CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Theoretical Background

The theoretical background for this research is in the works of Howard

Gardner who pointed to the theory of Multiple Intelligences. Dr.

Spencer Kagan (1997, p.1) further claims there is not just one human

intelligence, but rather multiple intelligences. He indicates that all

students possess various intelligences. He believes that intelligence

must include skills enabling individuals to solve problems and the

ability to create an effective product. To reach all students and to

develop diverse intelligences, one needs to teach in many ways,

providing varied experiences for the students (Kagan, 1997, p.1).

Kagan (1997, p.1) categorizes intelligences into eight categories,

namely: verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, bodily/kinesthetic,

naturalist, visual/spatial, musical/rhythmical, interpersonal, and

intrapersonal.

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Verbal/Linguistic refers to the ability demonstrated by students who learn through reading, writing, and discussing. They are good at verbal presentations and communicate effectively.

Students who think in numbers, patterns, and algorithms, learn by appeal to logic and solve logic problems easily demonstrate Logical/Mathematical intelligence.

Bodily/Kinesthetic intelligence is demonstrated by those students who are highly coordinated, learn through "hands-on" activities, enjoy acting and role-playing, and possess good motor skills.

Naturalist intelligence is demonstrated by those students who are "aware of their natural surroundings" (Kagan, 1997, p.2), who have good observational skills, and are good at sorting and classifying.

Visual/Spatial intelligence is demonstrated by those students who think in pictures and images, who are good with spatial relations, who have a good eye for detail and color, and learn from visuals.

Musical/Rhythmic intelligence is typical of those students who have good sense of rhythm, learn through music and lyrics, and are sensitive to timing.

Interpersonal intelligence is demonstrated by those students who understand and respect others, lead and organize others in a team, who can resolve conflicts, and learn by interacting with others.

Finally, those students who have strong opinions and beliefs, who are aware of their own strengths, and who know themselves well, demonstrate Intrapersonal intelligence.

Furthermore, Kagan (1997, p.1) adds that just as students are intelligent in many ways, they learn in many ways. If the teacher only lectures, he/she inadvertently puts the verbal/linguistic students at an advantage over the other students. Teaching should thus encompass all the intelligences (Kagan, 1997, p.1).

In terms of language skills development, cooperative learning develops speaking and listening skills because they are social-collaborative in nature, i.e., they address the communicative functions

of language. Writing skills are developed for complex concepts.

Reading skills are developed because the students need to understand

meaning and contexts. Additionally, cooperative learning teaches

other social skills. For example, Kagan (1999, p.1) indicates that

students are taught communication (verbal as well as non-verbal),

leadership skills, teambuilding, conflict resolution skills, and others.

Finally, Kagan (1997, p.1) adds that a teacher should make sure that

the development of all the intelligences is included in a lesson. To do

so, implementation of a cooperative learning approach addresses this

issue, whereas using the traditional teacher-centered approach to

teaching appears not to be the right choice.

The foundations of cooperative learning are positive interdependence

(all students depend on each other and work together to achieve a

common goal), individual accountability (each student is personally

accountable for learning the assigned material and helping other team

members), face-to-face interaction (students interact within their teams

facing each other), appropriate use of collaborative skills (students

apply real-life collaborative skills), and team interaction processing

(students take time to process how well their team is functioning)

(adapted from Johnson and Johnson, 1987, p. 125).

Positive interdependence is defined in many ways. Essentially,

positive interdependence is a team feeling of being dependent on each

of the teammates and their understanding of the fact that no common

goal can be achieved without contributions from each of the

teammates. "The students must be dependent on each other in the

completion of the activities" (Johnson et al., 1984, p. 8). The best

definition is perhaps provided by Johnson and Johnson who state that

positive interdependence is in fact "the essence of cooperative

learning" (1987, p. 125):

> Positive interdependence is the perception that you are linked
> with others in such a way that you cannot succeed unless they
> do (and vice versa), and that their work benefits you and your
> work benefits them. It promotes a situation in which individuals
> work together in small groups to maximize the learning of all
> members, sharing their resources, providing mutual support,
> and celebrating their joint success.

