CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Play, Learn
Social interdependence to humans is like water to fish.
David W. and Roger T. Johnson

Grow...
Together!

Education is a teaching learning process and can be viewed from many different perspectives. One view sees it partly as the transmission of the accumulated knowledge of a society. Children are born without culture; they grow up in one, molding their behavior and beliefs towards their eventual role in their society. The main aim of education is to produce human beings who are able to appreciate the benefits of education and contribute to the development of the community in different spheres of life and Education is an indispensable process of teaching, training and learning to improve knowledge and improve different skills that will help to respond effectively and to transmit all these to the next generation in order to guarantee a worthwhile life in the world we live in. “Education is a process by which man transmits his experiences, new findings and values accumulated over the years, in his struggle for survival and development through generation.” It is a dynamic process, which always changes in response to the requirements of the society. Over the course of human history education, both formal and informal educations have evolved in many forms. When we
look towards this world from ancient period till today, we find that great transformations had occurred in every period. Vedic system laid stress upon rote memorization or recitation and present system gives stress upon new techniques and methods of education so that we make teaching up to the understanding level of students. Education is a teaching learning process. Learning depends upon instruction. During instruction, a child cannot be treated like an empty vessel into which any type of information can be passed down. Topping the potential of an individual to the maximum has been one of the basic aims of education. Efforts are being made to make the teaching – learning process most effective. In the information era information is available everywhere and in multiple forms; but traditional schooling is not giving ample opportunities to the students to fully exploit the available sources to information.

In present our society is moving in an era of working with communications rather than working in factories. With these societal changes the model of schooling is also changing. Now the situations demand learning to be more flexible, experimental and collaborative. To maximize learning opportunities for each student, it would be highly desirable for all schools and teachers to make the teaching environment compatible with techniques/styles to the teaching-learning process so as to get the best learning outcome in the form of students’ achievement. Today, students need to understand current state of their knowledge and built on it, improve it, and make decisions in the face of uncertainty. The aim of education should be to reorient the minds of young ones and inflame their intellect. It is the time when we also need to redefine teaching and learning. Learning should no more be considered as simple acquisition of facts, knowledge or skill but it should be reoriented as acquisition of facts, knowledge and skill and the ability to apply it in real life. Since the world’s education system is becoming increasingly diverse, it is crucial that learning strategies are beneficial in educating a wide variety of students. Teachers must engage students so that they retain and comprehend the subject matter taught in the classroom, and provide them with the proper social skills needed to succeed beyond the classroom environment. A learning
method educators can use to help students develop these necessary skills is called cooperative learning. Cooperative learning is a strategy that develops healthy interaction skills, promotes success of the individual student and group members, and forms personal and professional relationships (Johnson & Johnson, 1999a). Cooperative learning is now widely recognized as one of the most promising practices in the field of education. We can say that cooperation, collaboration, consideration, creativity, responsibility and participation all these things seem to become involved in the coming century, as does the suggestion of stretching the student's experience beyond individual knowing to a kind of collaborative wisdom.

1.1 ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

The main concern of all educational efforts is to see what the learner achieves as achievement is the end product of all educational endeavors. Achievement means accomplishment as proficiency of performance in a given skill or body of knowledge (Good, 1951). This is applicable to every sphere of life-academic, sports, politics, business, etc. Academic achievement holds a cardinal place in the field of education and is considered as the outstanding inducement for the progress of individuals. It is the unique responsibility of all educational institution to promote a wholesome scholastic development of the students. It helps the students to understand the hierarchy based on academic achievement. It is an index of success of students' performance, teachers' efforts and significance of curriculum and educational objectives. Academic achievement is related to the acquisition of principles and the capacity to perform efficiently. Assessment of academic performance has been largely confined to the evaluation in terms of information, knowledge and understanding, certain manipulation of objects, symbols and ideas. It is employed as a customary criterion to measure the level of knowledge, understanding and acquisition of skills.
Academic achievement also plays a very important role in the attainment of the ideal of harmonious development of the child. Sound development in academic side can be well matched with pillars on which entire future structure of personality stands. Achievement in the educational situation has frequently been referred to as academic achievement or academic attainment. The term academic achievement signifies various aspects of learning as “Ability to learn” (Tilton, 1949), “Scholastic aptitude” (Traverse, 1949), “Measures of motivation” (McClelland, 1953), “Level of aspiration” (Sawrey, 1958) and “Creative capacity” (Torrence, 1964). Dictionary of Psychology (Chaplin, 1965) defines educational or academic achievement as specified level of attainment proficiency in academic work as evaluated by the teacher, by standardized tests or by combination of both. According to Dictionary of Education (Carter, 1959), “Academic achievement means the knowledge attained or skills developed in school subjects, usually determined by test scores or by marks assigned by teachers or both.” In the common terminology, academic achievement refers to the level of attainment in various subjects as indicated by marks or grade points after an examination, be it written or oral. It is universally accepted that marks serve the basis of classification and certification, motivation and measurement of educational performance.

Academic achievement also means the attained level of students functioning in the school task such as language, mathematics, science etc. as shown by school marks. This is not at all a very desirable parameter but there cannot be any running away from this standard formula of achievement. In fact it appears as if the whole system of education revolves round the academic achievement of student. Performance assessment will require students to actively demonstrate what they know and hence, may be a more valid indicator of their knowledge and ability. This type of assessment provides teachers the information that how a child understands and applies knowledge.

