Collaborative Learning as A Strategy to Improve the English Reading Comprehension of Indonesian Learners in The Agribusiness Department at Muhammadiyah University of Parepare

Ammang Latifa iD
Muhammadiyah University of Parepare, Indonesia
✉ **Corresponding Author**: Ammang Latifa, E-mail: latifa_ammang@yahoo.com

ARTICLE INFORMATION	ABSTRACT

This research sheds some light on collaborative learning to increase the agribusiness students' reading ability at the Muhammadiyah University of Parepare. It tries to find answers to two questions. First, to what extent does the collaborative learning strategy improve the students reading comprehension in the ESP course at UMPAR? Second, what are the students' perceptions of collaborative learning strategies in teaching reading comprehension at UMPAR? To answer these questions, the researcher adopted a Quasi-Experimental design by using the experimental and control group. The data were collected through a reading test and a questionnaire. The research findings indicated that using a collaborative learning strategy improved the students' reading comprehension at agribusiness students at UMPAR. The t-test result of the Pre-test was -1.25 and 2.50 in the Post-test. The Post-test result was more significant than the t-table (2.50>2.023). It indicated that H0 was rejected and H1 was accepted. The results of the study also revealed that a collaborative learning strategy improves the students' ability in teaching Reading Comprehension.

1. Introduction

Reading as a language skill should be mastered by anyone interested in finding information in the text. Therefore, there is much information that can be obtained in the reading activity. As Kenneth Beare states, "reading is a crucial skill in studying English" . Therefore, it becomes a principal skill for the learner who studies English as a foreign language. Jeremy Harmer (2002) states that reading comprehension activity is important because language learners should have in-depth engagement with their comprehension. Good reading skills will develop outstanding progress to reach a high progressive development in all academic settings. Lagunage learners are supposed to get an excellent understanding of reading comprehension. Reading comprehension is a thinking activity involving getting the main idea from the text. To know how the students could comprehend the text, Smith in Syamriany (2006) states four comprehension levels. They are literal comprehension, interpretation, critical reading, and creative reading. According to Klingner (2007), reading comprehension is "the process of constructing meaning by coordinating several complex processes that included word reading, world knowledge, and fluency." He summarised that reading comprehension instruction for the teacher follows a three-step procedure: mentioning, practising, and assessing. Teachers explain the skills that the students want to use, then they give the students chances to do a practice for those skills through workbooks or worksheets, and finally assess whether or not they use the skill successfully.

The agribusiness department students often face some difficulties understanding the message in the reading text of the English study course. They found it challenging to understand the message in the text of reading quickly. This condition gives information that agribusiness students should increase their reading comprehension ability. In language learning, a collaborative approach helps the students improve their learning skills in reading comprehension. This method should be interactive and more effective for students. The collaborative approach is a learning method that uses social interaction as a means of knowledge building. One of the learning methods suggests utilising a working group to reach a common objective while individuals respectfully contribute to the successful work.

2. Literature Review
Everyone knows that studying and working together is more powerful than studying or working alone. It is more impressive and competitive. The participant in case the learner can interact and share their idea. Robert (2004) states that learning is a collaboration activity. It is an approach that helps students work in groups together.

Cohen (2004), Nunan (1992), and Larsen-freeman (1992) confirm that collaborative learning is a pedagogical approach which emphasise the importance of small group learning activity to promote students' social skill, to increase students' motivation, and develop students responsibility for their learning. They are encouraged to be active and to have a role in the learning process.
Based on previous research related to the collaborative learning method conducted, Tauhida (2010), Adnyana (2014) and Zakaria (2009) found that in reading activity, students ability to read improved significantly due to the use of the collaborative learning method. Regarding these findings, this study is not much different from the research conducted by (Veti Mardiani et al., 2014), (Aisyah, syarah, 2018), and (Sinambela E et al., 2015) by using different treatments to improve reading comprehension ability. This study's collaborative method was one of the group learning strategies that teaches students to interact in concluding or understanding the reading contents.

3. Methodology
The quasi-experimental design was used in this study, which utilised experimental and control groups. This research involved two groups with different treatments. In the experimental group, the collaborative learning method was applied. The control group used a three-phase technique. Both groups were measured in pre-test before starting the study. The pre-test aims to diagnose students' prior knowledge. After all, treatments were given to the experimental group, and then, the post-test was given to respondents to measure the treatment quality and effectiveness. Effectiveness was evaluated by looking at differences in their reading achievement from the pre-test to the post-test. These tests serve to obtain data on students' reading abilities during the treatment process.

