

CHAPTER - III

Cooperative Learning Methods

Cooperative Learning has many methods, which this chapter intends to introduce, compare, and analyse. But before introducing and analysing these methods, an introduction to some popular common activities in CL classes is relevant and necessary. As related components of CL methods, they facilitate a better understanding of CL methods.

Cooperative Learning Activities

Well-known scholars in CL (e.g., Kagan, 1992; Kessler, 1992; Olsen & Kagan, 1992) have designed and developed a variety of group learning activities in order to boost the effectiveness of CL methods. The significance of these activities is that they facilitate active meaningful interaction among participants. Such interactions are likely to contribute to the engagement of all of participants in the learning process. And engagement in the learning process is considered as the key to effective learning.

Three-Step Interview

Three-Step Interview (Nattiv, Winitzky, & Drickey, 1991) is mostly harnessed as a follow-up activity with the intention to help students consolidate the new information introduced by the teacher. The thrust of this activity is interviewing each other to know and develop one another's opinions and ideas about the topic or issue introduced by the teacher. As indicated in its name, the process for reaching shared understanding of the topic involves three steps. First, after the posing of the topic or after introduction of a unit by the teacher, members of teams pair up to discuss the topic as interviewers and interviewees. Then, at the teacher's reminder, they reverse their roles. Interviewers try not only to fill their gaps of knowledge in the issue in question but also to improve their interviewees' understanding of the topic. Finally, at the second reminder of the teacher, they turn to their counterparts in their teams (e.g., of four) to share and discuss their understanding with them also. Students may as well be provided with the opportunities to share their learning with their classmates through class-wide discussions. This activity ensures that all the members get engaged in learning and have the opportunities to listen, talk, and share.

Thinking-Aloud Pair Problem-Solving

In Thinking-Aloud Pair Problem-Solving, once the problem is posed by the teacher, students pair up in their teams in an attempt to come to a probable solution. The implementation of this activity for quiz sessions when the teacher intends to subordinate testing to teaching will be helpful. In this activity, one pair member will be the problem solver and the other an active listener. The problem

solver is expected to think aloud (i.e., verbalize his or her thought and procedures for solving the problem) in the process of moving towards a solution to the problem so as to endow the interlocutor or the listener with the opportunity to learn the strategies for tackling the challenges coming in the way towards a solution. Meanwhile, the interlocutor is expected to give some hints whenever possible in order to facilitate and contribute to the process of arriving at a solution. To ensure the same opportunity for the other member, the roles will be reversed for the next problem. As three-step interview, this activity is conducive to transference and acquisition of language learning strategies. It provides a suitable matrix for students to practise, learn, and consolidate strategies.

RoundRobin

Kagan and Kagan (1998) designed this activity to provide opportunities for the participants so as to become aware of a range of responses for a single question. After a question raised by the teacher, which usually evokes multiple responses, students in heterogeneous teams of three or more get together to share their solutions in turn. Taking turns is advised to ensure the involvement of all the students in negotiating meaning. Participants may also be allowed to group in order to discuss alternative solutions class-wise.

RoundTable

RoundTable is another version of RoundRobin which has been introduced by Kagan and Kagan (1998). The difference is that in RoundTable, each member has to write his or her solution on a piece of paper rather than communicate it

orally. After the teacher poses the question, members of each team write their answers on a piece of paper and then pass the paper clockwise to the next person. They should brainstorm as many answers as they can to the question or the problem. The teacher may also allow students to use separate pieces of paper. The groups with the most correct answers or the most creative answers may be appreciated. RoundRobin and RoundTable can be applied for brainstorming or reviewing.

Think-Pair-Share

As Lyman (1992) has explained, in this activity, after the teacher raises a question, students are required to think over the given problem individually within a limited time, and then pair up to discuss their views. They are, then, asked to try to look for a shared solution to the problem with their group members. And finally, they are expected to share their ideas with their classmates. The significance of this activity, which can be used as a follow-up activity or be applied in quiz sessions, is in the stress it puts on 'wait-time' in the course of learning.

Solve-Pair-Share

Solve-Pair-Share is like Think-Pair-Share with the difference that after the teacher poses a problem, students are asked to try to solve it individually first rather than merely thinking over it. Subsequently, they will be asked to pair up to compare and discuss their solutions with their partners and then team members so as to synthesize a joint solution. Eventually, they are required to share and discuss their ideas class-wide.

Numbered Heads Together

Numbered Heads Together is an activity, mostly used for reviewing information that has previously been presented by the teacher. It can be used also to evaluate students' understanding of the material, orally or in the written form. In this activity, as Kagan (1989b) has elaborated, each member of the team is numbered (e.g., 1, 2, 3, & 4, in the case of teams with four members) prior to the class by the captain/leader. At the end of each class presentation of material and discussion panels, in a reading course, for example, the teacher asks a question or a series of 'content bound' questions, and students come together to find answers. Then, in due course, the teacher calls a number of a team randomly, and only the student with that number has to answer orally on behalf of the group. Most important, the select member should be ready to substantiate his or her answer(s). Based on his or her presentation, his or her team will be evaluated. That one student is randomly selected to answer for the team motivates all team members to encourage one another to do their work and inspires them to assure themselves of their partners' comprehensive understanding of the material. In other words, this activity encourages all the members to try their best both in the learning process and in tutoring one another. Class-wide discussions could also be conducted along with this activity. Rather than randomly selecting one member to orally answer on behalf of his or her team, it is also possible to make all members respond in written form and then randomly select one student to submit his or her paper for group recognition.

In conclusion, these activities contribute to the engagement of all the members in the learning process, specifically improve intra-group cooperation, and

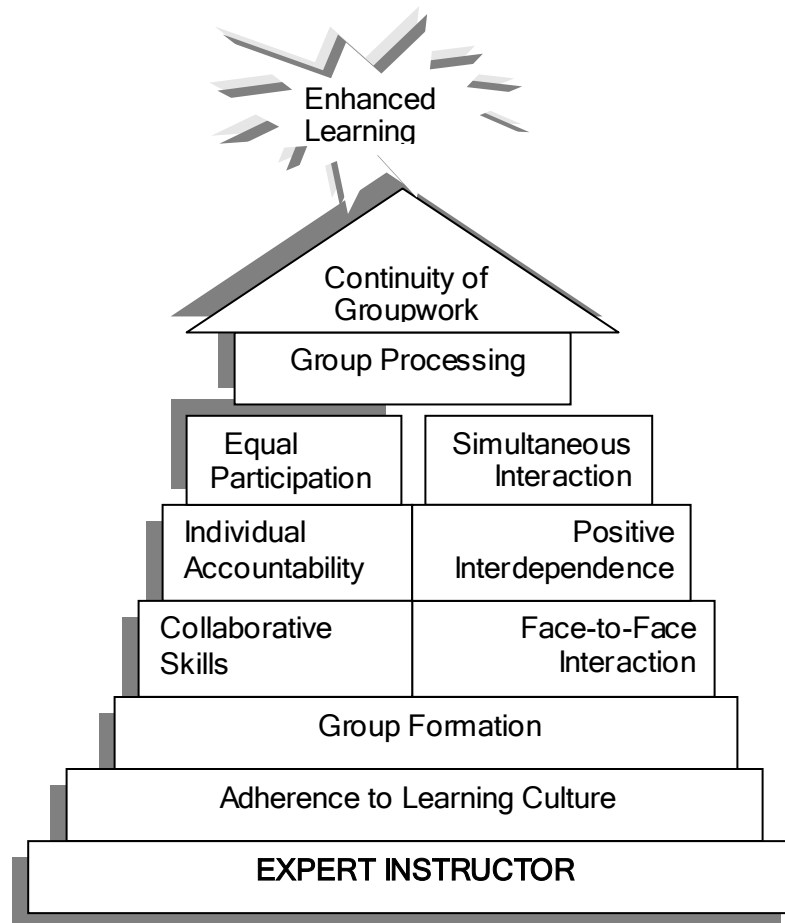
individual accountability of participants. The kind of environments these activities bring about increases the level of the comprehensibility of input and improves problem-solving strategies of participants (Kagan, 1992; Kessler, 1992; Olsen & Kagan, 1992). They bring with them genuine opportunities for input-output treatment whereby discussants have the opportunities to think and process information, concentrate on asking higher-order questions, observe their peers' reactions, and listen to their responses in metacognitive ways. The results of such activities are likely to contribute to a deeper understanding of the material, enhancing the quality of their language and the process of recall, which is one of the main concerns of EFL/ESL learners.

In addition to the application of the above activities, CL can be more effective if some essential elements are also taken into consideration.

Essential Features of Structured Cooperative Learning Methods

Not all kind of group work can mean CL. This is because just wanting students to get together and work in groups is not enough in CL classes. A number of problems will arise. Implementing structured CL involves techniques and strategies. A number of specialists in CL like Johnson and Johnson (1999a) and Kagan (1992) have argued that what differentiates more structured CL methods from traditional small group discussions or buzz groups is the focus they have on some essential features. Figure 3 illustrates some of such features developed by these specialists.

Figure 3. Basic Elements of CL Methods



Instructor as a Fellow Facilitator Expert

In CL, the teacher is not the predominant source of information, who tries to infuse knowledge into vacuumed minds, but rather he or she is the creator of opportunities for effective learning. Applying different strategies, he or she structures the learning tasks and environments in such a way that they bring reciprocal meaningful interaction among class participants. The teacher also strongly encourages students to take more responsibilities for their own learning. He or she ensures that there are enough opportunities for them to think, brainstorm, discuss, and solve problems collectively in heterogeneous teams with reference to specific conditions and principles in a congenial ambience.

Adherence to a Learning Culture

Effective CL does not come naturally. The first vital factor that greatly affects the outcomes of instructional innovations relates to the level wherein teachers can establish a learning culture. Establishing a culture of learning needs the open-endedness of both teachers and students in their attitudes and outlooks. Moreover, the willingness of all the participants to adhere to some basic norms or ‘ground rules’ is crucial. Creating such an ambience is not impossible, although it, sometimes, demands patience. In classroom situation, students themselves can be of great help to the creation of such learning culture, which could be signified through some rules. After reaching a consensus, teachers can pose such rules in the form of a small poster on the classroom wall. One sample of such norms/rules has been provided in the section on Competitive T-BL (Competitive T-BL and learning culture) in this chapter.

Criterion-Based Group Formation

Although random grouping, homogeneous grouping, and interest-based grouping, as they are in traditional methods of CL, can ease classroom management and provide a perception of fairness, they can create a lot of problems. Some of the problems are group labelling, restraints of learner-to-learner tutoring opportunities, and possible incompatibilities, and ‘loser teams’ (Olsen & Kagan, 1992). In homogeneous grouping, for instance, groups may be too fast or too slow in conducting their tasks. This demands extra burden on the part of the teacher. In reading comprehension classes, for example, homogeneous grouping leads to some complicated problems: While homogeneous groups with high

achievers may focus on deeper comprehending of the text, teams with low performers tend to get engaged in some minor activities such as decoding. That is why in these types of groupings the distance between low performers and high achievers widens day by day.

