Deciding the group size.
- Dividing the students into groups.
- Arranging the class.
- Planning the educational materials to provide dependence.

- Giving the roles for the group members in order to provide dependence.
- Explaining the academic work.
- Creating the positive objective dependence.
- Individual evaluation.
- Providing the cooperation among the groups.
- Being explained the criterions necessary for achievement.
- Determining the required behaviors for success.
- Guiding the students' behaviors.
- Helping the group work.
- Having students come together for being able to teach cooperatively.
- Finishing the lesson.
- Evaluating the performance and learning of the group.
- Forming academic contrasts (ÖZSOY, N.; & YILDIZ, N., 2004).

### **The Roles of Learners in Cooperative Learning**

There are many potential learners' roles, but the most common include:

- Facilitator: a person responsible for ensuring that the group stays on task.
- Recorder: a person responsible for writing down group answers and decisions.
- Summarizer: a person responsible for summarizing the group answers
- Reporter: a person responsible for conveying the group's ideas to another group.
- Time-keeper : a person responsible for checking the time left to finish the task.
- questioner : a person responsible for asking questions)
- praiser : a person responsible for an encouraging atmosphere with praising words.  
([www.du.edu.om/.../march%2019%20pdf/](http://www.du.edu.om/.../march%2019%20pdf/))

### **Advantage of Cooperative Learning**

Cooperative learning Strategy is characterized by:

- Learners learn from one another, learn the material covered at a deeper level and feel better about themselves and their interactions with their peers.
- Cooperative learning can be used successfully with a variety of other teaching strategies.
- Learners learn some social skills such as problem solving, criticizing ideas and not people, paraphrasing, asking

questions, giving direction to the group's work, and building on each other's information.

- Helping learners learn to cooperate in their groups gives them valuable life-long learning skills.
- Instructors will eventually be able to cover more material at a t deeper level with learners who will also enjoy the learning process.(Jones, et al. , 1994)

## THE DEFINITION OF READING SKILLS

### Strategies for Developing Reading Skills

Strategies that can help students read more quickly and effectively according to the National Capital Language Resource Center,(2004) include: previewing, predicting, skimming and scanning, guessing from context, and paraphrasing.

## CLASSROOM READING PROCEDURES

### Milevica(2010) Classified Classroom Reading Procedures Into Three Stages

- *Pre-reading*: as prediction, word association, discussions, and text surveys.
- *While-reading*: as list of questions, scanning & skimming, work out meaning of unfamiliar words, pattern study guides, summarizing, clarifying, and questioning,
- *Post-reading*: asreview of the content, work on grammar, vocabulary in context /word roots, writing assignment, discussions, debates, role-plays, and project work.

### Previous Studies

**Wachyunni (2015):** tried to(1) transfer effects of scaffolding on reading comprehension in cooperative and individual learning conditions, (2) immediate effects of scaffolding on reading comprehension in cooperative and individual learning conditions, (3) effects of scaffolding on vocabulary retention in cooperative and individual learning conditions, (4) effects of scaffolding on reading comprehension and vocabulary gain in the lower and higher ability students, (5) the relationship between ATGW, reading comprehension, and vocabulary gain in cooperative learning conditions, and (6) effects of individual accountability and group processing on reading comprehension and vocabulary gain. The results showed that, first, transfer effects of scaffolding both in the cooperative and individual learning condition was visible in the improvement of reading comprehension skills and gain. The greatest effect was in the individual learning condition. This suggests that the use of scaffolding worksheets experimented with in the current study, which consisted of comprehension questions that foster content learning of the texts, is more effective in an individual scaffolding classroom. Second, scaffolding either in cooperative or individual learning conditions provides no difference in immediate effect on reading comprehension. As indicated from the mean differences between SCL, SIL, and IL groups, there was no difference in effect. This suggests that the use of scaffolding worksheets experimented with in the current study provide a significant effect after the interventions, which I have called a transfer effect. Third, scaffolding provides a differential effect on reading comprehension gain for the lower and higher ability students in the SCL and SIL groups.