Learning style being a strong correlate of academic achievement has got an unshakeable place in educational researches. Lembke (1985) and Okebukola (1986) revealed that academic achievement was enhanced when the students were taught through their preferred style. As the world is becoming more and more competitive, therefore
academic achievement has become the key factor for personal progress. Parents desire that their children should climb the ladder of achievement to as high as possible. This desire for a high level achievement puts a lot of pressure on students, teachers, and in general the education system itself. Heads of institutions, curriculum planners, teachers and others who are involved in the task of helping students to achieve better would like to have the knowledge of the extent of the influence, these correlates exert on the achievement.

Thus, in the present study an attempt was made in the direction of exploring the impact of cooperative learning strategy on the academic achievement. A synthesis of research on cooperative learning indicates that cooperative learning strategies improve the achievement of students and their interpersonal relationships. In 67 studies of the achievement effects of cooperative learning, 61% found significantly greater achievement in cooperative than in traditionally taught groups. Positive effects were found in all major subjects and all grade levels (Dutson, 2001). George (1994) compared the selected cooperative learning methods with traditional learning methods for 18 weeks with 61 students in undergraduate educational psychology classes and found that cooperative learning groups show significantly stronger performance than non-cooperative learning method groups. He also reported that cooperative learning creates more favorable attitudes toward classroom instruction. In a similar study, Ghokhale (1995) found that cooperative learning can be a best choice for teachers to increase the critical thinking skills in learners, help them to understand better and easily solve problems. In a wide variety of studies the potential of cooperative learning to increase student achievement has been consistently shown (Ghaith, 2003). Johnson, Johnson, and Stanne (2000) pointed out that cooperative learning strategy are widely used because they are based on theory, validated by research, and consistent with personal philosophies. In a meta-analysis of 158 studies, Johnson, Johnson and Stanne report that current research findings present evidence that cooperative learning methods are likely to produce positive achievement results.
1.2 COOPERATIVE LEARNING

*Human beings, who are almost unique in having the ability to learn from the experience of others, are also remarkable for their apparent disinclination to do so.*

*Douglas Adams*

It was not until the mid 1960s that modern cooperative learning methods were introduced. The application of cooperative learning to classroom teaching finds its root in the 1970s when the United States began to design and study cooperative learning models for classroom context (Kessler, 1992 cited in Liang, 2002). Today, due to its rich history of theory, research and actual use in the classroom, cooperative learning is applied in almost all school content areas and, increasingly, in college and university contexts all over the world, and is claimed to be an effective teaching method.

Cooperative learning is an instructional strategy based on the human instinct of cooperation. It is the utilization of the psychological aspects of cooperation and competition for curricular transaction and student learning. The concept of cooperative learning refers to instructional methods and techniques in which students work in small groups and are rewarded in some way for performance as a group. The idea behind the cooperative learning method is that when group rather than individuals are rewarded, students will be motivated to help one another to master academic materials. Cooperative learning is a successful teaching strategy in which small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, 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 teammates learn, thus creating atmosphere of achievement. "Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups through which students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning" Johnson, Johnson and Holubic, (1994). Co-operative learning is a long standing concept.
Cooperative learning is a methodology that employs a variety of learning activities to improve students' understanding of a subject by using a structured approach which involves a series of steps, requiring students to create, analyze and apply concepts (Kagan, 1990). Cooperative learning may be broadly defined as any classroom learning situation in which students of all levels of performance work together in structured groups toward a shared or common goal. It is a learning approach in which small, mixed student groups form both in-the-class and out-of-the-class environments to ensure students help each other in learning an academic subject in the scope of a common goal; where their self-esteem increases and their communication, problem-solving and critical thinking skills develop; and where they actively participate in the teaching-learning process (Bowen, 2000; Doymus, 2007; Eilks, 2005; Gillies, 2006;
Cooperative efforts of group would be more productive with the five basic elements of cooperative learning which has been depicted and discussed as follows:

**Fig 1.2 Elements of Co-operative Learning & their Actions**

**Positive Interdependence**

Positive interdependence is creating the sense that “we sink or swim together;” group mates learn the assigned material and ensure that all members of the group learn the assigned material. Group members must recognize that they link to each other in such a way that one cannot succeed unless everyone succeeds (Johnson & Johnson, 1994). According to another expert Slavin (1995), the group’s success depends on positive interdependence. Strong positive interdependence can make students perceive the need to cooperate (Kagan & Kagan, 1999). Positive interdependence generally exists when
group members promote each other’s achievement and believe that through mutual cooperation and effort their goal can best be reached (Carroll & Williams, 2007).

**Face-to-Face Interaction**

Face-to-face interaction is defined by Johnson and Johnson (1994), as individuals encourage and facilitate each other’s efforts to achieve, complete tasks, and produce in order to reach the group’s goals. Face-to-face interaction is a way which through promotive interaction that members become personally committed to each other as well as to their joint goals (Glanz, 2004).

**Individual Accountability**

Individual accountability is the element that provided for each group member to assess against a standard and hold responsibility for their contribution to achieve goals (Johnson & Johnson, 1994). Johnson and Johnson asserted that the purpose of cooperative learning is to make each member a stronger individual in his or her own right. Individual accountability is the key to ensure that each group member is strengthened through group work. The existence of individual accountability lets students have more motivation to learn (Kagan & Kagan, 1995).

**Interpersonal and Small Group Skill**

The interpersonal and small group skill is about giving constructive feedback, reaching a consensus, and involving every member, which is necessary for effective group functioning (Johnson & Johnson, 1994). When students participate regularly in cooperative activities, all students gain enduring intellectual abilities (Huss, 2006).