Positive interdependence is in fact the connection between the

students in the team, the feeling of being able to help others in order to

achieve a common goal. Consequently, "the overall task cannot be

completed without the contributions of each member" (Johnson et al., 1984, p. 8). Johnson and Johnson (1987, p.126) indicate that "group members are striving for *mutual benefit* so that all members of the group will gain", i.e., either everybody in the team benefits or loses if the positive interdependence is present. Johnson and Johnson (1987) note that because of this bond that exists among teammates, "feelings of success are shared and pride is taken in other's accomplishments as well as one's own" (p.126), whereas one teammate's failure is seen as a failure of everyone else in the team. Therefore, either all teammates succeed or everyone fails, together. Jacobs, Lee, and Ball (1995, p. 17) indicate the following:

> Positive interdependence is the feeling among a group of students that what helps any member of the group helps everyone in the group, and what hurts any member of the group hurts everyone in the group. To put it another way, positive interdependence means that group members feel that they "sink or swim together."

Many researchers recognize that without positive interdependence it is difficult to make sure every teammate succeeds. "Group members share a *common fate;* they all gain or lose on the basis of the overall performance of group members" (Johnson and Johnson, 1987, p.126). This notion has been captured by Christian J. Faltis (1997, p. 147)

who elaborates on this definition of positive interdependence:

> Positive interdependence is the heart and soul of small-group learning. At the individual level, students are positively interdependent when they perceive themselves as linked with their group members in such a way that no one can succeed unless everyone in the group does and realize that the contributions each member makes benefit everyone in the group.

Trying to organize meaningful teamwork without clearly defining positive interdependence to students is a nearly impossible task because "without positive interdependence, students placed together to work in groups see little value in helping their fellow students learn" (Faltis, 1997, p. 148). He explains why such attempts in a language class can be disastrous:

> When students are not linked together through positive interdependence, an inevitable result is that only certain students benefit from the experience. What typically happens in small-group work sans positive interdependence is that the rich get richer while the condition of the poor either becomes worse or, at best, stays the same. The reason this happens is fairly straightforward: In small-group work, learning is directly tied to the extent to which students participate verbally in the completion of the task. (Faltis, 1997, p. 148).

Faltis (1997) says it is usually the case that "students who participate more benefit more because they use language to mediate their

learning" (p.148). Moreover he believes that by talking more, students actually practice various language functions, e.g., dealing with agreement and disagreement, expressing emotions, complaining, showing regret, defending opinion, encouraging others to participate in activities, and so on (Faltis, 1997, p. 148). Thus, it is crucial that all teammates realize the value of structured positive interdependence as applied to the development of both their social and language skills in an English class. Faltis (1997, p. 149) draws the conclusion that teachers should "promote positive interdependence to ensure that all students participate optimally during small-group learning", so as to assist them in development of social and language skills and to encourage positive interdependence.

To provide teachers with indicators that teamwork in a class is obviously failing, Johnson and Johnson describe situations where positive interdependence is not applied (1987, p. 127) by saying that in such classes students tend to talk about topics but not the actual assignment or task, do their own work yet ignore other students, leave groups impulsively; in such situations students do not share materials and answers, and no peer correction exists (Johnson and Johnson, 1987, p. 127).

On the contrary, Johnson and Johnson (1987, p. 126) explain what

teamwork in a class with carefully structured positive should look like.

Students in such a class often put their heads close together over their

work, talk about the assignment and not the topic in general,

encourage each other to learn and contribute; students in such a

successful class share materials and answers, and peer correction is

naturally accepted.

Johnson and Johnson (1987, p. 127) insist that teachers should

understand different types of positive interdependence in order to be

able to make sure all of them are present in teamwork of the students

by saying that teachers trying to apply cooperative learning strategies

"need to understand the different types of positive interdependence

and have specific strategies for implementing each one" (1987, p.

127).

Just putting students in teams and asking them to work together does

not appear to be enough to achieve positive interdependence in a class.

Jacobs, Lee, and Ball (1995, p. 17) indicate the following ways of

promoting positive interdependence: goals, rewards, roles, resources,

and identity.