**The Ststudy of Farzaneh and Nejadansari (2014):** contributed to the studies conducted for investigating the efficiency of different models of reading instruction. The aim of this paper was to investigate students' attitude towards using cooperative language learning techniques for reading instruction. Although cooperative methods are becoming more

prevalent in private language schools, there are few studies regarding evaluating the students' attitude towards using cooperative learning for instructing reading comprehension in Iranian context. Evaluation of students' attitude towards the cooperative language learning in this research project was conducted using a survey questionnaire. The results of quantitative part of the study revealed that the participants generally tend towards supporting the implementation of cooperative strategies in teaching and learning reading comprehension.

**Shafqat and Ahmed (2014):** in their study focused to find the effect of cooperative learning and traditional learning on the reading skill of the students of 8th class. It was an experimental and its sample size was 128 students. Sixty-four students were included in each of the experimental and control group. Pre-test, post-test equivalent group design was used. Treatment of planned cooperative learning (STAD) was provided to experimental group while control group was taught by using traditional method. At the end of treatment, a teacher made post-test was administered to measure the achievement of the students. To determine the effect of cooperative learning on the reading comprehension the significance of difference between the scores of groups at 0.05 level was tested by applying t-test and analysis of variance. Data analysis reveals that cooperative learning was more effective instructional paradigm for English as compared to the traditional method of teaching.

**The Study of Bhlool (2013):** aimed at investigating the effect of using differentiated instruction strategy on developing ninth grades' English comprehension skills at Gaza UNRWA schools. To achieve its aim, two tools were used, a questionnaire to determine the degree of importance of the reading comprehension skills and an achievement test (Pre & post test). The sample was chosen purposively in which the researcher chose New Gaza Prep Boys "c" for the experiment and randomly chose two classes from the ninth grade classes. The sample of the study was 70 male students, (36) in the experimental and (34) in the control. The results were statistically analyzed to be compared with the post-test results. using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings of this study revealed that there were significant differences between the mean scores attained by the experimental group and those by the control group in favor of the experimental group in all skills. In the light of these results, the researcher recommends that EFL Palestinian teachers should apply differentiated instruction strategy to develop reading comprehension skills.

**Karacop & Et Al (2013)** aimed determining the effect of jigsaw cooperative learning and computer animation techniques on academic achievements of first year university students attending classes in which the unit of chemical bonding is taught within the general chemistry course and these students' learning of the particulate nature of matter of this unit. 115 first-year science education students were chosen as the sample of this study who attended the classes in which the unit of chemical bonding was taught in a university Faculty of Education during the 2009-2010 academic year. The Test of Scientific Reasoning, the Purdue Spatial Visualization Test: Rotations, the Chemical Bonding Academic Achievement Test, and the Particulate Nature of Matter Test in Chemical Bonding (CbPNMT) were the tools of collecting the data of this study. The study was carried out in three different groups. One of the groups was randomly assigned to the jigsaw group, the second was assigned to the animation group (AG), and the third was assigned to the control group, in which the traditional teaching method was applied. The data obtained with the instruments were evaluated using descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVA, and MANCOVA. The findings of this study revealed that the teaching of chemical bonding via the animation and jigsaw techniques was more effective than the traditional teaching method in increasing academic achievement. The findings from the CbPNMT, also revealed that the students from the AG were more successful in terms of



correct understanding of the particulate nature of matter.

**The Study of Korkmaz (2012)** aimed at determining students' attitudes towards online cooperative learning. It also aimed at developing an attitude scale in order to specify students' attitudes towards online cooperative learning. 559 students were selected as the sample of the first application of this study and 242 were chosen for the second one. The results provided evidence that the Online Cooperative Learning Attitude Scale (OCLAS) is a valid and reliable scale that can be used in order to determine students' attitudes towards cooperative learning in online environments.