**Group Processing**

Processing means giving members time and a procedure to analyze how well their groups are functioning and using skills. When cooperative learning groups are used, the teacher observes the groups, analyzes the problems they have met, and gives feedback to each group on how well they are working together (Johnson & Johnson, 1994). A clear development process can control over the quality of the work produced (Jolliffe, 2007).
The interaction of the five elements makes cooperative learning able to achieve the learning objectives. The above five key elements of cooperative learning have emerged as critical to actual cooperation, without these elements, cooperation cannot be effectively carried out (Jolliffe, 2007).

Students working in cooperative groups experienced the so called ‘process gain’, that is, new solutions and ideas result from the group cooperative effort of sharing and generating information. This type of gain does not occur when students work individually. Ames and Murray (1982). Johnson and Johnson (1989) noticed another benefit of cooperative groups: the transfer of information goes from the group to the individual. Therefore, individual students are able to demonstrate their mastery even though the discussions and tasks have occurred as a part of a cooperative group effort. Slavin (1995) listed over 90 experimental studies about cooperative learning. He concluded that the reason cooperative learning succeeds as an educational methodology is its use of convergent tasks: Group goals based on the individual responsibility of all group members leads to increased learning achievement, regardless of subject or proficiency level of students involved as shown in (Fig.1.3)

(Based on Slavin, 1995, p. 45)

Fig. 1.3 Integration of Theoretical Perspectives in Cooperative Learning & its Effects on Learning
Co-operative learning is a group learning activity organized so that learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner is held accountable for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others. Olsen and Kagan (1992, p.8) Cooperative learning methods are instructional techniques in which students work in small groups to help one another learn academic content are among the most effective teaching methods. They are increasingly being used at every grade level, in all subjects, and in all kinds of schools and communities. Gupta & Pasrija (2011) revealed cooperative learning as an efficient technique to convert students into active learners in classrooms and it makes teaching–learning more satisfying, momentous, enjoyable and effective. There are many forms of cooperative learning now in use. The most extensively evaluated of these are Student Team Learning methods. The basic idea behind the Student Team Learning techniques is that when students learn in small carefully structured learning teams and are rewarded based on the progress made by all team members, they help one another learn, gain in achievement and self-esteem, and increase in respect and liking for their classmates, including their mainstreamed classmates and classmates of other ethnic groups. Student Team Learning methods are designed to be used as primary instructional approaches to replace traditional methods.

There are five major Student Team Learning methods

In all of them, students are assigned to four-member mixed-ability learning teams which stay together for about six weeks. The team members choose a team name and sit together. Following teacher instruction, students work together to help each other master material presented by the teacher, discussing, arguing, teaching, explaining,
elaborating, assessing one another, and trying together to build an understanding of the academic content. Later, students must show their individual knowledge on a quiz, essay, composition, or other product accomplished without teammates' help. Teams can earn certificates or other symbols of achievement based on the progress made by all team members. The only way for the team to succeed is to make certain that all team members have learned; teammates can help each other learn, but they cannot do each other's work.

1 Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD)

STAD is the simplest and most widely applicable of the Student Team Learning methods. It can be used in grades 2-12 in every subject. In STAD, the teacher follows a cycle of teaching, teamwork, and individual assessment. In this method, instruction is organized into the five major components of lesson planning—class presentation, team study, tournament, determining individual improvement points, and team recognition. Initially, the teacher introduces the material under study in a class presentation, following which learners work together to complete worksheets in heterogeneous groups of four members each, making sure that all team members have understood the material. Learners in STAD take individual quizzes and tests in order to determine their mastery of the material under study. Teams earn certificates or other forms of recognition based on the degree to which all team members have improved over their past performances.

2. Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT)

This method is very similar to the STAD method described above except that a tournament is then held at the end of a week or unit during which team representatives of similar levels of ability (high, average, low) compete together to earn points for their teams. Finally, the achievement of various teams is determined by calculating the average improvements earned by the members of the teams. TGT is most appropriate for teaching spelling and the language rules and mechanics of the target language.
3. **Jigsaw II**

Jigsaw II is a Student Team Learning program used in grades 3-12 whenever students are learning from written materials such as textbooks, biographies, and social studies or science books. In Jigsaw II, each team member is assigned a topic as a focus of study. After reading, students from different teams who had the same topic meet in "expert groups" to discuss what they have learned, and then the "experts" return to their teams and take turns presenting and discussing their findings. Finally, all students are quizzed on all topics, and the teams are recognized based on the progress of all team members, as in STAD.

4. **Team Accelerated Instruction-Mathematics (TAI)**

TAI is a comprehensive approach to cooperative learning in mathematics, grades 3-6. TAI combines cooperative learning with individualization, to allow teachers of heterogeneous math classes to bring low achievers quickly up to grade level and to provide acceleration beyond the usual curriculum for high achievers. TAI materials completely replace traditional textbooks with special materials designed specifically for the program. In TAI, students are assigned to heterogeneous teams in which they help one another learn. The teacher presents lessons that emphasize concepts, real life problems, and manipulatives to teaching groups composed of students from different teams who are at the same point in the curriculum. Students return to their teams and work on individual materials which follow up the teacher's lessons.