According to Jacobs, Lee, and Ball (1995, p. 17), "positive goal interdependence exists when the group shares a common goal or goals". For example, the goal may be to produce a report or a research paper, for everyone to know the answer to a particular question, mastering a certain skill and so on.

Jacobs, Lee, and Ball (1995) then describe positive reward interdependence as something that "exists when each group member's reward is affected by the reward that the other members of their group receive" (p. 17). For example, getting bonus points if everyone in the team does well on the test can be seen as a positive reward interdependence stimulus.

Making sure that all students stay on task while working together is best achieved by "assigning students to different roles within the group" (Johnson et al., 1984, p. 8). Positive role interdependence exists when "members are assigned complementary and interconnected roles that specify responsibilities which the group needs to meet in order to complete a task" (Jacobs, Lee, and Ball, 1995, p. 17), and these roles can be rotated from time to time. Jacobs, Lee, and Ball (1995) provide an example of roles that can exist when

positive role interdependence is used:

> In a group of three which is reading a unit in their textbook, one person can be the summarizer of each small section of the unit, another can be the checker who checks on the accuracy of the summary, and a third can be the elaborator who give examples or connects the material to what group members already know. (p. 17).

"Positive resource interdependence means that each member has only a portion of the information, materials, or tools needed to complete a task" (Jacobs, Lee, and Ball, 1995, p. 17). For example, no one in a team has all the information needed to complete a jigsaw puzzle, yet each teammate possesses only a piece of the puzzle. Teammates need to share information, i.e., their individual pieces of the puzzle, to succeed as a team. As a result, "individuals view themselves as instrumental in the productivity of other group members, and view other group members as instrumental in the individuals' productivity", according to Johnson and Johnson (1987, p.126), because it is only through being willing to contribute and share "own" information to other teammates can the productivity of the team as a whole be increased.

When the team shares common identity, positive identity

interdependence exists. "There is a *shared identity* based on group membership. Besides being a separate individual, one is a member of a team. According to Johnson and Johnson (1987, p.126), "the shared identity binds members together emotionally". For example, a motto, a flag, anything that is of emotional value to all of the teammates can be a valid basis for shared identity. "There is a *mutual interest* in each other", Johnson and Johnson (1987, p.126) indicate, not only because students benefit from working with each other towards a common goal, but also because shared identity makes them feel more comfortable and get the sense of belonging to their team. The emotional and spiritual bond that exists among the teammates is indeed an important factor in being able to work together towards a common goal.

Therefore, the value of positive interdependence is obvious. As a matter of fact, "the performance of group members is *mutually caused* by all members" (Johnson and Johnson, 1987, p.126). Being responsible for the overall success of the team, each teammate has to be attentive to the needs of other teammates, see himself/herself as a contributor. "The mutual causation results in *mutual responsibility* for the performance of each member and *mutual obligation* to the

assistance and support of the other group members", say Johnson and

Johnson (1987, p.126) who also sum up their description of the

positive interdependence principle by saying the following:

> No member works alone. Since each member receives the
> encouragement and facilitation of each other member, one's
> own performance is perceived to be caused by one's own efforts
> and abilities and the encouragement or facilitation of the other
> group members, and the performance of the other group
> members is perceived to be partially due to one's
> encouragement and facilitation.

Indeed, with positive interdependence existing in a class, teamwork

becomes efficient. Students see themselves as part of a team, staying

on the common task, encouraging teammates, sharing their efforts in

achieving a common goal in a strictly positive atmosphere of mutual

cooperation. This, however, also means that they need to understand

the fact that each of them is personally accountable for the result of

the teamwork.

Every teammate should be individually accountable for the success of

the team. A situation where some teammates are working and others

are not working should not be acceptable. According to Jacobs, Lee,

and Ball (1995), "one of the most commonly heard objections to

having students work in groups is that some group members will end

up doing all the work and all the learning" (p. 20).