**Hwang & Et Al (2012)** in his study investigated programming learning behavior of students and its relationship with learning performance. The results of this study revealed that most of students perceived that learning activity and the WPASC were useful for cooperative programming learning. The results also showed that there was no effect for problem solving activity on students' learning.

**The Study of Cole, Karen Sanderson, (2012)** examined the impact of cooperative learning. Students of University of the West in the context of the lecture and tutorial sessions as students worked toward the production of a credited expository assignment. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to assess student feedback through questionnaires, peer feedback, and group performance on the credited assignment. The study confirmed that clear guidelines, practical-based content, and multiple opportunities to practice are significant in maximizing cooperative learning opportunities. However, cooperative learning cannot completely militate against the individual or collective disadvantages of weak language skills.

**Dyson & Et Al (2012) Aimed At Outlining An** alternate approach to educating Year 9 students in a residential setting. The School for Student Leadership (SSL) in Victoria, Australia, provides a nine-week program focusing on leadership, relationship-building and self-awareness. A mixed methods approach was used to collect data through surveys and focus group interviews relating to student perceptions of their educational experience at the SSL. The findings of the qualitative method presented suggest that all five elements of cooperative learning, as theorized by Johnson and Johnson (1989; 2009), feature in students' discussions of their experiences and that cooperative learning within this context provides a unique platform for the development of positive attitudes toward learning and engagement.

**Ebrahim (2012):** aimed at comparing between the effects of two methods of teaching--teacher-centered and cooperative learning--on students' science achievement and use of social skills. 163 female were chosen as the sample of this study in 8 intact grade 5 classes who were assigned to 2 instructional methods and were taught an identical science unit by 4 classroom teachers. A test was used as the tool for collecting the data of this study. The results of the analysis of the achievement test scores and the social skills survey responses revealed that cooperative learning strategies have significantly ( $p > 0.05$ ) more positive effects on both students' achievement and social skills than teacher-centered strategies.

#### **Boukbass & Et. Al (2011)**

This study was carried out in order to identify the efficiency and the effects of cooperative learning techniques on the reading skills of the students who learn Turkish as a second language. A total of 40 students (20 subjects in experimental group, 20 subjects in control group), who learn Turkish as a second language at Istanbul University Language

Center, participated in this study which was done in accordance with the "pre-test post-test control group" model as one of the experimental research designs. In the experimental group, cooperative learning techniques were used for reading comprehension activities, while traditional teaching model was followed in the control group. The data were gathered through the "Reading Comprehension Skills Achievement Test" developed by the researchers, and a number of suggestions were made to develop reading skills in teaching Turkish as a foreign language.

**Or Kan&Soh (2011) In His Study Aimed At** developing a cooperative learning environment to promote an active learning environment of smart schools in Malaysia. The core purpose of this study is to establish the impact on student learning, their perceptions and learning experiences of the cooperative learning environment using web 2.0 tools among the smart secondary schools students in Malaysia. The findings of this study were encouraging as the students managed to cope with each other to reach their common goal. The usage of blogs acts as an important tool to enhance team cooperation and to foster a learning community within the class.

**Champion(2011):** in his quasi-experimental study examined the impact of cooperative learning assessment on student achievement. It also aimed at determining the relationship between teacher-assigned group/ and group-elected laboratory positions. Results of ANCOVA analyses indicated no significance difference in the adjusted scores between teacher-assigned versus group-elected laboratory positions within structured laboratory groups on the academic achievement of Chemistry I students as measured by a standardized pretest/posttest while using the cooperative learning assessment. The results revealed that the group-assigned students improved better than the teacher-assigned students had no significant improvements.