3.1 Population
The research population was taken from the agribusiness students at the Muhammadiyah University of Parepare for the academic year 2018/2019. The participants of were chosen randomly basedon the random sampling process.

3.2 Instrument
This research study applied two instruments to get the respondent's data. They were reading tests and questionnaires. These tests serve to measure the students' ability to comprehend the message in the English text. The questionnaire was then used to get information about teaching in the collaborative learning.

3.3 Procedure for Collecting Data
For collecting the data, the researcher applied a pre-test to measure the students' ability to comprehend a reading text. The pre-test consisted of 15 items. Ten items for multiple-choice and five items for statements (true/false). Next step, the students were directed to answer the reading text's questions. After giving the pre-test, the researcher conducted three meetings. In every meeting, the researcher used a communicative approach where the students should be active, and he gives a response to the material given. Therefore, the researcher put the respondents into several groups. In obtaining the students' development progress in reading activity, the researcher measured the post-test. The procedure of the post-test was designed as same as the pre-test implementation. The researcher then used the mean score to classify the individual scores level Gay (2006). After that the researcher classified the students score into the following criteria: very good, good, fair, poor, very poor. In the last step of data collection, the researcher calculated the sum of squares for each respondent's group. This calculation shows a significant difference between the two groups in the experimental and control groups. Then the researcher made the statistical. Finally, the questionnaire was analysed based on the students' perceptions of collaborative learning approach implementation.

4. Results and Discussion
4.1 Result of Students' reading comprehension
4.1.1 Scoring classification of students pre-test
The researcher utilised a pre-test to identify the students' reading ability. After doing the treatment, the research participants were given the post-test. The pre-test and post-test were compared to know the students' reading comprehension ability. The classification frequency and percentage of the respondents' achievement were firstly tabulated. Then, the researcher decided the quality level of the students' achievement in the reading comprehension ability of the experimental group and control group of the agribusiness students at Muhammadiyah University of parepare which could be seen in table I below:

Table 1. The Students' Score achievement in the Pre-test

Classification	Scores	Experimental Group		Control Group	
		F	P (%)	F	P (%)
Very Good	86 – 100	0	0.00	0	0.00
Good	71 – 85	1	4.16	1	4.76
Fair	56 – 70	5	20.83	4	19.04
Poor	41 – 55	5	20.83	4	19.04
Very Poor	0 – 40	13	54.16	12	57.14
Total		**24**	**100**	**21**	**100**

Table 1 shows that the most of the experimental group students got a score at a very poor level, while in the control group, most of the students were at a very poor level. The data in the table revealed that before giving the treatment, the students' reading comprehension ability could be concluded as low ability in reading.

4.1.2 Scoring Classification of Students' Post-test
Table 2. The Rate Percentage of Students' Score of Post-test

Classification	Scores	Experimental Group		Control Group	
		F	P (%)	F	P (%)
Very Good	86 – 100	0	0.00	0	0.00
Good	71 – 85	1	4.54	0	0.00
Fair	56 – 70	10	45.45	9	47.36
Poor	41 – 55	6	27.27	5	26.31
Very Poor	0 – 40	5	22.72	5	26.31
Total		**22**	**100**	**19**	**100**

Table II reveals that most experiment group students got some improvement in their achievement. Simultaneously, in the control group, most students also imporoved than before. It means that after giving the treatment, the students' ability to read comprehension either in experimental or control class improved than before.

4.1.3 Mean Score and Standard Deviation of Pre Test and Post Test
Table 3. The Mean Score and Standard Deviation of pre-test of the two classes

No.	**Class**	**Mean Score**	**Standard Deviation**
1.	Experimental	43.05	16.90
2.	Control	48.56	13.84

Table 3 shows the scoring rate of the pre-test of the student in the experimental class. The result of standard deviation was 16.90. The mean score pre-test of the control class was (48.56). The result of standard deviation was (13.84). It can be noticed that the mean score of the control class was higher than the mean score in the experimental class. The control class students

who used the three-phase technique scored higher than the students in the experimental class taught using the collaborative learning method. The researcher found that they could not comprehend the text well in the experimental class and they were unable to understand all of the questions.

Table 4. The Mean Score and Standard Deviation of post-test of the two classes.

No.	Class	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
1.	Experimental	52.73	16.05
2.	Control	40.34	16,99

Table 4 revealed that the mean score post-test of the student in the experimental class (52.73) with the result of standard deviation was (16.05) and for the mean score post-test of the control class was (40.34) with the result of standard deviation was (16.99).

Table 4. The t-test of students' pre-test and post-test.

