Cooperative Learning Approach to an English Academic Reading Course

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Abstract
This research intended to get a description of the Cooperative Learning application using Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD) type to improve students' motivation and independence learning level. The applied research method was classroom action research. The observations have been done during seven cycles to research the subjects; those are students of Basic Academic Reading Class C of 2018/2019 at the department of management, faculty of economy, Universitas Islam Indonesia. The result displayed that the number of students achieving maximum scores (A) has significantly increased, up to 31% of previous year as the baseline. Meanwhile, the average students' attendances in the entire semester have also increased up to 13% of the previous year baseline. The questionnaire was also distributed before and after cycles to measure the changes in students' perception of their perceived motivation and independent learning level. The result indicated the increase in average score of all variables. However, the result of the independent sample t-test showed that sig (2-tailed) score of students' motivation and independence learning level have significant differences. Thus, it is concluded that the Cooperative Learning model on Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD) type has a positive and significant impact on developing student's motivation and independent learning level.
Keywords: Academic Reading; Classroom Action Research; Cooperative Learning; STAD

INTRODUCTION

The successful students in tertiary education are largely determined by their basic capacities in academic skills. These skills comprise reading, writing, critical thinking, presentation, and media literacy (Rushton, 2007; Alexander, Sloan, Hughes, & Ashby, 2017; Kourakli et al., 2017; Lander, Seeho, & Foster, 2019; Trigo, Pellerano, & Jara, 2014).

However, not many do universities teach it intensively. Reading skills is one of them, particularly reading academic texts in the English language.

In many universities, reading skills are considered an urgent requirement, because reading skills will help students to access various information resources. As a result, they will be able to process every information. Thus, the ability to understand manuscripts in the English language must be an important factor that drives learning success. Moreover, the need for reading skills in Higher Education is much different than in Middle School. (Sidek, 2014; (Goux, Gurgand, & Maurin, 2017; Tang et al., 2017) on the other hand, reading skills is also the most frequently used skill in students' academic life.

Therefore, the students of higher education will find serious obstacles without enough reading skills in their academic life (Al-Jarrah, 2018; (Feragen, Aukner, Særvold, & Hide, 2017; Woodruff Carr, Fitzroy, Tierney, White-Schwoch, & Kraus, 2017; Yeganeh & Malekzadeh, 2015), since they are immensely required for accessing numerous academic references; such as textbooks, journals, and other written learning resources. Ironically, various studies showed that most universities' first-level students have insufficient academic reading skills. Thus, there are still many students who apply middle school reading strategies that only touches the surface (Hermida, 2009; Denton et al., 2015; Manoli, Papadopoulou, & Metallidou, 2016).

Basic Academic Reading course, the subject of the research, aims at developing reading skills for academic needs. This course contains material for developing skills, methods, strategies, and practice of reading academic texts in the English language. As a new subject, this course has not yet found an established teaching model, so that each teacher uses their own teaching method.

Thus, the formulation of the problem is: (1) how is the implementation of cooperative learning on the Students Teams Achievement Division (STAD) type in the Basic Academic Reading course? (2) Does the implementation of cooperative learning on the Students Teams Achievement Division (STAD) type significantly improve the students' learning motivation? (3) Does the implementation of cooperative learning on the Students Teams Achievement Division (STAD) type significantly improve the students' independent learning?

Based on those problems, the researchers chose the cooperative learning approach by using the Students Team Achievement Division (STAD) type. In general, cooperative learning can be indicated as a learning plan organized for a diverse group of students. Everyone depends on each other. Thus, as a member of group learning, each student can interact with other

members and practice together with the elements of learning material (Jamaludin & Mokhtar, 2018; Amornsinlaphachai, 2014) .

In higher education context, many researchers also usually show that group learning provides more academic and cognitive benefits; introducing students to learning and achievement, improving critical thinking skills, introducing far greater transfer of learning, and also helping to foster social skills for instance communication, presentation, problem-solving, leadership, delegation, and organization (Katherine McWhaw & Abrami, 2003; (Fonteyne, Duyck, & De Fruyt, 2017; Fuller, Bein, Bridges, Kim, & Rabe-Hesketh, 2017).