**Jalilifar (2010):** investigated the impact of Student Team Achievement Divisions (STAD) and Group Investigation (GI), which are two techniques of Cooperative Learning, on students' reading comprehension achievement of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). After administering an English Language Proficiency test (Fowler and Coe, 1976), 90 homogeneous pre-intermediate female college students were selected, and they were randomly assigned to three groups: two experimental and one control. The experimental groups (A and B) received instruction according to STAD and GI techniques respectively whereas the control group was instructed via the Conventional Instruction (CI) technique which followed an individualistic instructional approach based on the exercises in their regular textbook. A post-test was administered, and its results were analyzed through a one-way ANOVA and post hoc Scheffe statistics. The results revealed that STAD is a more effective technique in improving EFL reading comprehension achievement whereas GI and CI did not enhance reading comprehension significantly. Team rewards, as one of the central concepts of STAD, may have a strong impact on learners' performance in reading comprehension.

## DISCUSSIONS OF THE PREVIOUS STUDIES

Through the previous studies, the following conclusions were concluded:

- Cooperative strategy is important teaching English language skills.
- This strategy helps in motivating and encouraging learners to learn.
- Using such strategy help in improving the achievement of students better than many other traditional methods.

## METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

### Variables of the Study

The variables of this study are:

- **Independent Variable:** In this study, the independent variables is
  - the cooperative learning strategy that help the learners developing the reading skill.
  - The gender.
- **Dependent variable:**the dependent variables are
  - Students' achievement of the student in reading skill.
  - their attitudes towards strategy.

### Type And Method Of The Study

- **Type of the Study**

This study is a quantitative study in which its data was analysed through the use of the statistical package for social science (SPSS) in analyzing the collected data by means of a test and a close-ended questionnaire to answer the questions of the study.

- **Method of the study**

This study is a quasi-experimental. It is 2x2 design. Thus, it has two groups; experimental group and control ones. Moreover, it has pre-posttest and a close-ended questionnaire to highlight the learners' attitude towards the strategy.

### Population and Sample of the Study

- **Population of the Study:**

The target population of this study was 9<sup>th</sup> grade student of primary schools , AL-Amana'a private schools (2014-2015).

### Sample of the Study

The sample of the study was forty selected randomly. Those 40 students were assigned intentionally into 20 students for each group(experimental group and the control one).

### Groups Equivalence

The equivalence of the two groups (the experimental group and the control one) of the reading skills was tested. So that they were equivalent since the significance value is (0.63 ) more than 0.05.

**Table 1: Means of Scores of the Experimental Group and Control Group in the Pretest**

S	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig.
Exp.	20	11.7	3.3	0.48	38	0.63
Con.	20	11.2	3.2			

In addition, the researcher tested the equivalence of the two groups (the experimental group and the control one) in their attitudes towards English course and the result was that high positive attitudes in favor of the control group.

**Table 2: Means of Scores of the Experimental Group and Control Group in the Questionnaire**

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig.
Experimental	20	2.96	0.34	-2.23	38	0.032
Control	20	3.19	0.29			

### Data Collection Tool

For the purpose of achieving the aims of the study, two data collection tools were used. These were as:

- **A pre-post Test:** was purposed to highlight the effect of using cooperative learning strategy on students' English reading skills.
- **A close-ended questionnaire:** to highlight the students' attitude towards the strategy. It was a ready-made one (Salven's Strategy) used by Shamsan Alhusaini in his study "the effect of using Slaven's Strategy (Cooperative Learning) on Second Secondary Students' Attitudes Towards Learning English in Yemen".

### STRUCTURE OF THE TOOLS

#### The Test Consisted of two Questions

Question one was based on a passage. This question consisted of 7 true or false items. Students were asked to read the passage same and then determine whether the items are true or false.

Question two was based on the same passage. The question consisted of 12 multiple choice items. Students were asked to read the passage and choose the correct answer.

#### THE QUESTIONNAIRE CONSISTED OF 39 ITEMS WITH LINKERT SCALE (STRONGLY AGREE- AGREE- NOT SURE-DISAGREE- STRONGLY DISAGREE)

#### Validity and Reliability of the Tools of the Study

The two tools were given to some experts in the field to check their suitability and relatedness to the objectives of the study.