Therefore, the nature of the composition of groups affects considerably the patterns of interaction among participants and their groups' cohesion and consequently their engagement in the learning process and academic achievement. In contrast to traditional methods of CL in which students are randomly assigned to groups or are allowed to select their own teammates, in structured CL methods teacher-assigned heterogeneous grouping or a mixture of grouping procedures are strongly advised. This is to tap the positive effects of group learning to the extent possible. Teams are shaped based on predetermined criteria which have been intentionally selected. The criteria for group formation, which have to reflect the realities of classes, include a wide range of variables such as prior academic achievement, language proficiency, learning style, sex, race, ethnicity, social class, religion, personality, diligence, age, and so on. It is believed that such grouping is favourable to more effective learning in many ways. For example, discrepancies among solutions in such heterogeneous groups give rise to cognitive conflict, stimulate analysis of the problems and the procedures used, and promote learner-to-learner tutoring.

Further, as Oxford (1997) stressed, heterogeneity effectively enhances relations among group mates in the sense that it provides a variety of perspectives, promotes cross-cultural understanding, decreases prejudice, increases tolerance, and fosters appreciation of the value of diversity. Smaller sized groups are also

preferable to larger ones inasmuch as they endow students with both greater opportunities and greater obligations to respond which, as Swing and Peterson (1982) and Webb (1985) stated, contribute to more effective learning. The belief is that larger groups do not provide all the students with the opportunities of receiving information which, according to Webb, is negatively related to learning

There are different suggestions regarding the kind of composition of heterogeneous groups. For example, Peterson, Janicki, and Swing (1981) believed that groups with high-, average-, and low- ability members are not satisfactory for average scorers as they, in such groups, are ignored most of the time. Webb reported that when high ability and low ability uniform groups were compared to mixed ability groups, students in both groups gave fewer explanations to one another than their peers in the mixed ability groups, and this difference in behaviour was reflected in their achievement scores. She ultimately suggested two-level groups (high-average or average-low) in forming heterogeneous groups in order to satisfy all members, in group learning situations.

Face-to-Face Interaction

Face-to-face interaction exists when discussants circle together to better comprehend the material introduced by the teacher through discussion of acquired information and ideas, clarification of problematic areas and assessing one another. Face-to-face interaction provides discussants with a kind of meta-cognition monitoring opportunities in which they soon recognize not only their own problematic areas of knowledge, but also those of their peers. The immediate comprehensible feedback learners receive in such live contexts is also favourable

to the promotion of more elaborative thinking skills. In these contexts, which promote and facilitate mutual interaction, students get empowered with influential strategies, acquire some societal behaviours, and learn to value individual differences. In comparison with traditional CL methods, face-to-face interactions are more carefully and intentionally designed in recent methods of CL and are more actively supervised by teachers.

Interpersonal and Collaborative Skills

Interpersonal social skills are the immediate essentials of any kind of human interaction especially in academic situations. Social skills not only influence the kind and depth of relationships with others, they also improve individuals' abilities to further benefit from classroom teaching. There is considerable body of research espousing the idea that poor social skills contribute to academic under achievement (Cartledge & Milburn, 1980; Hughes & Sullivan, 1988; Michelson, Sugai, Wood, & Kazdin, 1983). Therefore, students need to value cooperation not only as a means to learning and achievement, but also as a 'content and must that has to be learnt'. They must learn and use social skills as well as the norms governing socially behaviour. That is why, in contrast to traditional CL methods and TLM which merely aim at academic achievement of learners, humane interpersonal skills are among the main concerns of recent CL methods. These skills are taught both implicitly and explicitly whenever appropriate. It is believed that teams cannot function effectively if members do not have and use the needed social skills. Hence, the development of social skills of students such as taking turns, encouraging others to participate, asking for

clarification and assistance, giving feedback, reinforcement and support, checking that others understand, supporting and encouraging academic achievement, challenging and constructive disagreement, conflict-management, consensus building, trust building, tolerating others, staying on task, and holding one another accountable for learning are necessary.

Positive Interdependence

Johnson and Johnson (1992) defined positive interdependence, which was first posed by Deutsch (1949), as the heart of structured CL. Positive interdependence exists when the success of an individual in a team is associated with the achievement of other members. Even it can exist when the success of a team in a classroom is correlated to the success of other teams. This way, all participants get motivated to cooperate and help those who need more assistance in completing the assignments so as to achieve their shared learning goals. Thus, positive interdependence is, in essence, an influential strategy for creating group identity and collective responsibility among students. In an environment in which positive interdependence has been established, Hills (2001) comments that “when Anybody learns something new, Everybody gets a sense of achievement; when the group achieves, Somebody in the team congratulates Everybody. And Nobody feels their achievement goes unnoticed by Anybody” (p. 5). Positive interdependence, as Johnson and Johnson elaborated, can be the result of those all factors like goals, rewards, rules, social skills, and members’ attitudes towards themselves, others, and the course that make and encourage them stay and work together in a group.

It is important to bear in mind that, depending on the type of patterns of interaction they desire in their classrooms, teachers can create different types of interdependence among students. In addition to positive inter- and intra-group interdependence as it is, for example, in Cooperative T-BL, they can also create neutral inter- while positive intra-group interdependence as it is in Student Teams-Achievement Divisions method of CL. They can even create negative inter-but positive-intra group interdependence as it is in, for example, Competitive T-BL. To have a view on these methods of CL, see the section on CL Methods in this chapter.

Intra-group positive interdependence can exist and be enhanced when individuals in a group come to the conclusion that their success or failure is positively correlated to their teammates' achievements or failures; that is, their fate is interdependent with the ones of other members of their group. In such an atmosphere they are aware that as their work benefits other members of the group, so others' work would also benefit them. Therefore, they not only do their part of the work, but also encourage and assist other members enthusiastically to do likewise. The significance of well-developed positive interdependence among group members is in the sense that it effects group cohesion which in turn is of help to achievement of learning goals. Inter- group positive interdependence is the same as intra-group positive interdependence, but here it is the destiny of each group that depends on the level of achievements of other groups in the classroom because all groups have 'common fate' and as Johnson and Johnson put it, they 'sink or swim together'. The emphasis is on improvement and expanding of cohesiveness of all groups in a classroom.

Types of Positive Interdependence

Kagan (1992) has argued that teachers can create ‘weak’, ‘moderate’, or ‘strong’ interdependence among students. Weak mode of positive interdependence exists when an individual in a team can succeed even if one or some other members fail to secure their marks. It can also exist when a team can succeed even when some other teams in the class fail. In spite of its positive aspects, the deficiency with this kind of interdependence is that high achievers will not be motivated enough to teach others due to the simple reason that they do not feel that it is necessary. Consequently, low performers will also be disappointed and reluctant to continue to learn because of being ignored by high achievers, as they want to secure and improve their own marks. Quite the reverse, strong form of positive interdependence is when the success of each member is totally dependent on the success of other team members, or when the recognition of a team totally depends on the success of other teams in class. Although it may best satisfy low performers, this kind of interdependence would dissatisfy high achievers in view of the fact that it is unfair and illogical. And finally, moderate positive interdependence is when an individual’s success or a teams’ recognition is not highly related to the success of other members or teams. Individual members’ diligence will also play a role in shaping their destinies. This mode of interdependence is more reasonable for reasons this researcher has explicated in the section on Competitive T-BL.

Strategies for Creating Positive Interdependence

Teachers can harness a number of strategies, some of which have been introduced below, to create a feel of positive interdependence among students in course of pursuing their group learning goals. These strategies can help teachers in different ways. They are helpful on the ground that they contribute to the involvement of participants in the learning process and motivate even the high achievers to help others. Cohen (1994), Johnson and Johnson (1992), Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec (1994), Johnson, Johnson, Holubec, and Roy (1984), Kagan (1992/1994), and Kessler (1992) have discussed these strategies. Salient features of these discussions may be noted here:

1. 'Reward-based interdependence': Positive interdependence can be brought about by distributing group rewards. Groups can receive the rewards based on some specific criteria. These criteria can include: (a) the average of scores of group members, (b) the sum of individual members who exceed a pre-determined criterion, and (c) team improvement.
2. 'Task-based interdependence': Teachers can facilitate positive interdependence by making students work on tasks to produce shared products. As such, team members can be evaluated based on their performance on tasks.
3. 'Goal-based interdependence': By evaluating an essay, a presentation, or a report as a team product, teachers can establish common goals, and thus ensure positive interdependence.
4. 'Resource-based interdependence': Teachers can help learners be dependant on one another's resources, materials, and information to effect

positive interdependence. This can be done through the distribution of separate materials to team members – as it is in Jigsaw, in order to learn them individually and then try to teach others.

5. ‘Role-based interdependence’: Assigning specific roles for each team member so as to bring some unique responsibilities to individuals is another strategy for patterning positive interdependence among group members. These roles can be such as leader, information giver, opinion seeker, recorder, summarizer, process evaluator, and reporter.
6. ‘Rule-based interdependence’: Positive interdependence can also be brought about by establishing some specific rules. Having a rule that no team member can secure his or her grade unless all team members are able enough to provide reasons for their answers is an example for this strategy for creating positive interdependence among team members.

Individual Accountability

After positive interdependence, individual accountability is the next most important element for implementing a structured CL experience. Individual accountability exists when each individual in a team feels responsible for his or her own progress and achievement as well as for their team members. Individual team members come to the conclusion that the level of their own efforts in team work situations will, in the first place, affect their own fate. The significance of focusing on individual accountability of participants in CL settings is that it keeps away CL settings from free riders who are in the habit of abdicating their responsibilities and ‘hitchhiking’ on the work of others. When teachers manage individuals to be

responsible for their own learning, because they know that they must personally learn the assigned material, they take on the responsibility for doing a fair share of work, and therefore, get engaged in the learning process. Such circumstances also put an end to the objection of some students for the inequitable distribution of workload among team members which is common in traditional forms of group work.

Individual accountability can be established through, for example, (a) presenting individual tasks or assignments which have to be done individually before or after the group work, (b) tournaments with same level learners of other teams, and (c) random selection of one student's product to represent the team. Distributing rewards in ways that appreciate coordination of individual members to the success of group, making team members take tests individually, and conducting specific grading systems as it is in Competitive T-BL, for example, are some other strategies for bringing and enhancing individual accountability among students. All these strategies can affect students' motivation, intention and concentration, and as a result, their learning in positive ways.

Equal Participation

Equal participation in CL exists when all members of a team have the same opportunities to give as much information as they receive. Usually in teams consisting of more than five members, as it is in some traditional methods of CL, some members might not have opportunities to have joint interaction in terms of both receiving and giving the information. This might be due, in part, to the

domination of one or two more capable or talkative/extrovert members of the groups. Consequently, the majority miss the advantages of these opportunities.

To avoid this problem, keeping groups' sizes small, assigning rotating roles in groups (e.g., as leader, information giver, and opinion seeker), and the use of multiple ability tasks -- tasks that require a range of abilities such as acting and categorizing, rather than only language abilities -- are some solutions. Also, considering activities that require input from all team members may be effective for bringing equal opportunities for participation of all the members.