The Cooperative Learning Theory by Student Teams Achievement Division (STAD) developed by Robert E. Slavin contained six main phases (Slavin, 1995; Idress & Chew, 2018; Nair & Sanai, 2018).

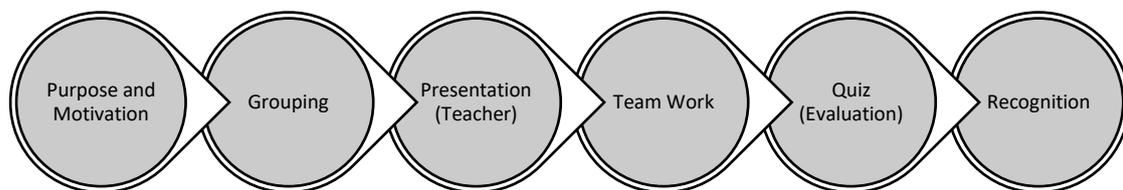Purpose and Motivation | Grouping | Presentation (Teacher) | Team Work | Quiz (Evaluation) | Recognition

Figure 1. Student Teams Achievement Divisions Cycle Process

Thus, the STAD type of cooperative learning is an approach that drives the students to be involved in various activities and interactions to encourage among others in mastering the subject matter and to gain the maximum achievement. In addition, this learning also encourages student learning independence in the collaborative process of achieving learning outcomes.

Many types of research have been done on cooperative learning in the classroom. The studies held to measure the effectiveness of the approach to support students' performance for any academic results, for instance, academic accomplishment, race relationships, gender relations, self-esteem, liking of class, and student attendance. However, researches have been done mostly at the elementary level. There were few kinds of research held at the secondary level and even at the upper secondary of social studies class and college students (Amornsinlaphachai, 2014; Nair & Sanai, 2018).

Applying a cooperative learning approach has been done by Alghamdy (2019) to identify students' experiences and opinions in the English lesson classroom. The participants were 10th-grade male students at the secondary level in Al- Baha city. However, the research didn't specify any type of cooperative approach used in this action research and its impact on certain

English skills such as reading, writing, speaking, or listening. The result displayed that cooperative learning could enable students' targeted skills, making new relationships, performing different opinions, developing friendships, motivation, and different views.

The study was also done by Yu (2019) and Essien (2015) on the effectiveness of the cooperative learning approach in English reading class and General English at higher education. The research proved that the approach has a positive effect on the students' motivation, confidence, learning interest, and learning atmosphere. Nevertheless, the study was held at a higher education level, but it didn't apply a specific type of cooperative learning approach. On the other hand, it didn't examine its impact on the aspect of students' independence in the English reading class.

Many researchers have applied the specific technique of cooperative learning, the Students Teams Achievement Division (STAD). One of them was Mufidah (2013) and Tohamba (2017) who examined the contribution of STAD to improve students' reading comprehension. The research was held at a secondary level class. The result displayed that STAD technique has a positive influence and recommended as the technique in teaching reading class. However, those researches haven't comprehended the impact of the technique to the level of students' motivation and independent level at academic reading class.