Variable	t-test value	t-table value
Pre-test	-1.25	2,017
Post-test	2.50	2,023

Table 4 shows that calculating the t-test of students pre-test with t-test value is lower (-1.25) than the t-table value (2,017). The table also indicated that the t-test value (2.50) was higher than the t-table value (2,023). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H0) which suggested that there was no significant difference between the students' ability in reading comprehension who were treated through the collaborative learning method and the students who were taught using three phases technique was rejected. The alternative hypothesis (H1) which suggested that there was a significant difference between the students' reading comprehension ability who were taught by using the collaborative learning method and the students who were taught by using three phases technique was accepted. So, the hypothesis showsthat there was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental and control groups.

4.2 Students' perception in collaborative learning
4.2.1 Students score perception by using the collaborative learning method
The students were given a questionnaire including thirty questions which were divided into four categories. They are; very good, good, bad, and terrible.

The questionnaire's result was outstanding in learning reading comprehension using the collaborative method. It was informed that the students' perception based on the third indicator the students mostly agreed for accurate perception. It means that they agreed if the reading material was good, appropriate, and attractive to the progressive development of learning and teaching. There are two indicators, the students mostly agreed and disagreed indicator. If we converted to the rating score of classification, the mean score of 92.04 was in excellente classification of the students' perception.

5. Discussion
This research was about finding an effective method to improve reading comprehension by using the collaborative learning method in the ESP course at Muhammadiyah University of parepare. It is essential to teach students some types of learning methods. One of the vital methods to teach students is collaborative learning. It was conveyed by Roberts (2004) It is stated that collaborative learning is a learning approach that delivers a working group to achieve common goals while maintaining an attitude of mutual respect between individuals in the working group. Working hard can solve and answer questions that students do individually. Using a collaborative method in reading comprehension learning in the class is a suitable method for an active class.

According to Gerlach (1994), collaborative learning is an educational approach to deliver the teaching and learning process that involves groups of students working together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product. Another case with Cohen

(2004) stated that all the learners need to learn and work in their environment where their competence is introduced, and individual' s necessities are delivered. This approach may fulfil the gaps between the quality of competence and the learners' weakness. Here, each learner can help their colleague when they are in trouble with learning. Several learning participants have good competence and weaknesses. If they collaborated in a group with the middle-or low competence of ability, it would positively affect. For a long time, when the learners may not answer or do not comprehend it yet, they frequently need help from their friends than communicate with their teacher.

Based on some experts' opinions, the researcher stated that collaborative learning in teaching reading comprehension tents makes the students feel active and enjoy studying. Because collaborative learning has an important role in guidance and assistance for the teacher and students in learning, it was introduced by Johnson et al. stated in Richards' book. Besides, Harel in Richard stated that the teacher is a facilitator of students' learning processes. Then, Kessler (1992) continued, who stated that it has five teacher roles in collaborative learning. Meanwhile, the students' roles in reading comprehension are stated by Richard and Rodgers that "the learner's primary role is a member of a group who must work collaboratively on task with other group members.

Moreover, supported by Orlich and friends and developed by Kessler. Furthermore, Johnson and Johnson mentioned the students' roles in which then, stated in Muijs and Reynold's work, the students have a significant role in the collaborative learning approach. The collaborative learning method has some advantages based on some experts. Lodge and Brown (2001) stated that the collaborative learning approach has a great value in the learning process. It has many good effects on the students' learning process, achievement, skill, even social life.

The researcher used a different technique in teaching reading comprehension in the previous related findings, but all of the techniques or method engaged the students actively. Mardiani Veti et al. (2014) stated that the schema activation strategy could significantly improve the students reading comprehension and Sinambela et al. (2015) invented that KWL (Know-Want-Learn) strategy can increase the students reading comprehension.
Reflecting on the previous researcher's results to make the students' ability in reading comprehension increased, we need a technique or a method that could be used in the teaching and learning process to make the students felt enjoy and involved actively. As Adnyana (2014) had researched using collaborative learning method to increase the students' reading comprehension, it found that the implementation of collaborative learning very effective in teaching reading comprehension. Thus, the researcher wanted to try the same technique. She had tried to implementation of collaborative learning method to improve the reading comprehension of agribusiness students at Muhammadiyah University of parepare. The process and the result that the researcher had found were explained as follows:

Before giving treatment, the researcher found students' score was categorised very poor; it was proven by the percentage of the total score of a pre-test for two groups, for the experimental group and control group. In the experimental group, the students' mean score from the pre-test acquired was 43.05 with a standard deviation score was 16.90, and In the control group, the students' mean score from the pre-test acquired was 48.56 with a standard deviation score was 13.84. It means that students' achievements before giving treatment in learning reading comprehension for the two groups were no far various. It can be stated that the result of the pre-test in the two groups was almost the same, still low. After the researcher implemented collaborative learning as an approach in Reading Comprehension class, it was found that students' scores were categorised as an adequate level of achievement. In the experimental group, the students' mean score from the post-test acquired was 52.73 with a standard deviation score was 16.05, and in the control group, the students' mean score from the pre-test acquired was 40.34 with a standard deviation score was 16.99. In other words, Hal was accepted, while the H0 was rejected. It means that there was an increase in learning reading comprehension through the collaborative learning method. In other words, collaborative learning as an approach significantly increases the students' ability to catch messages in the reading text.