Simultaneous Interaction

In CL, 'simultaneous interaction' is not recognized by action and reaction of one student and the teacher at a particular time as it is in conventional classes, but it is distinguished by interaction of all class members with one another, in their groups, at a particular time. In other words, as Kagan (1992) asserted, simultaneous interaction exists when all group members are involved in the process of learning at the same time.

There are a number of strategies for improvement of this element in CL classes. For example, by pairing members of a team, teachers can at least double the opportunities for members' participation. The other strategy to engage them all simultaneously is to have all of them write individual responses.

Group Processing of Interaction

Providing sufficient time for groups or the class to have regular group processing and reflection would improve the effectiveness of group work in CL

settings. In such situations, they discuss matters like how well they have been achieving their goals. Doing so, they detect the kind of activities, behaviours, and social skills, which probably have facilitated or intruded the attainment of their goals. The results make it possible for the group to enhance the positive factors and delete the negative ones for the purpose of accelerating group achievement.

Continuity of Group Interaction

While shorter duration of stability of group compositions is common in traditional and informal CL methods, recent methods of CL call attention to longer stable teamwork in view of some reasons. In longer duration of team learning, students have the opportunities, for instance, to know one another better and create better interpersonal relationships, which enhance social cohesion and more stable social network. Social cohesion, in turn, leads to more psychologically safe ambience in classrooms, which is congruent with effective learning.

In conclusion, careful implementation of these critical features contributes to the success of CL, the major goal of which is enhancing the effectiveness of group learning activities, which are of paramount importance especially in language classes.

Cooperative Learning Methods

As it was already stated, CL stands for some flexible instructional techniques and strategies known as methods. As Slavin (1983a) confirmed, these methods mostly aim at the development of cognition which includes thinking, remembering, concept formation, problem solving, and logical reasoning, in social

contexts. Most of these methods are focusing upon not only deleting some damaging problems of traditional group work like free riding, so as to enhance the effective use of CL groups, but also developing social skills and individuals' capabilities for more effective inter-personal relationships, thereby empowering them to succeed both academically and socially.

Some of the well-known methods of CL are Group Investigation (GI), Learning Together (LT) or Cooperative T-BL, Reciprocal Teaching of Reading (RTR), Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC), Jigsaw I, Jigsaw II, Constructive Controversy (CC) or Structured Academic Controversy (SAC), Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD), and Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT). Complex Instruction (CI), Cooperative Structures (CS), and Team Accelerated Individualization (TAI) are some other methods of CL.

It is essential to make it clear at the outset that in spite of their commonalties in some aspects, these methods have their unique and distinguishing features and characteristics. Such features manifest their designers' views and interpretations of learning, teaching, and the world. Some of the more popular methods of CL may be briefly introduced here below. For further information on various CL methods, Kagan (1992), Kluge, McGuire, Johnson, and Johnson (1999a), Sharan, (1999), and Slavin (1983a/1990) could be very useful sources of reference.

Group Investigation (GI)

Sharan and Sharan (1992) have developed this method of CL. GI is one of the rare CL methods that gives considerable freedom to students. Students have the

latitude to decide on the composition of their teams, assign their roles and responsibilities, establish and clear the norms and their desired behaviours, and set their goals. They form their own favourable two- to six-member groups to work cooperatively for conducting their group projects, and thereby, achieving their shared goals. GI involves cooperative group inquiry emphasizing data-gathering by students, interpretation of information through group discussion, and synthesis of individual contributions into a group project. Another distinguishing characteristic of the method is its attempt to eliminate competition among students.

At the class level, as in most CL methods, the instructor is expected to introduce the method and its basic principles, shed light on the objective of the course, explain scoring system, and help students form their teams in the first session. Like any other method of CL, the class presentation can be a lecture or any other kind of demonstration like brief plays and brain storming techniques supported by a slide, a video, or an internet show. The three critical components of this method, according to Sharan and Sharan, are: 'investigation', 'interaction', 'interpretation', and 'intrinsic motivation'. First teams get together and investigate into topics from a wide range of topics, which are to be covered during a term, and select their favourable topics. Then individual teams plan and decide what to seek for in the topic, how to go about it, and how to divide the work among them in order to carry out the group research or task. During the course, they collaborate in activities like analysing and evaluating the data they gather from several sources. They discuss their work in progress and exchange ideas and information in order to expand, clarify, and integrate them. After each individual finishes his or her task, the group pools the findings and tries to reach consensus to produce a group report,

demonstration, play, or exhibition. In the final session, each group makes a presentation or display to share its findings with the entire class. The belief is that collective achievement of shared goals brings with it a kind of intrinsic motivation.

Self-evaluation, peer assessment, and teacher evaluation are utilized in this method to supply appropriate feedback for students' further development. For example, while a group is presenting its report, other groups have the opportunity to evaluate the clarity and professional quality of their presentation through observation and posing questions with reference to their areas of concern and interest. The final evaluation of groups is based on the quality of their performance during the semester, which strongly aims at developing positive interdependence among group members.

Learning Together (LT)/Cooperative T-BL

Learning Together or Learning Circles or as this researcher has called it Cooperative T-BL has been developed by Johnson and Johnson (1999a) at the University of Minnesota. In this method of CL, class members, mostly heterogeneous groups (e.g., in sex, race, ethnicity, reading comprehension abilities, or language proficiency abilities) of three to six students, work together towards certain shared learning goals. One of the distinguishing features of this method is the strong stress it puts on cross-team sharing and learning. It will naturally be the norm that teams that contribute to the progress of other teams more enthusiastically have better chances to receive more information and help. Explicit teaching of social skills like trust building, conflict resolution, and helping and supporting one another are also appreciated. Johnson brothers have especially emphasized that five

essential elements must be structured in Cooperative T-BL: positive interdependence, individual and group accountability, face-to-face interaction, group skills, and group processing.

This method is much more group-skills based than other methods of CL. The focus is on the actual cooperation and getting along together in the group, which is considered as a necessary part of group learning. In contrast to some other methods of CL that follow specific steps, it allows teachers to follow their own procedures based on their students' and circumstantial needs.

Concerning its evaluation system, all team members receive the same grade, regardless of differences in their contributions to the success of the group. They are assessed for both their group participation and group performance in producing a shared product and the level of their cooperation with other groups in the class. This kind of evaluation system enhances both intra- and inter- group positive interdependence in the classroom. It is believed that because of their common fate, students are motivated to help one another to ensure that everyone learns the lesson or completes the assignment introduced by the teacher.

Reciprocal Teaching of Reading (RTR)

Originally Palinscar at the University of Michigan and Brown (1985) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign coordinated their efforts to launch the new version of RTR as a special program to suit poor readers who had not profited from traditional reading instructional methods in early and advance levels of education. By valuing the role of social scaffolding in class activities as its focused area, RTR lays emphasis on strategy training in reading courses. For the purpose of

joint understanding of a text, students, in their heterogeneous teams, are mostly focused on specific reading comprehension strategies such as ‘predicting’, ‘summarizing’, ‘questioning’, and ‘clarification’ to unfamiliar texts. The significance of predicting is that it helps students focus on what they are reading to see whether their predictions come true. It involves students in learning because they have to concentrate on the content, in order to evaluate their prediction. Summarizing is also assumed to encourage them to integrate what they have learnt. In other words, in order to summarize or reproduce the text, students have to implement their lexicon and syntax, which they have acquired through listening, reading, and speaking. The philosophy behind the emphasis on generating questions is that learning to generate questions in lieu of responding to only teacher’s questions challenges deeper levels of students’ cognition. And finally, clarifying is believed to promote comprehension monitoring of participants, which increases their meta-cognition abilities.

As regards teaching a text, for example, the teacher first activates students’ minds on the topic through different techniques, and then introduces the text. To illustrate how applying each of the abovementioned strategies helps students in the comprehension of the passage, the teacher models his or her own process of comprehending of the first paragraph of the text. He or she does it by thinking the process aloud. Through this technique, students will learn the target strategies – strategies that the teacher has already planned to teach. Students are then given the opportunity to try to follow the same procedure for next paragraphs in their teams so as to internalise and master the strategies. High achievers take the first turns to apply the strategies, by thinking aloud, in order to endow low performers with

more opportunities to better understand the application of strategies. Team members also share their uncertainties about unfamiliar vocabularies, confusing text passages, and difficult concepts and discuss about more practical strategies to be applied for each problem.

As opposed to GI and Cooperative T-BL which focus on positive interdependence in their evaluation systems, in this method, teams are evaluated based on individuals' performances on quizzes and tests which makes individuals more responsible for their own learning.

Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC)

Stevens, Madden, Slavin, and Farnish (1987) have developed CIRC which is a comprehensive programme for teaching reading and writing, and language arts. This method focuses on simultaneous development of reading and writing skills of participants because it considers them as two inseparable skills. Lesson elements, in this method, include discussing the context of each theme of the text, introducing the meaning of new vocabulary, reading silently and reading to a partner, analyzing the text's linguistic features, summarising the text, and practicing word recognition and spelling to the point of mastery. Therefore, in CIRC class, after the teacher introduces the topic and tries to relate it to the students' background knowledge through applying different strategies and techniques such as brainstorming and class discussion on the topic, students have the time to read the text silently and note down key vocabularies. Then, they head together with their teammates to discuss on unknown vocabularies and problematic

areas of the text and answer related questions. They engage in some other activities such as paraphrasing and summarizing the topic as well.

In this method, to enhance both positive interdependence and individual accountability, the evaluation of students is based on improvements in individual achievements that are calculated as a team-score.

Jigsaw I

Aronson, Stephen, Sikes, Blaney, and Snapp (1978) developed Jigsaw at the University of California. The key to implementation of Jigsaw is the creation of a *gap* in students' information and using this gap as a motivator for their further involvement in the learning process. The information gap creates a genuine communicative context for authentic language use -- the component crucial for language acquisition and learning. To create this gap in students' existing knowledge, no one member is given sufficient information to solve the problem at hand or complete the assignment in question. Therefore, to fill their gaps of information and meet their interests, students have no other option but cooperation. Because of felt-need, team members enthusiastically listen to their teammates which enhances positive interdependence and encourages them to take an active part in their learning.

Jigsaw has five main components: 'reading', 'expert group discussion', 'team report', 'testing', and 'team recognition'. In Jigsaw, after the material to be learnt is divided into separate units, it is presented in 'base groups or home teams' of four to six heterogeneous (in abilities) members assembled by the teacher. Individual members of the base groups are then given separate parts (mini-topics)

of the whole academic textual material. Each home team's member takes responsibility for one aspect of the problem in question. Having learnt something about their parts in an adequate time in their home teams, team members who have the same parts for learning come together in 'expert or study groups' to study, discuss, and refine their understanding of their shared parts and decide how best to teach it to their peers in their original or base teams. After assuring themselves that everyone has digested the material, they return to their base groups and take turns to teach what they learnt to their teammates. Equally, in this phase, they also have the opportunity to learn what their team members learnt and mastered in their expert groups. Therefore, they all fill their gaps of knowledge in mutual communicative environments and, in fact, complete the jigsaw. Subsequently, groups share their findings with the class at large through a class discussion, a graphic or dramatic production, or in a question-and-answer session. At the end of each unit students will take a test over the input which they have learnt. The procedure in such classes is not a loose, 'anything goes' situation. It is highly structured.