METHODOLOGY

This approach combined three fundamental aspects of research works: participation, action, and research (Chevalier & Daniel J. Buckles, 2008). Wadsworth in Kesby, Kindon, & Pain (2007) defined it as an approach involving researchers and participants who work together to examine problematic situations or take actions to change for better. Kemmis and McTaggart in Damopolii (2014) introduced Participatory Action Research class action by applying a learning cycle consisting of several stages; planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.
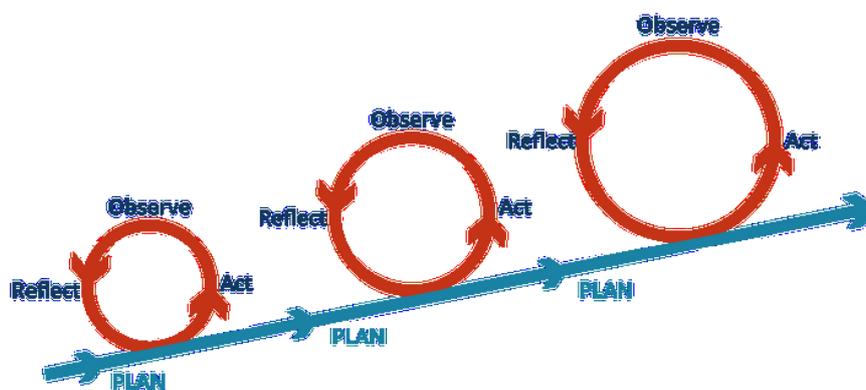

Figure 2. Participation Action Research Cycles *(O'Byrne, 2016)*

The data was collected through the observation stage of seven learning cycles. The observations were designed to collect the data made through research instruments in the form of pre-test and post-test, mid and final tests, and questionnaires on student perceptions of their motivation and independence learning level. Finally, the result of the questionnaire data was analyzed by an independent sample *t-test* to determine whether two related samples have significantly different values. An independent sample *t-test* was done by comparing the difference between the two average values.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

At the planning stage, the researcher has implemented several activities as preparation for teaching implementation, including; lesson plans, providing worksheets, and making observation instruments. The lesson plans are designed according to the Lesson Plan of the Semester (RPS) by STAD type cooperative learning. Plans for the stages of lecture including; learning goals and motivation delivery, presentation material, organizing students' groups, group learning activities, working individual quizzes, evaluations, and conclusions, awarding the best (Super) group.

The lecturer has done several things to ensure students' preparation; informing action research activity to the students at the previous meeting. Then dividing the student group based on their diverse background and language skills. During the implementation phase, the research was held in seven meetings or cycles divided into two steps. First, during the first mid-term, three learning cycles were conducted, while in the second half, four cycles of learning models were conducted. Meanwhile, the class used was class C of Basic Academic Reading courses.

However, as part of the observation stage, first, the student's achievement in each learning activity was observed by reviewing the percentage of students' scores that experienced an increase from pre-test to post-test. The test was utilizing online Kahoot and Google Classroom to create a dynamic atmosphere and time effectiveness. So, the test results can be immediately known by both lecturers and students.

To determine the score increase, it can be seen how much the student's score difference between pre-test and post-test. The results of the comparison of the two scores are at Figure 3. It showed that in five cycles; 1 (98%), 2 (72%), 3 (86%), 5 (70%), and 6(77%), most students' score has increased. In one cycle; 4 (25%) most of the has decreased, while in one cycle 7 the number was equal (50%).
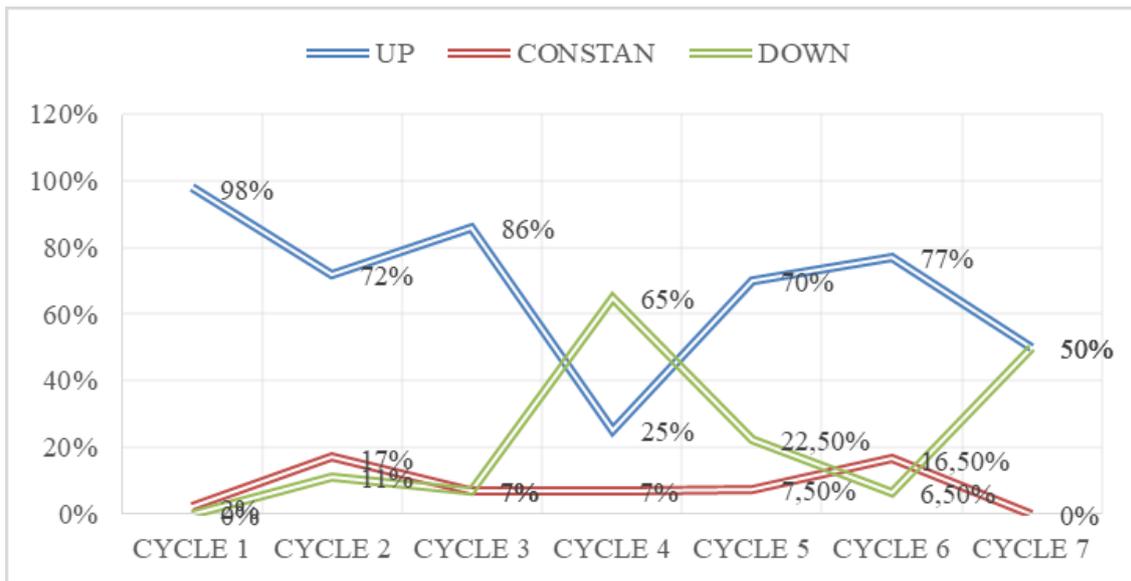
Figure 3. Distribution of students' daily score improvement