For checking the reliability of the test and the questionnaire used in this study, Alpha formula was applied. The reliability of the test and the questionnaire was found to be at level 0.67.

#### Treatment Procedures

The following procedures were done:

- The pretest was given to the two groups of the study (the experimental group and the control one) just two days before the experiment.
- The 20 students of the experimental group were divided into homogenous 4 subgroups, girls and boys as (excellent-very good-intermediate- weak) (5 Students in each). These groups were divided by using their achievement marks of the English subject of the previous semester (first semester).

- All the students of the control group together were taught together by using the traditional method of teaching.
- All the wanted activities, tasks , and exercises and that they were supposed to be taught in each class were distributed for students before classes to be aware of what they were supposed to learn and do.
- All the instructions of the wanted learning from students, the division of class time, what is supposed to be done by each one in each subgroup and by the group as a whole, and the units of the course included were known from the beginning.
- This process (the treatment) took about eight weeks and was done by one of the researcher's M.Edu. Students after training her on all the procedures and steps required in the experiment (5 periods a week-40 minutes for each class).
- After finishing the experiment, a posttest was given for the two groups of the study (the experimental and the control ones) to highlight whether there was an effect for using the cooperative learning strategy on students' English reading skills. Also, a close-ended questionnaire was given to the same groups to see the their attitude towards the strategy.

**Data Analysis and Results Interpretation**

The collected data of the test and the questionnaire was analyzed by means of SPSS program in which t-test, means, SD, and significant values were concluded. Through the analysis, the following results were concluded:-

**The First Hypothesis**

" Using the cooperative learning strategy has no effect for using the cooperative learning strategy on developing the 9<sup>th</sup> grade students' English reading skills in Yemeni private schools (Alamana)".

For highlighting whether this hypothesis was true or not, the data of the test was analyzed to find out the effect of this strategy on students' English reading skill. A t-test analysis for the data collected by means of pre-posttest was done to see whether there was an effect before using the strategy and after using it. The following results in table 3 below were revealed:

**Table 3: Means of Both Experimental Group and Control one in the Pretest and Posttest**

	Group	N	Mean	Std.	T	Df	Sig.
Pretest	Experimental	20	11.75	3.35	0.48	38	0.63
	Control	20	11.25	3.16			
Posttest	Experimental	20	14.30	2.68	3.52	35.34	0.001
	Control	20	10.80	3.55			

It is clear from the results shown in table 3 above that there was an effect for using the cooperative learning strategy on developing 9<sup>th</sup> grade students' English reading skills in Yemeni private schools. The results of the pretest showed that there was not any statistically significant difference between the two groups at level (0.05). This might be because they are in the same level, under the same condition, and in the same school. But the post test results revealed statistically significant difference at level (0.05) between the two groups for the sake of the experimental group that was taught by using the cooperative learning strategy with a significant value (0.001). This is because the mean of the

experimental (14.30) is higher than that of the control one (10.80). It means that this hypothesis was rejected. Such results indicates that the first question of this study is answered positively which means that there is an effect for the use of the cooperative strategy on students' reading skills development. This might be because students were exposed to different activities and tasks that support pair and group work and classes were interesting; so that, such environment affected on their performance positively. But that interesting and active environment was not in those classes of the students of the control group taught by using the traditional method. The results of Kuracop & et al, 2013; Ebrahim, 2012; Al-Aleyee, 2009; and Al-shyee, 2007 emphasize the results of this study which revealed that teaching via cooperative learning strategy is more effective than using the traditional teaching method in increasing students' academic achievement.