There are some advantages to teaching reading comprehension. Studying in groups is more attractive and competitive. Students can interact, share ideas, and give respect to each other. The writer has problems when doing the research. The writer did not have time to provide more information about learning techniques in collaborative methods. Students who did not attend come late in the learning process and the problem that often occurs here was the students' dependency on google translation. Some students did not understand collaborative learning rules, even though the teacher had explained the rules. In this study, the researcher had to repeat the rules for the students who did not understand, and it wasted time.

6. Conclusion

Regarding the result of this study, it can be implied that reading comprehension improved the reading ability of the agribusiness students at UMPAR. It is proved by the t-value (2.50), which is greater than the t-table (2.023). Besides, the experimental group's mean score improved from 43.05 to 52.73 after getting the treatment. This result was obtained after the researcher implemented collaborative learning methods to activate students' reading. The procedures are presented in the following steps; (1) introducing the method, (2) grouping the students, (3) distributing the reading materials, (4) asking the students to predict the main idea, finding the meaning of the word, phrase or sentences and textual reference of the text (5) directing students to make collaborative (6) delivering students to take discussed in solving the reading task given (6) making a summary.

As stated in this study's conclusion, the researcher proposed some beneficial suggestions for teachers and English learners. The students should be good learners; they should involve themselves in the classroom and pay attention to their teacher; they should respect their teacher's full attention to the lesson to support the learning process. The second for the teacher is to apply the materials so that the lesson's objectives can be appropriately achieved; the teacher should identify the learner's difficulties in the reading course. This awareness may help learners solve their problems when they are studying reading. The teacher must be innovative and creative in developing materials for teaching reading and create an enjoyable learning process.

References

[1] Arnett, J. (2018). What's Left of Feelings? The Affective Labor of Politics in Doris Lessing's The Golden Notebook. 41(2), 77–95. https://doi.org/10.2979/jmodelite.41.2.05

[2] August, E., Burke, K., Fleischer, C., & Trostle, J. A. (2019). Writing Assignments in Epidemiology Courses: How Many and How Good? 134(4), 441–446. https://doi.org/10.1177/0033354919849942

[3] banoğlu, Badem, Nebahat, R. A. (2018). Explicit and implicit written corrective feedback in higher EFL education: Evidence from Turkey. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330022950_Explicit_and_implicit_written_corrective_feedback_in_higher_EFL_education_Evidence_from_Turkey

[4] Bao, R. (2019). Oral corrective feedback in L2 Chinese classes: Teachers ' beliefs versus their practices. System, 82, 140–150. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2019.04.004

[5] Bauer, E. B. (2017). Writing Through Partnership: Fostering Translanguaging in Children Who Are Emergent Bilinguals. 10–37. https://doi.org/10.1177/1086296X16683417

[6] Benson, S., & Dekeyser, R. (2018). Effects of written corrective feedback & language aptitude on verb tense accuracy. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168818770921

[7] Blikstad-balas, M., Roe, A., & Klette, K. (2018). Opportunities to Write: Exploration of Student Writing During Language Arts Lessons in Norwegian Lower Secondary Classrooms. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088317751123

[8] Bulusan, F. , Romar, B. Antonio, and Sherill, G.-D. (2019). Effect of Medical English on Students' General English Proficiency. 15(2). Retrieved from https://www.elejournals.com/tag/asian-esp-journal-volume-15-issue-2-october-2019

[9] Can, R., & Ahi. (2017). Analysis of written expression revision skills of the students in faculty of education. 12(5), 267–271. https://doi.org/10.5897/ERR2016.3120

[10] Chen, T. (2014). Technology-supported peer feedback in ESL / EFL writing classes: a research synthesis. (December), 37–41. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2014.960942

[11] Chew, J., & Tham, K. (2016). Wearable Writing: Enriching Student Peer Review With Point-of-View Video Feedback Using Google Glass. 1–34. https://doi.org/10.1177/0047281616641923