In the second observation, during the semester, students' learning achievement was observed through 3 (three) formative assignments within 80 points as a baseline. The results of the observation showed that the number of students achieving all formative assignment score $>= 80$ was 48%, 44%, and 50%.
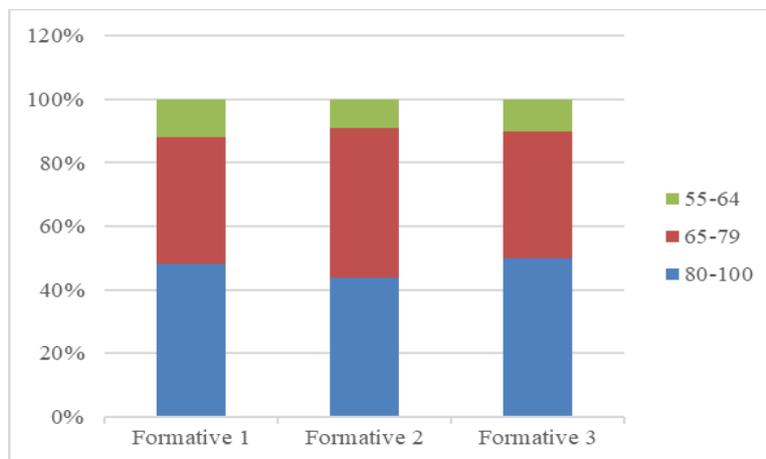

Figure 4. Distribution of formative Assignment Score

The third observation, on students' attendance and final grade, was done by comparing the percentage of students' attendance and final grade score between recent and previous academic year during one term. The observations showed that the average of students' attendance during the recent semester was 26 meetings or 93% of the total 28 meetings. This showed an increase in students' attendance in the classroom up to 13% compared to the previous year as a baseline, 22 meetings or 80% of 28 meetings. Meanwhile, the result of students' grades at the end of the semester showed that 23/46 students or 52% of students got

grade>= 80 (A). These results increased by 31% compared to the previous academic year's baseline as 9 students achieved score >= 80 (A).

Reflection was also done to determine the impact of the STAD cooperative learning model on students' learning motivation and independence. In addition, this stage was also conducted to find the constraints as the recommendations for improvement in the next implementation.

