From a Traditional Learning to a Cooperative Learning Method through a Metacognitive Approach to an EFL Group-Based Project: The Case of Second Year LMD Students at the University Center Ahmed Salhi, Naama.

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ABSTRACT

This study combines together the concepts of cooperation and metacognition in an EFL classroom. The researcher attempted to investigate the effects of working with metacognitive strategies in cooperative groups on the EFL learners’ understanding and use of English tenses, as well as the development of their positive attitudes towards the cooperative approach. Accordingly, this study represents a quasi-experimental research in which the investigator opted for a pre-test post-test group research design. In addition to this research instrument, the researcher selected also a reflective questionnaire and an interview. The sample population dealt with in this study is composed of two EFL 2nd year classes at the department of English, at the University Center Ahmed Salhi, Naama. The research process, then, started first with the students sitting for a pre-test for the sake of identifying their needs; to consider in the next step. Later, during the training phase, students had lectures about English tenses, and were asked to accomplish tasks. The only difference was that students of the experimental group worked on the assigned tasks with metacognitive strategies in cooperative groups and students of the control group worked with metacognitive strategies individually. At the end, students were asked to answer the reflective questionnaire and the interview. Thus, the researcher opted for both qualitative and quantitative types of data analysis. The statistical procedures used for the analysis of the students’ scores in both the pre- and post-tests demonstrated that both methods applied to both groups were beneficial; however, students of the experimental group achieved better results. The researcher, though, could not really confirm this hypothesis since the generalization issue could not be achieved after the use of the independent samples t-test. The remaining two hypotheses, on the other hand, were confirmed as far as the analysis of the reflective questionnaire and the interview demonstrated better understanding and use of metacognitive strategies by students of the experimental group and positive attitudes towards their cooperative experience. At the end of this research work, and based on the conclusions drawn, the researcher was able to propose some important concepts and activities to be considered by teachers in their EFL classrooms.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Statement of Originality...................................................................................I
Dedication........................................................................................................II
Acknowledgements..........................................................................................III
Abstract...........................................................................................................IV
Table of Contents............................................................................................V
List of Acronyms and Abbreviations.................................................................X
List of Tables..................................................................................................XI
List of Bar-graphs............................................................................................XIII
List of Pie-charts............................................................................................XIV
List of Figures..................................................................................................XV

**General Introduction**....................................................................................1

## CHAPTER ONE

**An Account of Cooperation and Metacognition**

1.1. Introduction...............................................................................................8
1.2. Teaching EFL: *An Overview*.................................................................8
1.2.1. The Grammar-Translation Method......................................................9
1.2.2. The Direct Method.............................................................................9
1.2.3. The Audio-Lingual Method.................................................................10
1.2.4. Suggestopedia....................................................................................10
1.2.5. The Silent Way..................................................................................11
1.2.6. Total Physical Response.................................................................11
1.2.7. The Natural Approach....................................................................11
1.2.8. The Communicative Approach.........................................................12
1.2.9. The Competency-based Approach.........................................................12
1.2.10. Embodying the Spirit of Teaching Approaches.................................14
1.3. Traditional Versus Cooperative Learning..............................................14
1.4. Should-be-known Features of Cooperative Learning..............................20
1.4.1. Theoretical Rationales.......................................................................22
1.4.1.1. The Social Interdependence Theory..............................................23
1.4.1.2. The Cognitive Development Theory.............................................25
1.4.1.3. The Behavioral Learning Theory..................................................27
1.4.1.4. The Generative Learning Theory..................................................27
1.4.1.5. The Sociocognitive Learning Theory..............................................27
1.4.2. Distinctive Methods.........................................................................28
1.4.2.1. Jigsaw..........................................................................................29
1.4.2.2. Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD)...............................30
1.4.2.3. Learning Together.........................................................................31
1.4.2.4. Guided Reciprocal Peer Questioning............................................32
1.4.2.5. Reciprocal Teaching......................................................................32
1.4.3. Basic Elements..................................................................................33
1.4.3.1. Positive Interdependence...............................................................34
1.4.3.2. Individual Accountability...............................................................35
1.4.3.3. Face-to-Face Interaction.................................................................36
1.4.3.4. Social Skills....................................................................................37
1.4.3.5. Group Processing..........................................................................38
1.4.4. Main Varieties....................................................................................39
1.4.4.1. Formal Cooperative Groups.........................................................39
1.4.4.2. Informal Cooperative Groups.......................................................40
1.4.4.3. Base Cooperative Groups..............................................................40
1.4.5. Major Outcomes..............................................................................41
1.4.5.1. Effort to Achieve.............................................................................43
1.4.5.2. Interpersonal Relationships..........................................................45
1.4.5.3. Psychological Health.....................................................................46
1.5. Structuring Cooperative Groups............................................................48
Table of Contents