Teams are evaluated by the sum of their members' scores on quizzes and tests which they take individually. Teams that show highest improvements receive rewards. This kind of evaluation is more likely to enhance individual accountability of team members. In addition to the recognition of the best teams, the rationale behind information gap activity contributes also to the enhancement of positive interdependence.

Jigsaw II

Jigsaw II, developed by Slavin (1980b), is similar to original Jigsaw in the sense that it too strongly advocates students to learn from one another. Jigsaw II is a more practical form of Jigsaw I. The difference is that in Jigsaw II each student should study the whole assignment rather than a section of it.

After the teacher introduces the whole theme, each member is asked to study a specific segment of the whole thoroughly. As in the original Jigsaw, to discuss the areas they have become expert in, individuals meet other teams' members who have the same topic in 'expert teams'. They, at this stage, mostly discuss about the ways as to how to teach their parts to their fellow members in their 'home groups'. Then, as experts, they go back to their home teams and take turns teaching their parts to one another. In this stage, in their home teams, they also learn something more in the areas they have not been provided with resources or sufficient knowledge from others in expert teams. And finally, they are subjected to a class-wide discussion or a question and answer session. They will also take a test which covers all the sub-topics.

In addition to group work evaluation as it is in the original Jigsaw, Jigsaw II stresses individuals' improvement evaluation. Each team member has a 'base score' and an 'improvement score'. Base score is the average of past grades of the individual, and improvement score is the difference between his or her last test score and the average of his or her base scores. The ultimate score of each team is also calculated by the sum of its members' improvement scores. These improvements will be judged by comparison of their recent marks with the average of their previous performances. Individuals and teams with highest improvement

scores earn certificates or other team rewards. Even though its activities aim at bringing positive interdependence, the evaluation system of this method mostly focuses upon individual accountability of students.

Constructive Controversy (CC)

Constructive Controversy is an extension of Learning Through Discussion (LTD), which is another method of CL. LTD is fundamentally based on discussion sessions on variety of desired-to-learners topics. Higher order questions and analysis of viewpoints that demand abstract thinking are emphasized and encouraged in this method. Such questions and activities exact more than remembering and expressing of factual or descriptive statements. They require discovery, comparison, generalization, and relating of ideas, concepts, and principles. They demand making inferences and evaluation of causes and effects. All of these are believed to be conducive to deeper and more effective learning. It is interesting to learn that, in contrast to education system in academic situations in Iran, which is sticking to traditional modes of learning and teaching, Iranian priests or sheikhs (clerics) have been experiencing this method (LTD) of CL in their institutions for centuries.

However, scholars like Johnson and Johnson (1979) and Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec (2002) have contributed to the development of CC which focuses on the positive influences of planned and structured controversy on achievement and social relationships among participants. In this method, discussants are always supplied with well-documented positions and some further references, if needed, along with some guidelines for discussion. Each session, teacher introduces an

interesting but challenging topic which foregrounds polemical discussions. He or she may have a brief review of vocabulary while introducing the general theme of the text or topic to be covered. Then teams of four members are divided into two pairs to discuss and develop one side of the argument. Afterwards, the two dyads meet to discuss the topic for the purpose of achieving more knowledge of the topic. Pairs then switch sides and develop arguments for the opposite side of the same issue in order to gain a through understanding of the topic in question from different dimensions. Later, they put the topic on the stage for a class-wide debate for further exploration and understanding. This gives students opportunities to explain and compare their understanding, reasons, and thoughts with those of others in a broader sense. As a result, they find opportunities to criticize and challenge others. More importantly, they will be challenged to defend their ideas too. Identification of advantages and disadvantages of the theme, discussion of theme through different dimensions, and evaluation of the type of presentation by the author are some of the activities which occasion students to consolidate the material they have learnt.

During controversy, according to Johnson and Johnson, students should try to critique the ideas instead of those who pose them. They should take into account that winning is not as important as arriving to best decision. Therefore, they should first listen to everyone's ideas, even if they do not believe in them. They should comfortably ask for clarification whenever they cannot understand some points. And finally, they should be objective. In other words, after considering both sides of the arguments, whenever they think that others' viewpoints are based on facts and evidence, they should openly consider and accept them. Alexander's (1968)

textbook could provide a good model for the application of this method in language classes.

In this method of CL, teams are recognized based on both group production and the average of members' performance. This evaluation system, is believed to increase individual accountability and positive interdependence among participants.

Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD)

Student Teams-Achievement Divisions is another popular method of CL which was developed by Slavin (1978). In contrast to some methods of CL like GI, for example, which are purely student-centred, STAD pays more attention to the presence and the role of the teacher. Therefore, it is likely to attract those teachers who do not like to consider their students' contributions to making important curriculum-related decisions such as goal setting, group formation, and role assignment. This method includes five major phases: 'teacher presentation', 'team study', 'individual quizzes', 'determining improvement points', and 'team recognition'. After the teacher presents the lesson through his or her favourable techniques and strategies, heterogeneous teams of two dyads work together to attain their learning goals. They work together to complete the worksheets, which are distributed by the teacher after his presentation. First, they work in pairs on one shared worksheet and then share their work with the other pair of their team. By virtue of the positive interdependence STAD brings among teams' members through applying different strategies like its grading system, students feel the need for helping their teammates. After the team study is completed, the teacher asks

students to take a test individually in order to assess their understanding of the material. Shortly thereafter, students correct their own performances on quizzes based on keys supplied by the teacher. This opportunity provides students an immediate feedback and helps them to better recognize their problems and reconstruct their related knowledge.

Like Jigsaw II, in STAD individuals are evaluated based on their improvements over their own past performance on quizzes and tests, which they have already taken individually, applying an individual improvement score. Therefore, each student is assessed based on the progress he or she has achieved, compared to his or her previous performances on similar quizzes and tests. Individuals' points are also combined to recognize teams. To put it another way, team recognition is based on individuals' improvements. Teams that achieve above a designated standard earn certificates or other team rewards.

Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT)

Scholars like DeVries and Edwards (1974) and Slavin (1991) have developed TGT. This method of CL is somewhat similar to STAD. Its distinguishing feature is that formal quizzes and tests have been replaced by tournaments, which have been designed to evaluate students' knowledge of the material covered previously. The grading system and the pattern of interaction TGT brings about among teams also differentiate it from STAD. Whereas STAD pays no attention to inter-group competition, TGT suggests within-group comparison in the sense that it encourages teams' members to vie with their same-level opponents from other teams. This opportunity endows them with equal

chances to win for their teams. This kind of academic competition among teams in regular class tournaments is the central focus area of this method.

In class activities, heterogeneous teams of usually four to five members, study, practice, and discuss together, and assist and quiz one another to master the material posed by teacher to get ready for the tournaments and in order to warrant their up-to-some-extent shared destiny. Due to their interrelated fate, team members are motivated enough to do their best not only to master the material for their own sake, but to help others to ensure that everyone learns the lesson or completes the assignment introduced by the teacher.

In relation to its evaluation system, points are awarded to individuals depending on how they have done in comparison with their same level opponents in other teams. The sum of team members' grades will stand for the team. Also the first top teams are appreciated. TGT also rewards high achievers and may allow extra points for more challenging students. Although it considers positive interdependence, TGT's evaluation system is more focused upon posing individual accountability.

Method Engineering

Notwithstanding the idea that every method is composed of certain unique principles and strategies, it is reasonable for educators to make use of different methods and approaches in order to meet their context-based academic goals in different circumstances in their respective classrooms. Fortunately, most of the CL methods, by virtue of their flexibility, have the potentiality to draw or crossbreed the best practices out of not only other methods within the domain of CL in general

education but also other methods in ELT sphere in order to suit the specific requirements of language classes.

In this study, this researcher has tried to enrich, expand, and develop CL repertoire by recasting, modifying, and mixing some of its methods. Effective principles of some methods and approaches in the field of language teaching have also been harnessed for improving the quality of these new methods for the benefit of language classes. The results of this attempt emerged in the form of Teams' Members Tournament (TMT) and specially Competitive T-BL, which he himself has been applying in his classes for the last decade. It was in the light of this experimental study that he found that there is another method which is similar to Competitive T-BL. This method which is known as 'mixed cooperative goal structure' in the related literature is practised in general education. As explicated earlier, the effectiveness of Competitive T-BL is to be compared to Cooperative T-BL and TLM in the present study. The illustration of the process under which these methods have been developed may inspire teachers to evolve similar or contextually relevant methods so as to meet their needs and goals in their classrooms.

Teams' Members Tournaments (TMT)

This researcher strongly believes in the idea that competition can be designed to act as an influential motivator for further cooperation through CL. The mechanism underlying TGT and its evaluation system, which encourages competition among teams, could better motivate students for more active participation in classroom activities, which can serve as predictors of their

achievement. The problem, however, is that sometimes conducting such tournaments in the form of games in some classrooms, especially at the collegiate level, may not be feasible or appreciated by students. It was in this backdrop that this researcher thought that tournaments of quizzes and tests rather than games would better satisfy students. Therefore, he thought of Teams' Members Tournament (TMT), which could be considered as an improved and enriched version of STAD and TGT. In TMT, as it is hinted in the name and as it could be in actual practice of the method in real class settings, the word, Games, has been removed, both from the title and the actual practice of the method.

To inject some kind of competition, teams are evaluated not only based on members' improvements over their own past performances as it is in STAD, but also in comparison with their opponents in other teams as it is in TGT. While this kind of evaluation system entails and ensures more accountability of individuals, it also patterns a within-group competition, which has been ignored in STAD.

There are a number of other procedures for evaluation of students in CL settings which could be adopted by teachers for the advantage of their respective CL methods. To cite an example, Kagan (1992) has suggested that for the evaluation of individual members of teams, say in a team of four, students' grades could be calculated by averaging the score of each individual on his or her performance and the average of his or her other three teammates' performances. To put it another way, if a student's mark is 18 out of 20, and the three other partners' are 17, 15, and 13 (an average of 15), then the student's grade would be 16.5 (the average of 18 & 15).