5. **Cooperative Integrated Reading & Composition (CIRC)**

Unlike STAD, TGT, and Jigsaw II, which are "generic" methods adaptable to any subject and grade level, CIRC is a comprehensive approach to instruction in reading, composition, and spelling for upper grades of elementary level. In CIRC Reading, students are taught in reading groups and then return to mixed ability teams to work on a series of cooperative activities, including partner reading, making predictions, identification of characters, settings, problems and problem solutions, summarization, vocabulary, spelling, reading comprehension exercises, and story-related writing.
CIRC Writing/Language Arts is a comprehensive approach to writing and language arts based on a writing process model, with the same teams used in CIRC Reading serving as peer response groups. Students work together to plan, draft, revise, edit, and ultimately "publish" compositions. Teachers present mini-lessons on style, content, and mechanics of writing, which are integrated with student writing. CIRC Writing/Language Arts provides a structure to help teachers and students succeed in helping all students become effective authors. CIRC Reading and CIRC Writing/Language Arts are usually used together, but can be used as separate reading and writing/language arts program.

All Student Team Learning methods have been found to produce gains in the following areas:

- **STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**
- **CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING**
- **POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD SUBJECT AND SCHOOL**
- **GROUP INTERACTION AND SOCIAL SKILLS**
- **SELF-ESTEEM AND MUTUAL RESPECT**
- **COMFORT WITH GROUP ACTIVITY**

**Fig 1.4 Gains of Co-operative Learning in different Areas**
**Student Achievement:** Cooperative learning promotes higher levels of achievement, greater depth of thought and improved attendance. Enjoyment of interaction and relevancy of content tend to encourage students to master the content. When students are responsible for reading a chapter, then use or discuss the content to create a product find that retention is greater.

**Critical and Creative Thinking:** Cooperative learning provides opportunities for higher order thinking as opposed to passive listening. It reinforces listening to others and gives opportunity for immediate feedback and adjustment of thoughts. Students talking together provide for input and listening. Students often have to assess the thoughts/ideas of peers, determine whether they “fit” their own, whether they disagree, or partially agree. Students have an opportunity to speak their ideas/thoughts for better formulation. Some often say, “I didn’t think of that” or “That’s a different slant.”

**Positive Attitude toward Subject and School:** Cooperative learning provides students the opportunities to make personal connections to the content. Enjoyment of learning often leads to greater retention. Interaction often promotes a more positive attitude toward the subject matter or course.

**Group Interaction and Social Skills:** Cooperative learning increases student retention and limits anxiety. Students are not overloaded with information. Students actually get time to think about, to talk about, and process information. This improves interaction and “talk” (Vygotskian Constructivism) which provides opportunities for students to think about and process the information. Time for “talking” and/or “writing” is needed to help students make sense of what they hear before attempting to “take in” even more information. Provides for improvement of social interaction skills, greater acceptance of others, and a greater sense of “community” in the class - in part by addressing learning style differences. Students may even begin to create study groups for greater learning. Students who teach or tutor each other learn more about each other and how to better communicate information to others. Students benefit from building group skills by working together. Not everyone will agree; students may learn to cope with those
who have differing viewpoints, OR recognize that some problems can be very complex and not easily solved with simple responses.

Self-Esteem and Mutual Respect: In Cooperative learning students help each other as discussion occurs. Students are more likely to respond to the whole class after discussing thoughts with a partner or small group. Responses may be more carefully conceived as they try responses with each other. Students may even discover that they understand the information because they must articulate the content to another. Greater satisfaction with the learning experience occurs. Students respect each other ideas and feelings.

Comfort with Group Activity: Cooperative learning promotes greater student-faculty and student-student interaction. Students assist each other in understanding material/content. This may even help students broaden their perspectives on issues or problems. Professors have an opportunity to move from group to group, listen and if appropriate add comments. It permits opportunities to connect the content to real life. Students are often hesitant to speak up and offer opinions, especially in very large classes. Students can provide real life examples of the content being discussed thus increasing the relevancy of the learning.

Cooperative activities also tend to promote the development of higher-order levels of thinking, essential communication skills, improved motivation, positive self-esteem, social awareness, and tolerance for individual differences. Cooperative learning is a way of helping students be more successful. It is also a way to help students prepare for careers and lives in the real world. Even in today’s competitive climate, it is hard to imagine something that does not require cooperation, collegiality, and teamwork. Cooperative learning facilitates academic achievement and creates positive social development among a wide variety of students.

1.3 COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION (ENGLISH)

Language is an important device and a very beneficial tool for human being to communicate with other people. It is acquired by all people in much the same way. Both language and language learning have universal characteristics. There are many
languages in the world. One of them is English. English is an International Language, and it is very important nowadays. It is the language of globalization, international communication, commerce and trade. English is a global language, which is spoken by more and more people in the world. Learning a foreign language throughout history has always been an important practical concern (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). The importance placed on foreign language learning has led to the constant developmental changes in language teaching to better fit the needs of the learners for a better outcome in learning. One such development was the use of cooperative methods in language teaching. Cooperative learning has been proclaimed as an effective instructional method in promoting linguistic development of learners of English as a social language (Kagan, 1994) fig.1.5

Cooperative Learning

Group Discussion among the students

The need to communicate with one another

Increase the English language proficiency level

Students’ academic achievement, social development and English language proficiency

Fig. 1.5 The Framework of Co-operative Learning for the Development of English Language Proficiency