Christian J. Faltis (1997, p. 150) further describes the need for

individual accountability, noting its relationship to the principle of

positive interdependence:

> A primary purpose of small-group learning organized to
> promote positive interdependence is to ensure that each student
> participates so that through the participation of all members of
> the group, the task is completed and learning is maximized.
> Occasionally, when you assign small-group learning activities,
> you will find that some students are not participating to their
> fullest potential.

This is often the case because some students do not want to work

while others are willing to work. It is indeed difficult to make sure that

all students in the team are working. However, it is should not

necessarily be the teacher who is to constantly remind the students of

their individual accountability for what the team does. The students

themselves should be aware of the fact that they are responsible for the

success of the team.

Individual accountability is sharing concern for the success of the whole team as a result of individual commitment on part of each teammate. Therefore, "encouraging everyone in the group to participate is a real concern", as Jacobs, Lee, and Ball (1995) admit, adding, "we need everyone to feel that they are individually accountable for the success of their group" (p. 20).

Johnson and Johnson (1987, pp. 53-54) note the following in regard to the issue of individual student accountability:

> The purpose of a cooperative learning group is to maximize the learning of each member. A learning group is not truly cooperative individual when some members are "slackers" who are letting others do all the work. In order to ensure that all members learn and that groups know which members to provide with encouragement and help, teachers will need to ascertain frequently the level of performance of each group member.

Johnson and Johnson (1987) suggest that structuring individual accountability in a cooperative learning class can be achieved by "giving practice tests, randomly selecting members to explain answers, having members edit each other's work, and randomly picking one paper from the group to grade" (p. 54).

Faltis (1997) adds, "if the group grade is based on the individual work of every student in the group, it is less likely that any one student will do more or less than others and more likely that students will help one another to ensure that all are participating equally" (p. 151). He also suggests "randomly picking from the group the completed task of one student and using that as the grade for the group" (Faltis, 1997, p. 151), in addition to individual grades.

Jacobs, Lee, and Ball (1995) also provide some instructions on how to structure teamwork to promote the feeling of individual accountability. For example, each teammate can individually take a quiz, or team members can be "called on at random to answer a question and/or to explain an answer" (Jacobs, Lee, and Ball, 1995, p. 20). Having each team member contribute only one part of the whole is another way of ensuring that all students understand that without their being individually accountable for the contribution to the success of the team, positive results cannot be achieved.

Both positive interdependence and individual accountability are interwoven. Assigning a role to each teammate and rotating these roles help develop the sense of being responsible for the success of the

whole team on part of each team member. Jacobs, Lee, and Ball

(1995) provide the following example of how "each team member has

a designated role" in a language class:

> For example, a reading passage can be divided into sections.
> Members of a pair each read the first section silently. Then, one
> person is to summarize the section and the other is to make
> connections between the section and other materials the class
> has studied or with aspects of their lives. These roles rotate for
> the next section of the reading passage. (p. 20).

Without individual accountability of each team member for the

success of the team as a whole, good teamwork and cooperative

learning are not possible. Unless the students understand the

importance of being involved in activities and being personally

accountable for whatever happens in the team, the team will not be

able to explore the full power of cooperative learning. Active face-to-

face interaction as a manifestation of each student's involvement

therefore becomes essential.

As students engage in cooperative learning activities, they should be

facing each other. The interaction must be face-to-face. Although it

appears obvious, in real life students often sit in groups without facing

each other. In a cooperative learning class, students communicate all

the time; therefore the issue of the physical arrangement of the students should not be overlooked. Christian J. Faltis (1997) believes that the students "need to be within personal talking distance (within 2 feet) and be physically facing each other" (p. 147). For example, students can be seated at a round table or in a circle.

Mary Ann Christison (1990, p. 6) states the following in regard to physical arrangement of the students in a cooperative learning language classroom:

> The physical and spatial arrangement of the classroom affects cooperative work. If students in EFL classes are to cooperate, activities *must* be structured so that students can cooperate, and talk to each other. If they want to have a conversation with someone, they can't talk facing back-to-back or front-to-back. They need to talk face-to-face.