Competitive Team-Based Learning (Competitive T-BL)

This researcher has developed Competitive T-BL out of some methods of CL as well as some methods in the arena of ELT in order to contribute not only to more academic achievement of learners in language classes but also to their success in real world situations. As it is evident from the review of the literature, the main philosophy behind harnessing competition in few CL methods, which appreciate the role of competition, is that it is a motivator for involving students in the learning process. Apart from this, the significance of competition in learning environments may also be looked upon from another different angle. As underscored elsewhere in the thesis, the era of globalization requires enormous skills for competition in as much as context-based learning demands team-related skills for cooperation. It is a known fact that a majority of students among the target groups of this study, for instance, have not been prepared to live in a world that poses a number of challenges vis-à-vis competition or cooperation. Therefore, if education ought to prepare students for the real world settings, if it is meant to empower them to face the challenges of globalization, and if it focuses on supporting them so that they shine forth both academically and socially, then it has to take into account all the motivational factors – both instrumental and integrative – in terms of both competition and interdependence. Competition, today, is an inevitable real world phenomenon. Therefore, students need to be equipped to cope with the norms of the real world in their educational life. They need to compete wherever it is indispensable, as otherwise, they would not be in a position of self-reliance to understand and constructively confront the realities of the tough world they face today and the tougher world they are likely to face in the years to come.

It is against such a backdrop that competition has been projected in Competitive T-BL in this research study. This researcher is of the view that Competitive T-BL, as a more realistic approach to teaching, would produce a more realistic depiction of the real-world norms and settings in the classroom, and it has the potential to contribute more comprehensively to the success of students. Competition, underscored in this method, differs from the kind of unhealthy competition, practised in different communities, societies and civilizations in the world today, resembling a jungle type of civilization. The kind of competition, emphasized in this method, has its own healthy principles that students could internalise as responsible citizens of tomorrow's world. It enables tomorrow's citizenry to work, learn, and develop together in the spirit of cooperation and fair competition on the basis of a respect for the culture of learning together. It intends to develop students' skills for cooperation and exercise them in humanitarian ways for competition that ensures fairness to all.

Some class-level problems with current CL methods introduced so far were also the motives for developing Competitive T-BL in the present study. Most of these methods, by overemphasizing patterning pure cooperation, ignore the fundamental role of competition in learning environments. STAD is among these methods. It focuses on intra-group cooperation. Even methods like Jigsaw I, II, and GI have extended cooperation to include inter-group relationships also. Cooperative T-BL is the epitome of this family of CL methods, which overemphasizes cooperation in both intra- and inter- group relationships and interactions. A negligence of the invaluable role of competition in learning situations may originate from the ideas of Johnson and Johnson (1975) and Ames

and Felker (1979). They have argued that competition promotes negative attitudes among students, distracts them from basic learning goals, and by creating losers and winners, ruptures the cohesion of the learning communities. Bacharach, Hasslen, and Anderson (1995) have also stated that competition tends to discourage students from helping one another. Even though some CL methods like TGT and TMT have considered competition, they mostly focus on within- group comparisons, ignoring inter- group competitions, which has been prioritized in Competitive T-BL.

Another problem with most of methods of CL is that they create situations whereby individual personal goals can only be achieved if the group is successful because individuals are recognized based on their group performances. Slavin (1995) has confirmed the idea that students in most of the methods of CL could earn certificates or other recognitions based on average team scores. This is not fair. These methods neglect the fact that the level of the coordination of work and perseverance, and capabilities of individual team members differs in many ways. Such evaluation systems endanger the effectiveness of these methods by virtue of the fact they leave:

1. the clever and more hard working students feel not adequately evaluated and appreciated, and
2. the room open for free riders, which, in the long run, contributes to the formation of unhealthy societies.

Competitive T-BL implies a middle path. It comes to mediate between CL methods, which entirely lay the stress on pure cooperation, and the traditional methods that merely put the accent on competition, with the presumption that

balance is a word of order. It focuses upon the significance of inter-group competitions, in addition to intra-group cooperation and within-group comparisons, in order to motivate individuals for further perseverance and cooperation with their team members, and thus, enhances the attainment of established curriculum goals. In contrast with methods like TGT and STAD, and up to some extent TMT wherein motivation is the key to help the teammates to achieve their individual goals, the key in this method is to win the competition against other teams. Team members help one another because their success is, to some extent, correlated with that of their team members. Fair and healthy competition, as a magic motivator and a motivation-driven device, is emphasized in this method in order to encourage students for further achievement, progress, and growth in authentic learning environments. More importantly, through some mechanisms, especially through its evaluation system, Competitive T-BL appreciates the levels of contribution of individual team members (individual accountability) in relation to the success of their teams.

Competitive T-BL differs from other methods of CL because the mechanism underlying it:

1. helps the best students or high achievers feel satisfied and puts an end to their objection and unwillingness to help their teammates;
2. motivates low performers for more active participation in class activities;
3. enforces individual accountability of all group members, and thus limits the scope for free riders or those who tend to abdicate their responsibilities;
4. brings further opportunities for students to be more clearly aware of their capacities and capabilities in a broader sense, and

5. contributes not only to true and active shared learning, but also to learning humanitarian democratic values which, in turn, are favourable to the acceleration of growth and development of humane societies.

Competitive Team-Based Learning in the Classroom

In the class, after the teacher presents the lesson, teams members have the time to go through the lesson individually first, and then, in pairs. Afterwards, they will be asked to get together and work with the other pair members of their heterogenous teams of usually four members. They work together on the given tasks with the ultimate intention of proving their fair superiority over other teams. They will also have class-wide discussions. In class activities, team members have no other option but to try to be sure that each member has mastered the assigned material because the teacher would randomly call upon a student to answer for the team. Although, in this method, team members take the finals individually as in CIRC, STAD and TGT, they have the opportunity to take quizzes cooperatively as a group. The philosophy behind allowing students to take quizzes cooperatively is to subject them to more opportunities for transference of skills and strategies in a metacognitive way through listening to their teammates. The application of this method in real classroom situations has been discussed in Chapter Four of this study.

Competitive Team-Based Learning and Evaluation System

Based on the fact that students, especially at higher education, are really sensitive to their grades by virtue of the fact that they play a critical role in their

future success in the real world of competition, this researcher has made Competitive T-BL avail of grades as an efficient motivating tool for creating an active and live learning environment. As it has been illuminated in the following paragraphs, graded evaluation of teams with a focus upon their individual members' accountabilities for their learning as well as for the benefits of their teams is the focal point of Competitive T-BL evaluation system. In addition to considering each team's performance for its final evaluation, this evaluation system pays specific attention to the performances of team's individual members with reference to their abilities to work together in team-learning, their individual levels of proficiency and competency.

Although, as in other methods, a number of grading systems and activities like Kagan's grading system or his Numbered Heads Together can be applied in this method for the evaluation of students, the evaluation of individual team members is suggested to be based on the following four criteria in this method:

1. Forty percent with reference to individuals' own grades;
2. Ten percent with reference to their improvement scores;
3. Twenty percent with reference to the level they outperform the average of same ability members of other teams, and
4. Thirty percent with reference to their team performance, which is gained through comparing the average of team members' scores with the average of other teams'.

As such, the recognition of each team is calculated by the sum-total of team members' scores, based on these criteria.

To cite an example, if, in an average team of four, Mohammad (as high achiever) gets 90, Ali and Peyman (as average scorers) secure 70 and 60 respectively, and Milad (as low performer) receives 35; the procedure for calculating Ali's score, for instance, would be as below:

1. Twenty eight points for his own grade ($70 \times 40\% = 28$);
2. Two point five points for his 'improvement score' ($70 - 45 = 25$, and $25 \times 10\% = 2.5$). This is while his base score has been considered to be 45;
3. Seven points for outperforming the average ability of opponents in other teams ($70 - 35 = 35$, and $35 \times 20\% = 7$). The average ability of opponents in other teams has been considered to be 35, and
4. Three points for his team performance ($61.66 - 50.66 = 11$, and $11 \times 30\% = 3.3$). Sixty-one point sixty six would be the average of Ali's team members' scores. And the average of other teams' performances has been considered to be 50.66.

Therefore, Ali's score will be 40.8. As noted, the recognition of Ali's team is calculated by the average of its members' scores, which is based on the above procedure.

The first two criteria in this system of evaluation emphasize bringing individual accountability of teams' members. They also inspire individual members for further perseverance. The third criterion contributes to both individual accountability and positive interdependence. It facilitates positive interdependence among team members because all members feel the need to help one another to outperform their opponents in other teams which contributes to the success of their team. Especially low performers will find this criterion suitable by virtue of the

fact they find it more feasible to compete with their peer-level opponents. And the forth intends to pattern positive interdependence among team members. It is a good motive, especially for high achievers to share their capabilities with team members. Therefore, in Competitive T-BL's evaluation system, almost 70% of each individual's success depends on his or her own diligence and willingness and the remaining 30% correlates to the performance of other team members. This evaluation system pushes team members not only to outperform their peer-level opponents in other teams but also to pool their efforts together to surpass other teams in order to prove their fair superiority in the class and get the special rewards, which may include securing the highest mark for all team members in recognition of their effective collaborations.

Likewise, to encourage fair competition among teams, and simultaneously motivate team members for more effective cooperation, teams that prove their superiority for two periods may receive 'A' marks for their members' final exam regardless of their actual grades -- on the condition that they should not be below the minimum standard. Besides, the first three to six, depending on the number of students in the class, best students are recognised as 'intellectuals or motivators' who will assist the teacher in the course of teaching. For example, when teams have problems, they must consult the motivators first. The teacher is the last resource. Every main exam's results, however, lead to the replacement of these intellectuals as well as teams' leaders or captains by those who prove their superiority over them. Although appreciation of the best team(s) is also valued in some methods like STAD, TGT, and TMT, this component is not as much seriously and directly injected in these methods as it is in Competitive T-BL.

Recognition of the best team(s) is a formal part of Competitive T-BL evaluation system. Likewise, teams' performances are regularly reported on a teams' recognition chart on the notice board of the classroom which as well announces the names of outstanding individuals. To lessen individual anxiety levels, teams that secure the designated standard – the least acceptable rank -- would pass the course. The average of teams' members' grades is the basis for this decision.

The application of Numbered Heads Together, which stresses random selection of team members to represent their teams, in Competitive T-BL classes would compensate the lack of sufficient emphasis on positive interdependence in the evaluation system of this method. Furthermore, that students take the quizzes cooperatively re-enhances positive interdependence in classes run through this method. This strategy also provides students excellent opportunities to listen and observe their counterparts thinking aloud which by itself improves their repertoire of skills and strategies to a great extent.