Cooperation means working together to accomplish shared goals. In cooperative students work together to maximize their own and each other’s learning. On the other side, in cooperative learning group, members of a cooperative group generally meet all reasonable expectations of achievement academic goals. In cooperative groups, students work together on specific tasks or projects in such a way that all students in the group
benefit from the interactive experience. Cooperative learning can be defined as a learning approach in which small, mixed student groups form both in-the-class and out-of-the-class environments to ensure students help each other in learning an academic subject in the scope of a common goal; where their self-esteem increases and their communication, problem-solving and critical thinking skills develop; and where they actively participate in the teaching-learning process (Bowen, 2000; Doymus, 2007; Eilks, 2005; Gillies, 2006; Hanze and Berger, 2007; Hennessy and Evans, 2006; Levine, 2001; Lin, 2006). Since learners are different in their intellectual capacity, their attitude and their linguistic skills. The cooperative language learning approach puts primary importance on interaction and meaning negotiation. The main goal of this approach is to enable students to communicate using target language Cooperative learning techniques, as opposed to conventional strategies, provide learners with opportunities to take more active roles in their own learning. Cooperative learning activities lead to peer interaction which itself promotes the development of language and the learning of concepts and content. Cooperative learning maximizes second language acquisition by providing opportunities for both language input and output (Fathman & Kessler, 1993; Holt, Chips, & Wallace, 1992; Long & Porter, 1985; McGroarty, 1993).

Research in the second language classroom indicates that cooperative learning is potentially beneficial for ESL students in a number of ways. It can maximize second language acquisition by offering opportunities for both language input and output. It can also help students draw on their first language while developing second language skills. It includes opportunities for the integration of language and content learning. Its varied applications were in harmony with the pedagogical implications of the input, socialization, and interactive theories of second language (L2) acquisition. This was because cooperative learning (CL) enhanced the motivation and psychosocial adjustment of second language learners (Dornyei, 1994). According to Olsen and Kagan (1992), cooperative learning increased interaction among learners as they restated and elaborated their ideas in order to convey or clarify intended meaning. This interaction contributed to gain in second language (L2) acquisition. The following table describes the difference between traditional and cooperative language learning.
Table 1.1
Showing the Comparison of Traditional Language Learning and Cooperative Language Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Traditional language learning</th>
<th>Cooperative language learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role of Teacher</td>
<td>As Controller of teaching pace and direction, judging of students’ right or wrong, the major source of assistance, feedback, reinforcement and support.</td>
<td>As Organizer and counselor of group work, facilitator of the communication tasks, intervener to teach collaborative skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Materials</td>
<td>Complete set of materials for each student.</td>
<td>Materials are arranged according to purpose of lesson. Usually one group shares a complete set of materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Activities</td>
<td>Knowledge recall and review, phrasal or sentence pattern practice, role play, translation, listening etc.</td>
<td>Any instructional activity, mainly group work to engage learners in communication, involving processes like information sharing, negotiation of meaning and interaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>Some talking among students, mainly teacher-student interaction.</td>
<td>Intense interaction among students, a few teacher-student interaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Expectations</td>
<td>Take a major part in evaluating own progress and the quality of own efforts toward learning. Be a winner or loser.</td>
<td>All members in some way contribute to success of group. The one who makes progress is the winner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-Student Relationship</td>
<td>Superior-inferior or equal</td>
<td>Cooperating and equal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cooperative learning has been proclaimed as an effective instructional method in promoting linguistic development of learners of English. As Richard (2006) explains that linguistic development covers the following language knowledge: knowing how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions, knowing how to vary the use of language according to the setting and participants, knowing how to produce and understand different types of texts (e.g., narratives, reports, interview, conversations), and knowing how to maintain communication despite having limitation in one’s language knowledge i.e. development of four linguistic skills Listening, Speaking,
Reading and Writing. Reading and writing skills are very important in the context of language teaching and use. Writing is the most concrete and systematic of the language skills. The more developed the writing skill, the more systematic the individual’s overall use of language. By this way, a person can speak, read and listen in a more accurate and effective way (Bryson, 2003). Writing is to individual expression what reading is to comprehension. Among language skills, reading together with writing is the first skill to be learnt. It is also known that, in the learning process, there is a high correlation between reading comprehension and academic achievement. Reading and writing are two basic language skills that are important from the first phase of primary education. These skills fall in the context of mother language learning. Students can learn by writing and reading and a teacher can teach by reading and writing or having students read or write (Bloom, 1979; Yağlı, 2002). Reading And writing are necessary when students further in their study. Many reading methods have been used in classrooms alternately. The results show that some are successful with a particular group of students but some are not.

Actually, what should be taken into consideration now is the way the knowledge is presented. As we know, teacher–centered approaches taking place in traditional classrooms do not produce active recipients and result in fossilized language learning. It is not effective enough to promote language acquisition. Pedagogy to be adopted in the teaching process should ensure both accurate comprehension and correct and effective self-expression by students during reading and writing activities. Teachers need information and experience to choose appropriate teaching methods for specific learning environments (Kapka and Oberman, 2001). Therefore, in the English teaching and learning process, the students should be given a lot of opportunities in using English through classroom activities. According to Kumaradivelu (2003) the best way to maximize the learning opportunities in the class is through meaningful students’ involvement. Therefore, the English teaching and learning process can be said successful when most of the students can actively involved in the every stage of the teaching and learning process so that the materials taught can be absorbed well. And Cooperative Learning is a great way to engage English language learner in learning both language and content. Cooperative Learning has been proven to be effective for all
type of students, and for all the four linguistic skills. One of the cooperative learning strategy i.e. Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition (CIRC) to develop Reading and Writing skill is used as focus of the study.