Faltis (1997) indicates, "face-to-face interaction ensures that students can hear each other speak and actually see any paraverbal and nonverbal support that may accompany what is being said" (p. 147), ensuring successful communication. Moreover, students should be able to engage in conversation/consultations with their teammates at any time. As a matter of fact, Faltis (1997, p. 147) accepts that sometimes students need to be ordered to move. However, he says, "be sure to explain to them that being face to face improves interaction because now, not only can they can see

each other better, they can hear each other better as well" (Faltis, 1997, p. 147), which in a language class is an absolute must.

Furthermore, it is clear that human beings are social beings collaborating and cooperating together. The skills of cooperative interaction are most important to human beings (Johnson and Johnson, 1987, p. 109). Johnson and Johnson (1987) believe that "cooperation is the forest; competition and individualized effort are but trees" (p. 109).

Johnson and Johnson (1987, p. 109) explain why teaching the appropriate use of collaborative skills is important:

> Most human interaction is cooperative interaction. Cooperation is the most important and basic form of human interaction, and the skills of cooperating successfully are the most important skills anyone needs to master. There is no way to overstate this point. Competitive and individualistic behavior cannot take place unless persons are interacting within a broad cooperative framework.

It is often the case that when put together in teams, students show lack of collaborative skills to work effectively with other teammates. Jacobs, Lee, and Ball (1995) emphasize teaching the use of

collaborative skills is essential because "good collaborative skills are important not only so that students learn more when they study in groups; these skills are also crucial for success outside of school, with their friends and families, as well as later, in their careers" (p.18).

Working toward a common goal is vital in cooperative learning. However, Johnson and Johnson say that students need to have the necessary collaborative skills in order to be able to achieve common goals (1987, p. 106):

> The students must have the appropriate skills in order to respond to the goal structure implemented by the teacher. With each type of goal structure comes a set of skills that each student needs to have mastered. Teachers often assume that students have the skills necessary to cooperate or compete with other students, or to work productively by themselves. This is often not the case, even when students are in high school and college. Many students come to school unable to work alone, to cooperate with others, or to compete successfully.

In teaching these skills, Jacobs, Lee, and Ball (1995) believe that it is "necessary to emphasize the same skill for several lessons or more" (p. 18) for the students to eventually master collaborative skills. According to them, teaching the appropriate use of collaborative skills can be done in a variety and combination of ways.

The need for the collaborative skills should be made apparent to the students. For example, the teacher may want the students to relate to their past experiences and times when they could have used collaborative skills. The students should also understand the benefits of collaboration and cooperation not only in formal classroom settings but also in everyday life.

In what can be neatly applied to any good language class, Jacobs, Lee, and Ball (1995, p. 18) suggest that when teaching a particular skill, the teacher should also ask the students to think about "what a skill looks like and sounds like":

> For example, being a good listener can look like looking at people when they are talking to us. It can sound like using expressions such as "uh-huh" and "right" while the people are speaking to us in order to show we are following what they are saying.

Again, rotating roles based on collaborative skills is an important step in mastering them. Jacobs, Lee, and Ball (1995) provide an interesting example of student roles within a cooperative learning team trying to master designated collaborative skills:

For example, one student can be the praiser, another the paraphraser, a third can be the facilitator (in charge of keeping the group on task), and a fourth can be the questioner (asking people for reasons). The teacher can circulate among groups and observe use of the designated skill(s), and students can also observe their own use and their group members' use of the skill (s). (p. 18).

Johnson and Johnson (1987) sum up the above mentioned by saying that "teachers should deliberately teach the skills students need" in order to engage in effective learning process, and that teachers "should also establish classroom norms and climate that support the use of the skills" (p. 106).

Collaborative skills in a language class can be practiced in many ways. For instance, playing various real-life simulations (such as games, role-plays and so on) can do this for the students. It is important to keep it real, especially in a foreign language class. It is also important to reflect upon what has been already done to master collaborative skills in a variety of ways, including team/group interaction processing.