To reveal the effect of STAD technique on students' learning motivation and independence, questionnaires were distributed at the beginning and the end of the learning cycles, including students' perceptions of their motivation and independent learning, distributed before and after following the STAD cooperative learning for seven cycles.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Pre-Test on Students' Learning Motivation

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Keingintahuan terhadap materi	36	3	4	3,01	,232
Partisipasi pada proses belajar	36	3	4	3,19	,401
Penyelesaian tugas	36	3	4	3,86	,351
Dukungan orang tua	36	2	4	3,36	,543
Valid N (listwise)	36				

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Post-Test on Students' Learning Motivation

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Keingintahuan terhadap materi	31	3	5	4,00	,447
Partisipasi pada proses belajar	31	3	4	3,61	,495
Penyelesaian tugas	31	3	5	4,26	,575
Dukungan orang tua	31	4	5	4,10	,301
Valid N (listwise)	31				

It is indicated the level of students' learning motivation level, before and after implementation of the STAD cycle. Curiosity on the material variable with an average score of 4.00, at the time of the post-test, had an increase from the average pre-test 3.06. Furthermore, the participation in the learning process variable with an average of 3.61, had an increase at the post-test from the average baseline score of 3.19. In the task completion variable, an average of 4.26 also increased from the average baseline score of 3.36.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Pre-Test on Students' Independent Learning

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Kemampuan mengambil keputusan	36	3	4	3,61	,494
Bertanggung jawab terhadap tugas	36	3	4	3,36	,487

	N				
Kepercayaan diri dalam menyelesaikan tugas	36	3	4	3,39	,494
Valid N (listwise)	36				

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Post-Test on Students' Independent Learning

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Kemampuan mengambil keputusan	31	3	5	4,00	,516
Bertanggung jawab terhadap tugas	31	3	5	4,03	,547
Kepercayaan diri dalam menyelesaikan tugas	31	3	5	3,81	,543
Valid N (listwise)	31				

It displayed the student's perception of their independent learning level. The ability of the decision-making variable with an average of 4.00 has increased from the pre-test score 3.61. Meanwhile, the variable of responsibility for the task with an average of 4.03 has increased from the pre-test average of 3.36. Furthermore, the variable of confidence in completing the task with an average of 3.81 has increased from the pre-test average of 3.39. These results indicated that students got an increase in perceiving each variable between before and after the learning for one semester.

To reveal the significance of the difference between pre-test and post-test result, score distribution and different test were done with the following results:

Table 5. The result of Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality distribution test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Persespsi Motivasi	Persespsi Independensi
N		67	67
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	88,52	90,07
	Std. Deviation	10,118	8,697
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	,151	,106
	Positive	,151	,106
	Negative	-,078	-,074
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1,233	,872
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		,095	,43

    a. Test distribution is Norrmal
    b. Calculated from the data

Results displayed the significance value of Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) on the motivation variable of 0.095 and the variable of independence learning was 0.433 or greater than 0.05. Based on this statistical test, it can be concluded that the data is normally distributed. Thus, the assumptions or normality requirements in the regression model have been fulfilled.

The independent sample test was also measured to determine the difference of students' perceived motivation between before and after seven learning cycles with the following results:

Table 6. Independent sample test on the perception of students' learning motivation

Group Statistics					
	Test	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Persespsi Motivasi	Pre Test	36	80,75	3,597	,599
	Post Test	31	97,55	7,311	1,313

It is showed that the number of output data for the pre-test is 36 students while the post-test is 31 students. The average score or mean perception of student motivation at the pre-test was 80.75, while at the post-test, it was 97.55. Thus, there was an increase in the average score of students' perceptions of motivation. Meanwhile, to know the level of significance level, an independent sample test was conducted with the following results.

Table 7. T-Test Statistic test result on students' learning motivation

Independent Sample Test									
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Differences	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the dirrefence	
									Lower	Upper
Persespsi Motivasi	Equal variances assumed	13,769	,000	-12,189	65	,000	-16,798	1,378	-19,551	-14,046
	Equal variances not assumed			-11.637	42,234	,000	-16,798	1,444	-19,711	-13,886

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances score was 0,000 <0.05, so it can be interpreted that the variants of pre-test and post-test data are not homogeneous. So, to reveal sig. (2-tailed) was based on Equal variances not assumed. Based on table 7, in the Equal variances not assumed section, it is known that sig. (2-tailed) equal to 0,000 <0,05, so the conclusion that there were significant differences in the average score of perceptions of students' perceived motivation between the pre-test and post-test. Meanwhile the result of the same test on students' perceived independent learning level, the result was at Table 8.