Cooperative Learning and Reading Skill

Reading is one of four language skills that has important role for the students. One's academic success has a strong correlation with reading. One who has a good achievement in classroom usually like to reading. That is the reason why the reading ability should be built as early as possible. In reading, learners are actively responsible for making sense and catch the ideas of the texts. Reading has different way in interaction with the readers because the writer is not available. That interaction will see in getting all the information from the writer. Brown (1982) says that a person must be able to understand what the author writes in order to be an effective reader. It means that the readers have to catch the information which writer writes so that it can be seen the benefits in doing reading. Academically, reading is one of the most important skill. Reading can be defined as the ability to get understanding from written text. L2 reading can best be understood as a combination of skills and abilities that individuals bring to bear as they begin to read (Grabe, 1991).

Reading skill is assumed to be improved and enhanced by means of the application of the cooperative learning techniques. Reading comprehension was also seen as the construction of the meaning of a written text through an interaction between the reader and the text. Jacobs and Hannah (2004), in integrating cooperative learning techniques with reading aloud, found that not only can they promote language learning, but they also promote active citizenship. Apple (2006) holds that cooperative techniques make EFL learners to be more active in the language classroom. Cooperative learning allows them to use language in different ways. Cooperative learning creates more effective classroom climate in which collaboration towards a common goal plays an important role in emotional and linguistic development. In much the same vein, Faryadi (2007) compared the effect of cooperative learning with individual learning and concluded that cooperative learning enhances learners’ emotional and social performance and improves their academic accomplishment dramatically. In addition, Adeyemi (2008) found that
students exposed to cooperative learning strategies performed better than their counterparts in the other groups. Stevens et al. (1987) observed on achievement test reading comprehension, language expression, and language mechanics scale, CIRC students gained significantly more than control students, averaging gains of almost two-thirds of a grade equivalent more than control students. Ames and Murray (1982) also found that students working in cooperative groups experienced the so called 'process gain', that is, new solutions and ideas result from the group cooperative effort of sharing and generating information. This type of gain does not occur when students work individually. Ziba Javadi Rahvard (2010) validates the effect of cooperative learning on the reading comprehension performance in EFL classes. Murray and Karagiannidou (2011) established that use of co-operative learning increases pupil formulation of propositions, explanations. Gupta & Pasrija (2012) determined the positive effects of the co-operative learning approach on the achievement of content knowledge, retention, of Mathematics students toward the teaching method. Arthy (2012) investigated the relative effectiveness of small group interaction techniques in enhancing reading comprehension Skills and concluded that cooperative learning to be an effective method for improving reading comprehension.

Reading can't separate with writing. Good reading texts provide good models for writing, and provide opportunities to introduce new topics and to study language (vocabulary, grammar and idioms).

**Cooperative Learning and Writing Skill**

Writing is one of the four language skills which is given emphasis in second language learning. As “Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man and writing an exact man,” says Bacon. It is an important tool, which enables man to communicate with other people in many ways. Writing is the most concrete and systematic of the language skills. The more developed the writing skill, the more systematic the individual’s overall use of language. It means that in writing skill, students are expected to be able to express their knowledge and idea in form of producing the text. Our abilities in language are made perfect in writing. Writing is an art, a creative art in which the acquired skills in language and innate interests are made manifest. System should move beyond the rote learning method which most considered as methods of the past (Kaur
2001; Wong 2003; Chan 2004; Lee & Tan 2004; Campbell 2006). One of the approaches which show positive result in boosting the students writing skill is the incorporation of cooperative learning (Kagan & High 2002).

In the field of language, cooperative learning values the interactive view of language, which is known as developed combination of structural and functional views of language. It considers knowledge of appropriate use of language and the ability to structure discourse interactions. Like any other approach, as Richards and Rodgers (2001) argued, it possesses its own theory of language and theory of learning. In its theory of language, cooperative learning sees language as a tool of social relations. Students are provided with authentic context for negotiation of meaning through using the language. Cooperative learning facilitates and deepens learning. It results in higher levels of understanding and reasoning, the development of critical thinking, and the increase in accuracy of long-term retention.

In cooperative learning method when the teacher gives a writing task, the members of the groups work together towards certain shared learning goals. They help each other during the process of drafting the writing. They plan, translate and review the work together. They monitor and evaluate their writing. They try to gain appreciation for their group. In such class activities team members try to make sure that each member has mastered the assigned task because the teacher randomly calls upon the students to answer for the team. The teacher should reward the best team and the most challenging individual. This kind of grading will serve as an incentive to harness competition for further cooperation amongst teams’ members. Studies also show that there are 3 major positive impact of cooperative learning which are categorized into greater effort to achieve, more positive relationship among pupils and greater psychological health (Johnson & Johnson 1989). Sabarun (2009) reported that cooperative learning strategy with cooperative integrated reading and composition (CIRC) was effective in improving the student’s writing ability. Ulya Himawati (2011) investigated the students’ Ability in writing a narrative text, to apply CIRC in teaching learning activity to improve students’ from aspect: Content, Organization, Vocabulary, grammar, and mechanic and revealed that there is an improvement before and after students get the teaching. Students improve their writing efficiently and effectively by using CIRC. This method give much
time to students to be active in the English teaching and learning process. Beside that, they can develop critical thinking and learn to solve the problem. Cooperative learning stimulates the students to be more actively involved and motivated in the writing process so that their writing ability improves.