[12] Cloutier, C. (2015). How I Write: Inquiry Into t Writing Practices of Academics. Journal of Management, Inquiry 1 –16 Reprints and Permissions: Sagepub.Com/JournalsPermissions.Nav,. https://doi.org/10.1177/1056492615585875

[13] Cuenca-carlino, Y., Mustian, A. L., Allen, R. D., and Gilbert, J. (2016). I Have a Voice & Can Speak Up for Myself Through Writing! 51(4), 220–228. https://doi.org/10.1177/1053451215589180

[14] Delante, N. L. (2017). International and Multidisciplinary Perspectives Perceived impact of online written feedback on students ' writing and learning: a reflection. Reflective Practice, 3943(September), 1–33. https://doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2017.1351351

[15] Ellis, R. (1985). Principles of Instructed Learning. Asian EFL Journal.

[16] Engeness, I., & Engeness, I. (2018). What teachers do: facilitating the writing process with feedback from EssayCritic and collaborating peers from EssayCritic and collaborating peers. Technology, Pedagogy and Education, 5139, 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/1475939X.2017.1421259

[17] Hammad, E. A. (2014). Problems with EFL Essay Writing in an Instructional Setting. 99–124. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-46726-3

[18] Han, Y., & Xu, Y. (2019). Teaching in Higher Education Student feedback literacy and engagement with feedback: a case study of Chinese undergraduate students. Teaching in Higher Education, 0(0), 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2019.1648410

[19] Huy, N. T. (2015). Problems affecting learning writing skill of grade 11 at thong linh high school. 3(2), 53–69.

[20] Kent, S. C., & Wanzek, J. (2016). The Relationship Between Component Skills and Writing Quality and Production Across Developmental Levels: A Meta-Analysis of the Last 25 Years. 1–32. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654315619491

[21] Kılıçkaya, F. (2019). Pre-service language teachers' online written corrective feedback preferences and timing of feedback in computer-supported L2 grammar instruction Ferit. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2019.1668811 Pre-service

[22] Langhorne, P., Coupar, F., Pollock, A., Tech, H., Su Nwe, M., De Silva, V., … Bleyenheuft, Y. (2017). Academic-Writing-Handbook-International-Students-3Rd-Ed (2). In Society (Vol. 45). https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ijssn.20170504.11

[23] Lee, A. H., & Lyster, R. (2015). THE EFFECTS OF CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK ON INSTRUCTED L2 SPEECH PERCEPTION. 1–30. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263115000194

[24] Lee, I., Mak, P., & Burns, A. (2015). EFL teachers ' attempts at feedback innovation in the writing classroom. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168815581007

[25] Norman, D. A. (2010). THE WAY I SEE ITLooking back, looking forward. Interactions, 17(6), 61. https://doi.org/10.1145/1865245.1865259

[26] Ostovar-namaghi, S. A., & Safaee, S. E. (2017). Exploring Techniques of Developing Writing Skill in IELTS Preparatory Courses : A Data-Driven Study. 10(3), 74–81. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v10n3p74

[27] Paris, N., Ngonkum, S., & Nazaruddin, R. (2017). Types of Written Corrective Feedback : Overview of Teachers ' Implementation in Indonesia. The 5th AASIC 2017, 5, 255–262. Retrieved from https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/be9b/c3694badb635cbe11831e8ec7cd3d21cb02c.pdf?_ga=2.48830118.1257399318.1583152720-773875922.1561758504

[28] Park, E. S., Song, S., & Shin, Y. K. (2015). To what extent do learners benefit from indirect written corrective feedback ? A study targeting learners of different proficiency and heritage language status Eun Sung Park. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168815609617

[29] Patricia, P. W. (2016). [PDF] Becoming Academic Writer : 50 Exercises For Paced, Productive & Powerful Writing Patricia Goodson - download pdf book free.

[30] Saulnier, B. (2016). The Application of Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Techniques of Systems Analysis and Design Flipped Classroom. 14(4). Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1135329.pdf

[31] Wette, R. (2017). Journal of Second Language Writing Using mind maps to reveal and develop genre knowledge in a graduate writing course. Journal of Second Language Writing, 38(June), 58–71. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2017.09.005

[32] Zheng, Y., & Yu, S. (2018). Student engagement with teacher-written corrective feedback in EFL writing : A case study of Chinese lower-proficiency students. Assessing Writing, 37(January), 13–24. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2018.03.001

[33] Zumbrunn, S., Marrs, S., & Mewborn, C. (2015). Toward a better understanding of student perceptions of writing feedback : a mixed strategy study. Reading and Writing. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-015-9599-3