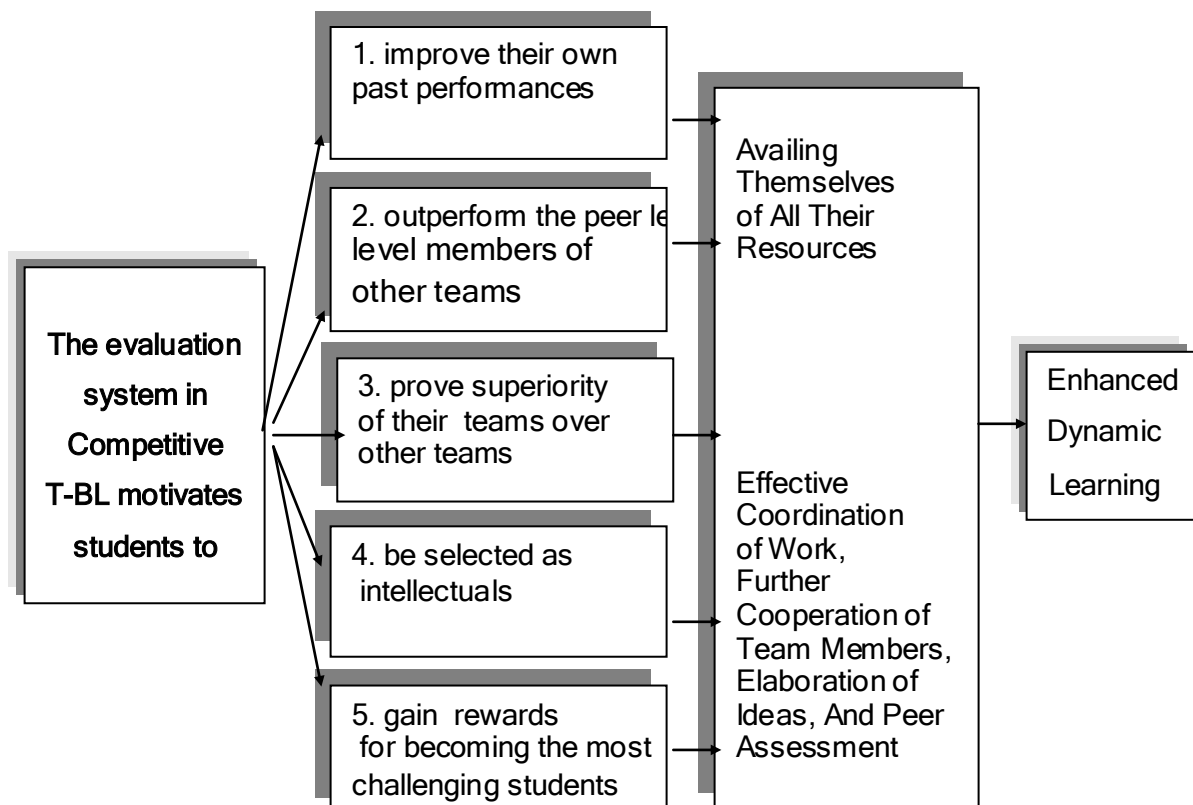
Competitive Team-Based Learning as a Motivating Agent in Evaluation System

Recently the focus of a number of researches is on the role of motivation in language classes, especially in EFL/ESL settings. Lack of motivation among EFL/ESL students has been claimed to be one of the main reasons for their low or under-performance in many countries. As Oxford and Shearin (1994) asserted, the significance of motivation lies in the fact that it determines the extent of the learner's active personal involvement and his or her attitude towards learning. The point is that when students are motivated, they have greater will-power to be

involved deeper in the process of learning. To motivate them is to provide them a motive, a need, or a desire that inspires them not only to act but also to sustain their intentions and goal-seeking ways (Ames & Ames, 1989). Motivation can also be a powerful propellor towards overcoming deficiencies in one's language proficiency and accomplishing long-term goals.

Given the importance attributed to the role of motivation in learning, Competitive T-BL applies different strategies to motivate students. Ensuring feedback scaffoldings with a relaxed ambience, providing challenging tasks for team performance and offering attractive incentives are part of the strategies of Competitive T-BL. However, creation of academic goals, as indicated in Figure 4, through applying its specific grading system is the main strategy for motivating students in this method.

Figure 4. Motivators in Competitive T-BL Graded Evaluation System



The immediate achievement of goals may demotivate students from further effort. This is so because goals act as desire-driven devices. Therefore, five developmentally progressive drives/goals (no. 1–5) have been developed in Competitive T-BL system of evaluation with the intention of sustaining students' zest for active language learning and cooperation with their team members during the whole semester. Engagement in the process of learning, as Richardson and King (1998) believed, results in effective learning and retention of information.

Finally, for this grading system to be a success, it is very important for teachers to know that grades should be properly given for the benefit of deserving individual members as well as teams. Further, they should be authentic, specific, and sufficient. Students should interpret them as recognition of achievement (Włodkowski, 1985). Otherwise, as Flint, Boggiano, Main, Barrett, and Katz (1992) have opined, if students interpret rewards as manipulated, there is a danger that they may feel that they are treated as objects. And this may weaken their motivation.

The important thing is that internal motivation among learners is not neglected in Competitive T-BL. In fact, extrinsic and achievement motivation focused upon in this method is considered as complementary to intrinsic motivation, which today college level student already possess. The belief is that external motivation potentially contributes to the success of students, which in turn, gives them a sense of achievement. And the feeling of achievement enhances their internal motivation. This researcher is of the opinion that the relation among external, achievement, and internal motivation is cyclical, and thus, none of them can be underestimated or ignored in learning environments, as it is so in most of

the methods of CL. However, in Competitive T-BL, internal motivation of students is also appreciated through meta-messages or motivational messages about the importance of education and learning implicitly or explicitly.

Competitive Team-Based Learning and the View of Language Learning

In Competitive T-BL, language learning is not deemed as a simple shallow exercise where students passively listen, repeat, and reproduce the material they have already memorised. It is a complicated process which involves active involvement of participants in environments in support of mutual interaction for negotiation of meaning. Meaning is deemed as the key to FL/L2 learning, and as already emphasized under theory of language in this study, language is the instrument to think and negotiate meaning.

The belief is that whole language carries more meaning rather than its isolated parts. For this reason, all (sub-) skills of language are suggested to be appreciated even in specific courses so that students could achieve their learning goals with little difficulty. For instance, in a special course for reading, as it has been illustrated in the next chapter, in addition to listening and speaking, writing is also considered as a complementary skill to reading. The presumption is that in order to learn to read and to prove their academic reading abilities, especially at the collegiate level, students need to write properly. Writing serves as a tool for learning and for consolidating the knowledge students acquire through oral negotiation of texts' themes. Thus, activities like note taking, outlining, paraphrasing, and summarizing are emphasized in such courses as complementary activities to oral negotiation of themes. The significance of these activities is that

they contribute to further involvement of students and encourage them to focus and concentrate not only on semantic but also on syntactic components of texts at hand which makes learning more purposeful. Because this kind of challenging activities demand deeper analysis of input not just for meaning but for accuracy and frequency, they solicit deeper levels of students' cognition, which in turn, contributes to their deeper comprehension and an in-depth understanding of the material.

Competitive Team-Based Learning and the Role of Tasks and Materials

The primary assumption in Competitive T-BL method is that negotiation of meaning will be effective once the instructional environment provides enough motivation and exposure to the target language. The fact is that students will not get motivated unless they feel engaged, stimulated, and challenged in learning situations. And tasks come to fulfil such goals. In view of the significance of tasks and materials in Competitive T-BL classes, the provision of more motivating, and communicative tasks which are favourable to natural language acquisition of participants is considered to be of critical importance. They are suggested to be authentic and discursive in nature. They should bring with them active participation of discussants for negotiation of meaning in the course of language learning. They should provide opportunities to students to discuss viewpoints of other members of the group and contribute to transference of skills and strategies.

Competitive Team-Based Learning and Learning Culture

This researcher believes that adherence of students to a learning culture which can be built on the following eight basic norms, he has developed, would contribute to the success of Competitive T-BL and the progress of students:

1. Regardless of diversities in our ages, status, and socio-cultural backgrounds, we are all human and so are responsible for one another;
2. Errors are inevitable. They are signs of openness, attentiveness, risk taking, and perseverance in the course of language learning;
3. We share all relevant information openly, encourage others to contribute to discussions, listen to them attentively, and want them to provide reasons for their suggestions or ideas they expect us to consider;
4. We cooperate to deepen our knowledge and understanding of the world, and to improve our capabilities to the extent possible for future career and life success;
5. Everyone has equal and shared opportunities to prove his or her abilities in action. Those who prove themselves under such conditions deserve the best;
6. We admire, appreciate, and respect our team leaders as long as they have qualities, commitments, talent, and academic and leadership ethics;
7. Losing is unavoidable as it is with winning; therefore, we practise to learn through losing as we do it through winning. Losing strengthens our will for winning-- winning through losing, and

8. Constructive criticisms are most welcome and are valued inasmuch as they lead to our learning and growth. Before criticizing others, let us try to be objective and fair.

Competitive Team-Based Learning, Flexibility, and other Methods and Approaches in ELT

In contrast to some methods that are strictly prescriptive, Competitive T-BL does not necessarily stipulate and follow specific steps. Therefore, it has the potential not only to compensate the deficiencies of other CL methods but also those in ELT sphere in order to make language classes more interesting and effective.

Like Counselling Learning, Competitive T-BL is learner-centred, and it accentuates both cognitive and affective aspects of learning. It tries to make the learner feel comfortable as a member of a group. Spontaneous exploratory discussion and confidence building within the privacy of small groups in a friendly ambiance encouraged by the teacher as a fellow facilitator contribute to the development of such a feeling. Like Suggestopedia, it focuses upon making the learner feel totally relaxed and open, and consequently, more receptive to what is learning. Like Multiple Intelligences, it values uniqueness of the learner and takes care of individuals' differences. By shifting the roles of the participants, it aims at not only accommodating diversity in intelligences but also improving their multi intelligences simultaneously. As in the Silent Way method, it values discovery learning and knowledge construction to make learners more independent and self-reliant. Like Communicative Language Teaching, it values genuine

communication in well-designed relaxing as well as motivating social frameworks. It values communication for real purposes, encourages risk taking, and accepts errors as signs of learning. Like Whole Language, with the presupposition that meaningfulness of the language to the learner supports the learning process, it appreciates the idea of teaching language as a whole and not in the form of isolated skills. Like Task-Based Language Teaching, it realizes the critical importance of tasks and activities that involve real naturalistic communication and encourage students to negotiate meaning. Tasks are designed to provide better contexts for the activation of input-output practice and the learning process, which are conducive to language learning.

Like Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach, Competitive T-BL provides explicit teaching of learning strategies whenever possible, implicitly or explicitly. As in Natural Approach, it foregrounds and focuses upon the significance of comprehensible input and learning environment. Like Lexical Approach, it appreciates the importance of functional words for effective communication and focuses upon providing sufficient and appropriate input. It tries to empower students with essential words. Like ALM, it avails itself of different kind of drills, whenever needed. And finally, like Neurolinguistic Programming, it aims at empowering students with techniques and strategies for personal growth and change.

On the other hand, unlike GTM, Competitive T-BL focuses upon process of learning rather than product of teaching; unlike Total Physical Response, it can be applied to all levels of proficiency and for all skills, and unlike Community Language Learning, it can be used with large groups of learners. Unlike DM,

Competitive T-BL makes students accountable for their own learning and pays specific attention to the realities of classrooms; unlike ALM, it gives prominent importance to creativity of students, and unlike the SW, it is not boring. Unlike SO, it is not merely focused on vocabulary at the expense of other (sub) skills. And finally unlike CLT, it respects effective variables such as students' attitudes and cultural expectations, and takes great care of moral and human values in language classes. It prioritizes simultaneous development of all aspects of communicative competence of students. And it is not limited to a particular view of language learning or a particular type of syllabus. In short, Competitive T-BL aims at training life long learners who will be empowered enough to live in this competitive complicated world.