1.4 RATIONALE OF THE PRESENT STUDY

English language has come to occupy a central place in the education system. To this effect, students are expected to have a good knowledge of English. As an international language, English is spoken in many international events and it is used as a medium for information on education, science, technology, culture, etc. Realizing the importance of English language, as the first foreign language and it is taught as one of the compulsory subject valued for its educational and cultural significance.

English being a foreign language is a difficult subject to teach and learn. Most of the students do not attain the required competency because English is taught only as a compulsory subject and it is not used as a medium of instruction. Majority of the teachers in schools are using traditional competitive and individual learning method with lockstep or traditional learning group arrangements. In most of the schools, teachers have to teach a large class in which sixty to seventy students learn together. Christensen (1994) described three categories of problems, i.e. pedagogical, management and affective which were faced by the English language teachers in traditional teacher centered teaching approach. Traditional approach is not effective enough to promote language acquisition and Curricula renewed according to student-centered teaching approach require use of strategies, methods and techniques complying with a constructivist approach and involving active student participation in the learning process. One of the approaches parallel to this teaching approach is cooperative learning. Teachers can use this approach to stimulate students to acquire the knowledge as well as create interpersonal and team skills. Traditionally, classes always consist of good students and weak students. The weak students sit in isolation as they lose confidence in their ability to learn English. Working in groups, therefore, is believed to help solve this problem. Shy students who don’t like to speak in a large class are more comfortable speaking out in smaller groups. Group members can complement each
other's strengths and weaknesses in English. Each student has a different background and ability in English, which he or she can bring to the group. For example, one student might have a strong vocabulary that can supply to students with a solid background in grammar. Furthermore, poor students will benefit from interaction with better ones, and good students will feel proud that they play an important role in helping their weaker classmates.

Cooperative integrated reading and composition (CIRC) technique, one of the learning techniques based on cooperation, is designed to develop reading, writing and other language skills in the upper grades of primary education. CIRC technique presents a structure that increases not only opportunities for direct teaching in reading and writing but also applicability of composition writing techniques (Açıkgöz, 1992; Yaman, 1999). CIRC technique is developed to support traditionally used “skill-based reading groups” approach. This research describes the rational, development, and evaluation of Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC), a comprehensive program for teaching reading, writing, and language art. The researcher wants to take the research about the use of Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) Method to Improve Students’ ability in reading and writing skills in English.

1.5 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

EFFECT OF COOPERATIVE INTEGRATED READING COMPOSITION TECHNIQUE (CIRC) ON READING –WRITING SKILLS IN ENGLISH AMONG 7TH GRADERS

1.6 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF KEY WORDS

Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC)

Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) are a comprehensive reading and writing program for students in grades 2 through 8. It includes story-related activities, direct instruction in reading comprehension, and integrated reading and language arts activities. In the present study, (CIRC) was employed as Cooperative learning technique to improve students’ ability in reading and writing skills in English to seventh graders.
Reading Skill

Reading skills are specific abilities which enable a reader to read the written form as meaningful language, to read anything written with independence, comprehension and fluency, and to mentally interact with the message. Reading skill was measured by the scores obtained on Reading Comprehension Test developed by the investigator.

Writing Skill

Writing skills are specific abilities which help writers to put their thoughts into words in a meaningful form and to mentally interact with the message. It helps the learners to gain independence, comprehensibility, fluency and creativity in writing. Writing skill was measured by the scores obtained on Writing Expression Test developed by the investigator.

Achievement in Reading Comprehension & Writing Composition

Achievement is a measure of performance, knowledge, skill of a person in a given area at a particular time. Performance in Reading Comprehension & Writing Composition Achievement Test in English (developed by the investigator) as indicated by the scores of students is considered Reading Comprehension & Writing Composition English achievement in the present study.

1.7 VARIABLES INVOLVED

In experimental research, the relationship between two types of variables namely, independent and dependent variables is studied. Independent variables are the cause while dependent ones are the effects. Besides, there are intervening variables also. All these three kinds of variables, identified for the study are as discussed below.

Independent Variables

The co-operative learning strategy, which was used in the present study to see the effects on the achievement of reading & writing skills in English, constituted as independent variables. The experimental group was taught through Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition Technique (CIRC), and the control group was taught through Conventional Method. Thus Instructional Treatment- Cooperative Integrated
Reading Composition Technique (CIRC), Conventional Method and gender were the three independent variables for the present study.

**Dependent Variables**
Achievement of Reading Comprehension & Writing Composition skills in English were treated as the dependent variables.

**Intervening Variables**
Those variables, which have their effects on the learning outcomes, are known as intervening variables, and can influence both the independent and dependent variables. Different intervening variables in the present study are Type of Schools (affiliated to Haryana Board of School Education), Intelligence of Students (moderate intelligence), Socio-Economic Status (middle stratum) of students etc. which were controlled up to greatest extent.

**1.8 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

**A. Objectives related to Reading Comprehension**
1. To develop Reading Comprehension Achievement test in English for 7th graders.
   a) *(Before Experimental Treatment)*
2. To compare the mean achievement scores in English reading comprehension of Experimental and Control (E & C) group students to be taught through Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition (CIRC) and conventional method of teaching before experimental treatment.
3. To compare the mean achievement scores in English reading comprehension of boys of Experimental and Control group (BE & BC); and girls of Experimental and Control group (GE & GC) to be taught through Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition (CIRC) and conventional method of teaching before experimental treatment.

b) *(After Experimental Treatment)*
4. To study the effect of treatment on achievement in English reading comprehension of students after experimental treatment.
5. To study the effect of gender on achievement in English reading comprehension of students after experimental treatment.