### The Second Hypothesis

**" Learning by using cooperative learning strategy has an effect on enhancing positive attitudes towards the strategy"**

This hypothesis is a reflection for the second question of the study which is *" What is the effect of using cooperative learning strategy in English classes on students' developing students' positives attitudes towards it?"* The data collected by means of a close-ended questionnaire after the experiment was analyzed to compare between the students' attitudes of both groups (the experimental and the control one). This is to see whether there was an effect on the attitude of students' taught by using the cooperative strategy positively or not. The result was shown in the following table:-

**Table 4: Means of the Attitudes of the Learners Towards the Strategy (Experimental Group and Control Group after The Experiment)**

Group	N	Mean	Std.	T	Df	Sig.
Experimental	20	3.31	0.27	2.30	38	0.027
Control	20	3.12	0.23			

The results of the questionnaire reveal that there is an effect for the use of cooperative learning strategy on students' attitude towards the method. This is clear in the statistical difference between the results of the two groups of the study given after the experiment for the sake of the experimental group that was taught by using the cooperative learning strategy. This is because the mean of the experimental group is higher (3.31) than that of the control one (3.12) with significant value (0.027). This means that the hypothesis was true in which learners who learned by using the cooperative learning strategy have positive attitude towards the strategy more than that of those who were taught by using the traditional method. This might be because students of the experimental group were interested in the program and the strategy used; so that their attitude towards it was positive. Also, because learners can build good relationships with each other. Moreover, they have good impression about the teacher and the course. That can take place because this strategy has a great role in decreasing the tension and decreasing the motivation of the learners (Jaccobs & et al, 2013; Ebrahim, 2012, and AL-Hussainin, 2010). Tarhan & et al, 2012; Cole, 2012; Bohukbas & et al, 2011; and Al-Alyee, 2009 said that learners may have positive attitude towards cooperative learning strategy because they are given practical based content, clear guidelines, and multiple opportunities to practice.

### The Third Hypothesis

**"There is no statistical significant difference between the means of the scores of the students reading posttest of the experimental group related to gender"**.

The means of the male and female students of the experimental group were compared by using t-test to highlight whether there was statistical significant difference between male and female students in the results of the posttest. The results indicate that there was no any statistically significant difference at level (0.05) in the test related to gender. This result is shown in table 5 below:-

**Table 5: Means of Scores of Both Male and Female of the Experimental Group in the Post Test**

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig.
male	10	14.60	2.171	0.340
female	10	14.00	3.197	

This results might be because all the students were distributed well in homogenous groups and were exposed with the same activities, tasks, and exercises. This means that this hypothesis was true in which gender makes no difference in students' achievement.

**The Fourth Hypothesis**

**"There is no statistical significant difference between the means of the scores of the experimental group students in the questionnaire of the attitude towards the strategy related to gender".**

Such hypothesis was tested by giving students a close-ended questionnaire to check their attitude towards the cooperative learning strategy. Then, t- test was used to compare the means of male and female students to see whether there is any statistical significant difference between the two groups. Such results are in the following table:-

**Table 6: Means of Scores of Both Male and Female of the Experimental Group in the Post Questionnaire**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Sig.
Male	10	3.27	0.29	0.808
female	10	3.35	0.26	

It seems from the results in table 6 above that the students' gender makes no difference in the students' answers of the close ended questionnaire which means that their attitude towards the cooperative learning strategy is the same. This might be because they were divided equally and the same tasks and activities were given to both girls and boys. And also because either girls or boys were taught by the same teacher and under the same condition.

**SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS**

The results of the study can be summarized as:

- The results indicated that the experimental group achievement in the posttest was better than that of the pretest and better than the control group. This means that there was an effect for using cooperative learning strategy on developing students' reading skills.
- The results revealed that there is a significant differences in terms of Ss' scores in reading tests and their attitudes in the questionnaire between the two for the sake of the experimental group. This means that the results led to rejecting the null hypotheses and answering the questions of the study.



## RECOMMENDATION

- The results of the study revealed that cooperative learning has increased students' achievement in reading skill. Therefore, a replication of the study could be conducted in other skills such as listening , writing, and speaking.
- EFLteachers are encouraged to teach reading through cooperative learning strategy.
- Textbooks should involve some group activities and cooperative learning strategies in general.
- Some training workshops should be held to trainteachers on how to use cooperative learning strategy.

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