Team/group interaction processing is an important element of cooperative learning. It can be defined as a moment in time when the

teammates can discuss their cooperation efforts and how well they have been working to achieve a common goal. According to Johnson and Johnson (1987), "every learning experience is also a lesson in learning how to collaborate when the group members process how well their group functioned" (p. 147). Furthermore, Jacobs, Lee, and Ball (1995, p. 19) emphasize the importance of group interaction processing:

> As part of each unit in which cooperative learning is used, time should be set aside at least once for students to discuss how well their group is working together. This processing of group interaction helps groups learn how to collaborate more effectively. It can take place during or at the end of an activity.

Johnson and Johnson (1987) believe that teammates need to discuss "how well they are working and take action to resolve any difficulties members have in collaborating together productively" (p. 147). Jacobs, Lee, and Ball (1995, p. 19) insist that processing group interaction is of vital importance:

> It is easy to succumb to time pressure and skip the processing portion of a cooperative learning lesson. However, processing group interaction is a key element of cooperative learning because it gives students useful feedback on their group skills, and it tells students that the teacher places importance on how well they work together.

However, it appears indeed that little attention is usually paid by teachers and researchers to team interaction processing, as compared to other foundations of cooperative learning. In regard to this, Johnson and Johnson (1987, p. 148) note:

> Group processing, however, has been relatively ignored in most models of cooperative learning. Although a great deal of attention has been paid to structuring materials and organizing instruction to promote cooperative learning, little attention has been focused on training teachers (and students) to promote the processing by group members of their collaborative efforts to achieve. Theoretically, empirically, and practically, group processing has been ignored.

The discussion may concern teamwork in general or the use of a particular collaborative skill. Therefore, Jacobs, Lee, and Ball (1995) believe that teammates should take some time to discuss how well the team is functioning and what needs to be improved, elaborating on processing group interaction:

> Processing group interaction has two aspects. One, the good things about group functioning should be brought out. For example, particular members can be praised for the specific time they helped to explain a difficult point to their groupmates. Two, the group should discuss what in their interaction needs to be improved. For instance, they may feel that did not stay on task. (p. 19).

Johnson and Johnson (1987, p. 148) indicate that "processing is important for the group as a whole and for individual students" and provide the most important reasons for using cooperative team interaction processing. They include giving students the time to "maintain effective working relationships", helping students "become aware of and develop the collaborative skills they need to work effectively" in teams, providing students with "positive feedback on their use of collaborative skills", and reminding students to practice their new collaborative skills consistently, not just occasionally" (Johnson and Johnson, 1987, p. 148).

Johnson and Johnson (1987) believe that students benefit from team interaction processing enormously, particularly because "they will learn and practice acceptable behavior and start down the difficult path toward being more socially skilled" (p. 148).

In a powerful combination of effective team interaction processing, appropriate use of social skills, face-to-face interaction, positive interdependence, and individual accountability, students will learn not only a foreign language but also the social skills that they will need to use the English successfully.

Related Studies

Cooperative learning is a relatively new trend in education. It was not until the 1970s that cooperative learning in which students helped each other learn was introduced in schools and popularized in different countries. In fact, cooperative learning is still a new trend and it is constantly being developed and improved.

It is no secret that humans are social beings; working collectively to solve a task is therefore a normal process. Kagan (1998, p.1) suggests that we can expect better mastery of a subject from students perfecting it in small teams through cooperative learning (as distinguished from group learning – see below) than from those working without support or feedback from a social entity, i.e., peers. Furthermore, we can readily expect better mastery of a subject from those who learn it through mutual cooperation.

Cooperative learning as such is a new set of concepts and strategies that helps students master the subject better and faster. Kagan (1998, p.1) says that it is considered good cooperative learning when there is equal participation, individual accountability, simultaneous interaction, and positive interdependence (when all students gain).

Kagan (1998, p.1) believes that otherwise it is merely the old-fashioned group work.

Only with these procedures being present can we apply the cooperative learning strategies in teaching EFL successfully.