It was known that the number of output data at the pre-test was 36 students while at the post-test was 31 students. The average score of perception of students' perceived independence learning at the pre-test was 86.56 while at the post-test was 94.16. Thus, there were differences or there was an increase in the score of students' independent learning perception.

Table 8. Group statistic on students' independent learning perception

Group Statistics					
	Test	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Persespsi Independen	Pre Test	36	86,56	5,862	,977

| | | Post Test | 31 | 94,16 | 9,706 | 1,743 |

Table 9. Independent sample t-Test of independent learning perception

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Differences	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the dirrefence	
									Lower	Upper
Persespsi Independensi	Equal variances assumed	6,903	,011	-3,943	65	,000	-7,606	1,929	-11,458	-3,753
	Equal variances not assumed			-3,806	47,769	,000	-7,606	1,998	-11,624	-3,587

The value of Sig. Levene's Test for Equality of Variances was 0.011 <0.05, so it can be interpreted that the variants of the pre-test and the post-test data were not homogeneous. So, to reveal sig. (2-tailed) was based on Equal variances not assumed. From table 9, it is known that sig. (2-tailed) 0,000 <0,05, so it was concluded that there were significant differences in the average score of the perception of students' perceived independence learning between the pre-test and post-test.

Discussion

We learned that group activities were the core of STAD. It has also become the most important experience to influence students' learning engagement that significantly affected their motivation and independence during the course. These results were in line with the research conducted by Guthrie, Klauda, & Morrison (2012) which concluded that the level of student motivation was determined significantly by their learning experience in language classes (reading), art and science. The support of a teacher to actively read and participate in class also affects student engagement and achievement. Many studies also stated that motivation in learning to read is determined by among others; intrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, assignment value, peer value; As for the things that weaken are avoidance, difficulty in assignments, low grades, and friends who are not valuable (Wigfield, Cambria, & Ho, 2012).

Cooperative learning, specifically the STAD type, also contributed to improving learning dynamics through competitive activities in group work. This is very important because the spirit of competition will encourage involvement in the learning process and learning achievement. Therefore, this model is appropriate for class with heterogeneous students' composition; both in terms of capability and their socio-cultural background. These results

were also in line with the findings of the study Bibbings, Bieluga, & Mills (2018) which found that collaborative processes with each other in a team can develop creativity and independent learning abilities. This is because activities will develop students' research knowledge and skills. Competition modules can encourage them to find help outside the place of learning, promote interdisciplinary collaboration, and gain a broader understanding of real life. Meanwhile, Sommet (2015) also found that the level of competition in any department of higher education was directly related to the achievement of student learning. It was found that early students may not have a strong learning orientation and perseverance when involved in a competitive environment so that it affected their low achievement.

CONCLUSION

The final assessment proved that the implementation of cooperative learning using STAD technique at the Basic Academic Reading course has a positive impact on students' performance, especially in the level of students' motivation and independence learning. It has also confirmed that the technique was feasible to be developed in lecture activities.

Based on the experience, the number of students attending the classroom has a significant impact on the effectiveness of STAD technique, since there was an obstacle to observing the authentic assessment of the pre-test and post-test. The not conducive class has driven the student to cheat during the assessment process. Therefore it is important to consider the ratio of the number of students with the classroom widths There were less authentic assessment results to measure student progress in each cycle, due to imbalanced between the number of students and the classroom widths. STAD technique is a kind of group-based activity that demanded a small number of students. On the other hand, an interactive testing platform media was needed to deal with large class conditions; such as Kahoot and Google Form and others that have been applied in this research.

As a step of STAD technique, appreciation and recognition of student achievement were the most important factors in increasing student engagement to always be motivated and involved during learning activities. Even so, appreciation and recognition remain framed in groups to maintain the togetherness spirit in the achievement of group learning.

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