Globalization and the Significance of Competitive Team-Based Learning

Interdependence and cooperation are inevitable among living beings. Even animals' existence depends on their cooperative work and on their symbiotic interaction with their milieu. Human being is not an exception. All human accomplishments during the history from the creation of villages to the formation of civilizations have been the outcomes of group work. Group work and group learning has promoted man from settling in jungles to launching into the desert areas in space. The pivotal role of group work comes to light in the present era of ongoing globalization today, which has made interdependence an indispensable value. As more and more physical and geographical borders are crumbling, communication and interdependence gain importance all the more in terms of

sharing knowledge, information and ideas and narrowing down of differences so that global challenges are met with goodwill and cooperation.

Interdependence, however, has another unavoidable component, which is competition. The history of mankind makes it also evident that as all human accomplishments have been the results of group work, all his fiascos and miseries have also been the consequences of unhealthy competition among groups. The Western hegemonical version of globalization, which can be considered as the result of the group work of the superpowers of the world competing against other groups (e.g., developing countries), has contributed to the ongoing clash of cultures, religions, and civilizations in today world. Unwillingness for fair distribution of wealth, lack of mutual communication skills, inability to listen to the Other, and fanatical attitude or condescending look towards the Other could be part of the reasons for conflicts among nations and civilizations. This researcher thinks that on the way towards the dream future, students or tomorrow's citizens and leaders of the world should also be empowered with interpersonal skills and humanitarian principles and norms for competition. It is against this backdrop that the significance of Competitive T-BL and the critical magnitude role of teachers who want to apply it should be taken into account.

Competitive Team-Based Learning and Teachers' Responsibilities

In view of the critical importance of teachers' contribution to true learning and development of humane and compassionate civilization, their roles and responsibilities have been viewed from two angles in this section: global and classroom.

At global-level, in the current scenario of globalization, which is characterised by ever-growing technological revolutions, teachers need to view their tasks from a broader perspective which, in turn, solicits an understanding of pedagogical and social objectives and commitments. As educational goals are being broadened to include teaching higher-order skills such as problem-solving, reasoning, critical thinking, and the acquisition of metacognitive knowledge and skills, new challenging expectations and multifarious roles and responsibilities are being expected from present day teachers. They, particularly university teachers, need to forget about their traditional roles and digest the idea that merely producing information is not sufficient, and it can no longer guarantee their professional success. They are expected to play their roles as frontiers of knowledge, attitude re-orienters, and agents of critical awareness and attitudinal change and social development.

Teachers can play key roles in ensuring the prosperity of humanity. They have plenty of opportunities to plant, nurture, and develop human values, morals, and attitudes in their students, who are tomorrow's citizens of the globe. They should take into account that civilizations and citizens need to learn humanitarian ways of interaction, cooperation, and competition, and therefore prepare and train their wards in some related pro-social and life-long interaction skills. These skills, which reflect the needs of real world, can include, for example, the ability to listen objectively and attentively to others' ideas and opinions without any preconceived notions and regardless of their nationalities, races, and ethnic backgrounds in order to understand them, the ability to communicate themselves precisely and effectively, and the ability to think critically and creatively. Empowering students

with such essential skills is a must in order to get them ready to face challenges of globalization and transcend cultural barriers.

If these objectives are realized, students will be empowered and equipped for a life-long learning and global interaction. They will be able to achieve their goals at the societal, national, and international levels. As critical thinkers, they will possess the abilities to evaluate the assumptions and the context in which things happen to discern truth in the welter of events and information engulfing them, and consequently ensuring they could make appropriate decisions and judgments. They will be mature enough to accept their disabilities, acknowledge their mistakes, and cope with the consequences of their actions. And as creative thinkers, they will be ready to take risks in life. They will be in a position to overcome barriers and try their best to accomplish set and desired goals. They will cherish it as a virtue that nothing is impossible. They will, in short, contribute to a new world order that strives for peace, fellowship, and social harmony.

At class-level, concretely speaking, every teacher is to think and act like both a scientist and an artist. They are expected to perform several roles such as discerners of current needs and demands, dissectors, analysers, psychologists, learning process engineers, conflict managers, and midwives. Towards these ends, they should have sufficient knowledge in the components of their profession such as subject matters, teaching methodologies, typologies of learners, their learning styles, demands and expectations, personalities, competencies, and cultural backgrounds and norms. Moreover, it is necessary for them to have a comprehensive understanding of the nature of learning, the contexts and processes under which learning occurs, and related theoretical perspectives. As friends of

their wards, they will be co-travellers in the journey of students in identifying their goals and discerning the ways of realizing them. Teachers are expected to be adaptable and flexible enough to make the best use of the latest findings in their fields of concerns. It is, then, that they could exploit their arts for the purpose of harnessing their knowledge to meet the curriculum goals.

The presupposition, in any method of CL, including Competitive T-BL, is that context gives meaning to content. Therefore, providing an appropriate context for learning can be one of the main responsibilities for teachers. They should create a psychologically safe social climate that reflects acceptance, care, genuineness, reciprocal and interpersonal trust, tolerance, and respect. All these enhance the zest for learning. Such contexts can also be supported through connecting their classes to virtual learning environments. Through developing their class blogs, wikies, and moodles, for instance, they can enhance the attainment of their learning goals. They should focus on bringing the kind of learning environments that naturally impetus risk taking, giving and receiving influence, creativity and critical thinking. In such shared knowledge environments, teachers should behave as ordinary flexible and responsible members of their classes. They should be able to listen to students patiently, and respond tactfully, and observe and evaluate their progress carefully.

To contribute to the development of such contexts, teachers ought to improve the cohesion of the groups and tactically soften the learning process. They should assure themselves of the equal and active participation and engagement of all learners in the learning process. To these ends, they must use strategies and tactics, which enhance positive interdependence among students and bring

individual accountability of all learners for their own learning as well as their groups. They must as well diagnose and even predict the affective, cognitive, and environmental oriented problems and barriers to learning and be ready resolve them whenever they arise. They need to know how to tackle different unpredictable problems, for example, with extremely disruptive students. They must be able not only to manage conflicts but also to harness them as well to fulfil their pedagogical goals. More specifically, they must pay special attention to low status, timid, shy, and slow learners, and take it into account that not every student can be fitted with any group. In providing assistance, they should act as midwives, who give birth to knowledge as one of the goals of CL is to train learners to be proactive rather than reactive learners. Likewise, they should be fair evaluators of students. Most important, they should be open-ended in their outlook and be able to evaluate and modify their own strategies of teaching from the authentic feedback they receive in course of their interactions with students.

At a more concrete level, in Competitive T-BL, as it is with other CL methods, teachers, according to Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec (1987), should arrange the room, structure the learning teams, decide on group size and group composition, and assign roles. They must explain about the method of teaching, define academic and social objectives and skills that students are to master and apply, identify norms, and specify desired behaviours. Preparing necessary work sheets, quizzes, answer keys, and team recognition forms are another set of responsibilities. Also, they should teach the academic concepts, principles, and strategies, and explain about criteria for success and evaluation procedures (e.g., the ways individual members' learning, group productivity, small group

processing, and whole class processing are to be evaluated). They need to plan instructional materials and structure meaningful activities and tasks in ways that promote interdependence and thereby engaging students in the learning process.

Cohen (1986) opined that teachers need to consider time division, monitor functioning of the learning teams, students' behaviours, achievements and group dynamics, and provide continuous authentic feedback on individual as well as groups' progress. They should act as a 'guide on the side' go round and check to see that students are on tasks, redirect the groups with questioning, encourage them to tackle problems, extend the activities, encourage thinking, supply resources, and specify and model their desired behaviours. And as Kessler asserted, they should train learners to act as active generators of their own knowledge.

Furthermore, because of the deficiencies in teaching English at primary and secondary levels, the college teachers have some more important professional challenge which must be met. They ought to fill the gaps in knowledge of students and wipe out the fossilized deterrent strategies of learning and the effects of bad learning. They should also modify students' attitudes towards subject area and learning which if allowed to linger, would barricade further learning. And they should encourage EFL/ESL learners to participate and use English in their small group discussions with proper accent, which requires patience and strategies.

To achieve their goals, teachers, as in the words of Anderson (1967), should adapt integrative rather than dominating roles. Because teachers who adapt autocratic roles ignore and even disregard the judgement and desires of students, thereby, knowingly or unknowingly, obstructing the process of growth in them. Teachers who are integrative in behaviour are flexible and logical and try to

understand students. They are open and welcome constructive criticism, and intentionally get involved in critical engagement with students and through accepting, clarifying, and supporting challenging ideas, stimulate, and enhance their growth.

Competitive Team-Based Learning and Students' Responsibilities

Students in Competitive T-BL settings are supposed to be committed to a learning culture that expects them to be hard working information accumulators and processors, paraphrasers, and proactive explorers of effective learning strategies and knowledge. They have to be risk takers, but they should be realistic, logical, fair, caring, sharing, flexible, and open to reasonable and constructive criticisms. They need to be tolerant of uncertainties along the path of learning in the classroom as an academic situation. They should be benign, far from hatred, jealousy, hypocrisy, conspiracy, and so many other narrow behaviours. As collaborators, they need to actively contribute to the negotiation of meaning and pool resources with their partners as well as their teacher in order to pursue the development of both their academic and social skills in parallel. They ought to feel responsible for necessary knowledge acquisition not only for themselves, but for their teammates as well. And according to Johnson and Johnson (1975), students should try the following:

1. Initiating and contributing ideas, and information.
2. Giving and asking for information, ideas, opinions, and feelings.
3. Clarifying, synthesizing, and giving examples.
4. Periodically summarizing what has taken place and the major points discussed.
5. Encouraging and supporting participation by all members.
6. Evaluating the effectiveness of the group and diagnosing difficulties in group functioning.
7. Process observing.
8. Giving direction to the discussion.
9. Energizing the discussion.
10. Helping the sending skills of the members.
11. Helping the receiving skills of the members.
12. Being an active listener.
13. Testing whether discussions have been made

and what the procedure has been. 14. Moderating controversies by disagreeing with others in ways that promote intellectual disagreement without personal rejection and helping other members disagree in the same manner. 15. Beginning, ending, and keeping on time during the session. (p. 281)

Analysis of Cooperative Learning Methods

As noted earlier, in spite of their affinities in their surface structures, CL methods differ in a number of ways in their deeper structures. They diverge due to a range of variables from the kind of tasks they insist on to the types of patterns of interaction they pattern in intra- and inter- group relationships for the attainment of their goals.

Cooperative Learning Methods and Tasks

The ways tasks are applied in CL methods differentiates them from one another. Whereas in some methods like GI, RTR, and Cooperative T-BL, for instance, students work together on a single task, in others like Jigsaw I, LTD, and CC, group members work independently on one part of a task and then share their findings and understandings with others. Accordingly, to cite an example, the types of interaction tasks pattern in a GI class totally differ from that of in a Jigsaw I class. Tasks in Jigsaw I encourage dyadic tutoring while in GI motivate students for inquisition, exchange of ideas, and problem solving. Yet, in methods like Competitive T-BL the implementation of both of these tasks are possible, depending on the need of the situations and objectives.