1.6. Reviewing Cognition and Metacognition............................................50
1.7. Raised Concepts about Metacognition............................................53
1.7.1. Metacognitive Knowledge..............................................................54
1.7.2. Metacognitive Experiences..............................................................55
1.7.3. Metacognitive Tasks (Or Goals)......................................................56
1.7.4. Metacognitive Strategies (Or Actions)............................................56
1.7.5. Metacognitive Skills........................................................................59
1.8. Metacognition in Education...............................................................60
1.9. Conclusion.........................................................................................62

CHAPTER TWO
Research Design and Methodological Framework

Introduction...............................................................................................64
2.2. Description of the Research Setting ....................................................64
2.3. Research Participants..........................................................................69
2.3.1. Profile and Sampling Technique......................................................69
2.3.2. Needs Analysis................................................................................74
2.4. Experimental Design...........................................................................74
2.5. Data Gathering: Methods and Procedures.........................................79
2.5.1. Interview.........................................................................................83
2.5.2. Learners’ Tests................................................................................90
2.5.2.1. Pre-test.........................................................................................93
2.5.2.2. Post-test.......................................................................................94
2.5.3. Reflective Questionnaire.................................................................95
2.5.4. Describing the Research Journey: Training Episodes.....................99
2.6. Conclusion.........................................................................................107
Table of Contents

CHAPTER THREE
Research Findings: Analysis and Discussion

3.1. Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 110
3.2. Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analysis: An Account ............................................. 110
3.3. Results of the Learners’ Pre-test ...................................................................................... 116
3.3.1. The Experimental Group ......................................................................................... 117
3.3.2. The Control Group .................................................................................................... 122
3.4. Results of the Learners’ Post-test ................................................................................... 128
3.4.1. The Experimental Group ......................................................................................... 128
3.4.2. The Control Group .................................................................................................... 133
3.5. Comparing the Pre-test and the Post-test Results .......................................................... 138
3.6. Results of the Reflective Questionnaire ......................................................................... 144
3.7. Results of the Interview ................................................................................................. 156
3.8. Conclusion ....................................................................................................................... 160

CHAPTER FOUR
Suggested Recommendations and Final Thoughts

4.1. Introduction ........................................................................................................................ 163
4.2. Considering Students: Learners’ Autonomy ................................................................. 163
4.3. Considering Teachers ...................................................................................................... 172
4.3.1. Teachers’ Education and Training ........................................................................... 173
4.3.2. Familiarizing Cooperative Learning ........................................................................ 177
4.4. Practical Suggestions for EFL Teachers ......................................................................... 178
# Table of Contents

4.4.1. Marginal Implementation of Cooperative Learning........................................178

4.4.2. Teaching Critical Thinking Skills..............................................................188

4.4.3. Teaching Social Skills..................................................................................189

4.5. Valuing Grammar: *Suggested Lessons*.........................................................194

4.6. Cooperation at a Wider Level..........................................................................200

4.7. Final Thoughts: *Limitations of the Study*....................................................201

4.8. Conclusion.......................................................................................................202

General Conclusion..............................................................................................204

Bibliography........................................................................................................209

Appendices...........................................................................................................215

Appendix ‘1’: The Learners’ Pre-test.................................................................217

Appendix ‘2’: First Task.......................................................................................221

Appendix ‘3’: Second Task....................................................................................225

Appendix ‘4’: Third Task.......................................................................................228

Appendix ‘5’: Fourth Task....................................................................................231

Appendix ‘6’: Reflective Questionnaire...............................................................233

Appendix ‘7’: The Learners’ Post-test.................................................................237

Appendix ‘8’: The Learners’ Interview.................................................................240