6. To study the interaction effect of treatment and gender on achievement in English reading comprehension of students after experimental treatment.

7. To study the effect of treatment on mean gain achievement scores in English reading comprehension of students after experimental treatment.

8. To study the effect of gender on mean gain achievement scores in English reading comprehension of students after experimental treatment.

9. To study the interaction effect of treatment and gender on mean gain achievement scores in English reading comprehension of students after experimental treatment.

B. Objectives Related to Writing Composition

10. To develop Writing Composition Achievement test in English for 7th graders.

a) (Before Experimental Treatment)

11. To compare the mean achievement scores in English writing composition of Experimental and Control (E & C) group students to be taught through Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition (CIRC) and conventional method of teaching before experimental treatment.

12. To compare the mean achievement scores in English writing composition of boys of Experimental and Control group (BE & BC); and girls of Experimental and Control group (GE & GC) to be taught through Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition (CIRC) and conventional method of teaching before experimental treatment.

b) (After Experimental Treatment)

13. To study the effect of treatment on achievement in English writing composition of students after experimental treatment.

14. To study the effect of gender on achievement in English writing composition of students after experimental treatment.

15. To study the interaction effect of treatment and gender on achievement in English writing composition of students after experimental treatment.
16. To study the effect of treatment on mean gain achievement scores in English writing composition of students after experimental treatment.

17. To study the effect of gender on mean gain achievement scores in English writing composition of students after experimental treatment.

18. To study the interaction effect of treatment and gender on mean gain achievement scores in English writing composition of students after experimental treatment.

1.9 HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

A. Hypotheses related to Reading Comprehension

Based upon the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses were devised.

1. (Before Experimental Treatment)

H$_{01(a)}$ There exists no significant difference in the mean achievement scores in English reading comprehension of the two groups (E and C) of students taught English through Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition (CIRC) and conventional method before experimental treatment.

H$_{01(b)}$ There exists no significant difference in the mean achievement scores in English reading comprehension of the two groups of boys (BE and BC) taught English through Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition (CIRC) and conventional method before experimental treatment.

H$_{01(c)}$ There exists no significant difference in the mean achievement scores in English reading comprehension of the two groups of girls (GE and GC) taught English through Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition (CIRC) and conventional method before experimental treatment.

2. (After Experimental Treatment)

H$_{02(a)}$ There exists no significant effect of treatment on achievement in English reading comprehension of students after experimental treatment.

H$_{02(b)}$ There exists no significant effect of gender on achievement in English reading comprehension of students after experimental treatment.

H$_{02(c)}$ There exists no significant effect of treatment and gender on achievement in English reading comprehension of students after experimental treatment.
Hₒ₂(₅) There exists no significant effect of treatment on mean gain achievement scores in English reading comprehension of students after experimental treatment.

Hₒ₂(₆) There exists no significant effect of gender on mean gain achievement scores in English reading comprehension of students after experimental treatment.

Hₒ₂(₇) There exists no significant effect of treatment and gender on mean gain achievement scores in English reading comprehension of students after experimental treatment.

**B Hypotheses related to Writing Composition**

Based upon the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses were devised.

3. **(Before Experimental Treatment)**

Hₒ₃(₃(a)) There exists no significant difference in the mean achievement scores in English writing composition of the two groups (E and C) of students taught English through Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition (CIRC) and conventional method before experimental treatment.

Hₒ₃(₃(b)) There exists no significant difference in the mean achievement scores in English writing composition of the two groups of boys (BE and BC) taught English through Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition (CIRC) and conventional method before experimental treatment.

Hₒ₃(₃(c)) There exists no significant difference in the mean achievement scores in English writing composition of the two groups of girls (GE and GC) taught English through Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition (CIRC) and conventional method before experimental treatment.

4. **(After Experimental Treatment)**

Hₒ₄(₄(a)) There exists no significant effect of treatment on achievement in English writing composition of students after experimental treatment.

Hₒ₄(₄(b)) There exists no significant effect of gender on achievement in English writing composition of students after experimental treatment.

Hₒ₄(₄(c)) There exists no significant effect of treatment and gender on achievement in English writing composition of students after experimental treatment.
H₀₄(d) There exists no significant effect of treatment on mean gain achievement scores in English writing composition of students after experimental treatment.

H₀₄(e) There exists no significant effect of gender on mean gain achievement scores in English writing composition of students after experimental treatment.

H₀₄(f) There exists no significant effect of treatment and gender on mean gain achievement scores in English writing composition of students after experimental treatment.

1.10 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Keeping in view the constraints of the time and available resources, the study is delimited to the:

1. Students of class VII studying in private schools of urban area only.
2. Schools affiliated to Haryana Board of School Education of Rohtak city only.
3. Syllabus of English for semester-I of seventh class only.
4. To the experiment for eight weeks only.

1.11 CHAPTERISATION SCHEME

The present study has been developed in six chapters. The chapter I is Introduction, which includes rationale of the study, variables involved, objectives of the study, hypotheses of the study and delimitations of the study. The chapter II deals with the Review of the Related Literature. In the chapter III named as Research Design in which the design of the study, sample, tools, procedure and statistical techniques have been presented. The chapter IV is Data Analysis and Interpretation which is linked with the analysis and interpretation of data along with the discussion of results. In chapter V, the findings, educational implications of the study and suggestions for further research have been given.

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