Cooperative Learning Methods and the Concept of Teacher-Learner-Centeredness

In CL methods, learners are appreciated differently. In this regard, GI and STAD can be considered as two extremes. Whereas in the former, as the byword of learner-centered methods of CL, students are given considerable freedom in, for instance, determining how to organize their teams, assigning their roles, doing their assignments, and presenting their products to the class; in the latter, as one of the most teacher-centered methods of CL, students do not have such choices and opportunities. It is the instructor who often determines the members of individual teams, their roles, the nature of the learning materials, and so on. And methods like Competitive T-BL offer a balance between these two extremes -- the middle path of learning-centeredness to teaching.

Cooperative Learning Methods and Positive Interdependence

Another factor that differentiates CL methods is the kind of strategies they apply for enhancing positive interdependence among students in order to create appropriate motivating learning environments. Methods like GI, LTD, and CC, for instance, give emphasis to asking one joint product or report or giving extra grades to groups on the condition that all their members shine on tests and exams. Methods like Jigsaw I, Jigsaw II, and GI apply strategies like division of tasks and thus creation of gaps in participants' information for bringing and maintaining positive interdependence. In such situations to complete their own knowledge of the topic, students are motivated to ask for further information and listen attentively to one another. Comparing Jigsaw I and Jigsaw II, Slavin (1990) believed that Jigsaw I patterns positive interdependence better because it provides

everyone with the information others lack and therefore make them all to be more carefully listened to, valued, and respected by others.

By virtue of the techniques these methods apply (e.g., organizing separated tasks or assigning rotating rolls), all students have the same opportunities to develop their repertoire of knowledge through both listening to others and elaborating their own understanding to them. As a result, high achievers do not have opportunities to dominate the discussions in their groups. This problem exists in some methods like STAD and TGT. And methods, like Competitive T-BL, use strategies and activities like Numbered Heads Together or prioritise the importance of incentives (e.g., in their evaluation systems) to bring and enhance positive interdependence among learners. The problem of the domination of group discussions by high achievers, which hampers positive interdependence, has been tackled by this method by the kind of group formation and its evaluation system. The other main difference among CL methods with reference to positive interdependence is that, whereas most of them like Cooperative T-BL method appreciate both intra- and inter-group positive interdependence, methods like Competitive T-BL emphasize only intra-group positive interdependence, leaving the space for accommodation of competition at inter-group level.

Cooperative Learning Methods and Individual Accountability

Likewise, the level of the prominence CL methods give to individual accountability, and the strategies they apply to bring, develop, and maintain it, distinguishes them from one another. Too much emphasis on positive interdependence and neglect of individual accountability is a major problem with

most of CL methods. Such neglect brings its own pitfalls in CL settings. It can, for instance, develop some individuals as free riders, those who put the burdens of their tasks on others and abdicate their responsibilities. This problem naturally arises in methods like Cooperative T-BL, GI, and Jigsaw I, which mostly focus on bringing positive interdependence.

Teams-Games-Tournaments stresses tournaments; STAD, LTD, and CC focus on individual quizzes, and TMT, TAI, Jigsaw II, and GI emphasises individual assignments to bring this element. A shared presentation is another strategy used in LTD, GI, and CC to encourage individual accountability (e.g., Moskowitz, Malvin, Schaeffer, & Schaps 1985; Slavin, 1983a). Competitive T-BL may be considered as a typical method of CL that pays especial attention to the significance of individual accountability of group members in order to avoid problems like free riding, which is detrimental to the success of CL methods. This method, through its special grading system and activities, intensifies peer tutoring in a noticeable way and highly engages learners in classroom process.

Cooperative Learning Methods and Evaluation Systems

As regards grading systems, there seems to be some disagreements among advocates of CL methods on exactly what is necessary for CL to be successful. Some methods like Cooperative T-BL and GI mostly emphasize team recognition and evaluate individuals based on their group performance. In contrast, some other methods like Jigsaw II and STAD recognize teams based on the sum of their members' performances. As it was already stated, the fact is that the former methods are ignoring the importance of making individuals responsible for their

own learning, and the latter are neglecting the significance of positive interdependence both of which, in turn, deter the attainment of group goals. However, some other methods like TGT, CIRC, TMT, and especially Competitive T-BL try to take care of both. In addition to considering collective contribution of team members to the attainment of their group goals, the evaluation system of Competitive T-BL foregrounds the importance of individual members' own efforts for their own progression. The assumption is that students are more likely to work harder under such evaluation system.

Cooperative Learning Methods and Pattern of Interaction

Whereas most methods of CL emphasize merely cooperation, some methods like TGT and specially Competitive T-BL apprehend and appreciate the role of competition. Tournaments in TGT and special grading system in Competitive T-BL foster and enhance competition among students. In spite of similarities, however, there exists a major difference between TGT and Competitive T-BL at the class level: While TGT appreciates only within group comparisons, Competitive T-BL patterns a strong competition among not only groups members by within group comparisons in its evaluation system, but groups as well. This is not to conclude that the important role of cooperation is underestimated or devalued in Competitive T-BL. This method prioritizes the significance of the both in the sense that it motivates team members to help one another on cooperative tasks in order to compete with their same-level opponents in other teams and also win the competition against other teams. Competitive T-BL

in point of fact emphasizes a combination of cooperative tasks and team competition and group rewards in order to improve individual performances.

Student Teams-Achievement Divisions, on the other hand, is quite neutral because it appreciates neither within group nor inter-group relationships. That is to say, it structures no actual relationships among different teams, neither cooperation nor competition. This is so because, as it is in Cooperative T-BL, all teams can achieve the established criteria for reward or recognition regardless of the existence of such interdependences. STAD, however, appreciates intra-group cooperation and encourages a kind of competition of the individual with himself/herself as it is in TLM. In contrast to STAD, methods like TGT and GI try to depersonalise competition.

From a broader perspective also, CL methods differ in their outlooks and in the outcomes they are looking for. The evaluation systems in methods like STAD, whereby students' performances are recognized by, for example, a comparison with their own past, do not value the realities of the real world and thus bring no considerable motivation with them. As noted earlier, classes should mirror the realities of the real world, and in the real world, no achievement can be better appreciated without a comparison with the achievements of others. Methods like Competitive T-BL come to bridge these gaps. Competitive T-BL brings in situations wherein students have to compare their potentials and capacities with a number of others. They will learn to accept what they are and that they could potentially be the best. Such situations motivate and facilitate them to do their best, under the scaffold of their team members.

Cooperative Learning Methods and Feasibility of Application

Cooperative Learning methods like STAD, Cooperative T-BL, and GI look easier in terms of the feasibility of their application in classrooms, and so there can be more reasonable choices for teachers who want to practice CL for the first time. Most methods of CL, however, demand more work on the part of the teacher. In Jigsaw II, for instance, the teacher must work more to prepare separate meaningful sections of a unit, which should be 'self-contained'. The teacher should think of tasks that have several distinct aspects or components. Likewise, in Competitive T-BL, the teacher should invariably be equipped with necessary work sheets, quizzes, answer keys, and team recognition forms and be ready to calculate individuals as well as their teams' marks through multidimensional grading systems. The solution, however, is to lessen the number of exams in a semester or encourage self- or peer-assessment of individuals at least on quizzes, which would also contribute to deepening their learning.

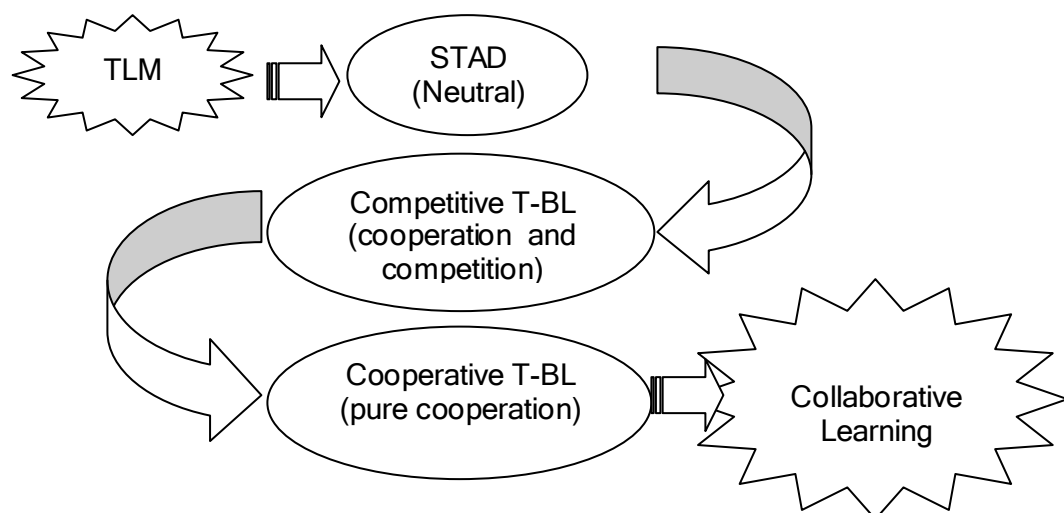
Which Method of Cooperative Learning?

Before selecting a method, it is very important to consider some critical factors such as the goals, the level of practicality of the method with regard to the target groups' level, the kind of inter-and intra-group relationships teachers desire to pose, the kind of facilities at hand, and so forth. Economic, political, historical, and socio-cultural factors in the real world situations should not be neglected. Due to the patterns of interaction CL methods pose in classes and considering the psychological typology of target students, it seems some methods like Cooperative T-BL, TGT, STAD, TMT, and original Jigsaw might better satisfy primary levels

of education. Methods like GI, Jigsaw II, Competitive T-BL, LTD, and CC that solicit higher levels of cognition and aim at development of complex and critical thinking, and creative problem solving skills like analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and application of concepts in different and more complicated situations would best satisfy classes in higher education rather than at primary levels.

Above all, due to the fact that the main mission of modern education is to prepare tomorrow's citizens and the fact that Competitive T-BL with its special mechanism better mirrors and appreciates the realities of life and further motivates students for learning, educators must at least add it to the repertoire of their strategies. They should appreciate this method inasmuch as it aims at cultivating well-empowered competent individuals equipped with academic as well as social skills and strategies in a way they could never grow such out of traditional instructional methods or even other methods of CL. However, as indicated in Figure 5, this researcher proposes a take off from traditional methods, from which students are suffering for centuries, towards collaborative learning, as the final dream.

Figure 5. Logic Gradual Departure towards Collaborative Learning



The next chapter throws light on the praxis of methodology for applying two CL methods introduced in this chapter (Cooperative T-BL and Competitive T-BL) and the TLM amidst the target groups of the present research study. It deals with methodology and design employed to pursue the objectives of this study which aimed at comparing the effectiveness of these methods at the collegiate level in language classes. It illustrates presentations, classroom techniques, and so forth in classes where these methods were applied by this researcher.

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