The strategies used in cooperative learning are instructional strategies that "prescribe how students should interact over the content" (Kagan, 1998, p.1). There are many of these so-called 'co-op strategies'. The co-op strategies ensure success with cooperative learning because they have the above mentioned principles built-in and can be used to form teams and teach various subjects in the context of social skills (see the Theoretical Background section). These strategies are applied in small teams, ideally of four, to provide for equal participation so that the strategies can be successful. "All students have the ability to create an effective product… We make the content accessible to all of our students and give all students an equal opportunity to excel" (Kagan, 1997, p.1).

The following are some of the cooperative learning strategies used in this study (adapted from Kagan, 1998, pp.2-3).

Round Robin:

- a ball is passed around the table in each team;

- only the person having the ball gets to speak when other students
  are listening to him/her attentively (this is in opposition to
  traditional group work where a discussion may be chaotic).

ThinkPad Brainstorming:

- Ss "generate items on thinkpad slips, announcing them to
  teammates and placing them in the center of the table" (Kagan,
  1998);

- The thinkpad slips are later rearranged and modified into graphic
  organizer content, making the experience more visual.

Think-Pair-Square:

- Ss discuss their answers in pairs;

- Ss share their partner's answer with the team.

Four S Brainstorming:

- Ss in their teams quickly generate many ideas;

- one designated S simultaneously writes down the ideas.

Paraphrase Passport:

Ss "share their own ideas only after they accurately paraphrase the person who spoke before them" (Kagan, 1998).

Team Interview:

- Ss are interviewed by their teammates;

- Each Ss takes turns.

Jigsaw Problem Solving:

- each teammate has part of an answer/clue;

- teammates must put their pieces of information together to solve the problem and achieve a common goal.

Team Statement:

- Ss discuss their opinions in pairs;

- Ss write individual statements;

- Ss Round Robin individual statements;

- Ss work together to make one team statement.

Team Mind Map:

- Ss draw the central image;

- Ss brainstorm/draw/label ideas radiating out of the central image;

- Ss add details using key words and images.

Generally speaking, it is useful to assign specific functions to every person on the team. For example, one person will read to the team on this particular day, another one will write down the results of a discussion etc. In a way, it makes the work in the team more structured because it attaches real-world societal values to the team – responsibility and individual accountability rather than having a faceless position in a group.

Teambuilding in cooperative learning is aimed at creating "a non-threatening tone in class that sets the stage for effective learning" (Kagan, 1999, p.1). It is also meant to build positive student relations, reduce discipline problems, and more importantly, increase motivation and learning. Students also "feel a sense of belonging" (Kagan, 1999, p.1). All of this improves the quality of learning, which, again, makes cooperative learning beneficial for students.

There are many ways to approach students in teams in order to accelerate their learning, improve understanding of the subject, and make a session a valuable experience by effectively introducing cooperative learning strategies in a teaching session.

Cooperative learning is a fairly new approach to teaching. It has its drawbacks, mainly because it is new and not all problems in cooperative learning have been solved. Much of it is subject to further development and improvement, especially as those who are used to more traditional approaches to language teaching are still investigating it. Nonetheless, it appears to be effective because it provides for livelier interaction between students in a constructive and structured manner. Applying cooperative learning in teaching EFL may indeed be an effective way of accelerating English language learning.

As far as immersion is concerned, it is a method of foreign language instruction in which content subjects are taught through the medium of the foreign or second language (Met, 1993). The foreign language is the vehicle of instruction. There are two kinds of immersion: total and partial. In total immersion, all schooling in the initial years is conducted in the foreign language, including reading and language

arts. Partial immersion differs from total in that 50% of the study day is conducted in English right from the start. In partial immersion, reading and language arts are always taught in English (Met, 1993). Beyond that, the choice of subjects taught in each language is a local decision.

Various studies show that immersion is an effective way of accelerating English language learning. For example, Soifer (2000) has found that students are literally thriving under English immersion. Gumz (2000) has found that under a new immersion program, there was impressive growth among English learners who showed dramatic improvement. His recent study of a number of successful immersion programs also disclosed results of various foreign language tests and the obvious improvement in the scores of those in immersion programs as compared to those in regular schools where foreign languages are taught in a more traditional, conservative, teacher-centered way (Gumz, 2000).

Furthermore, Soifer indicates that swift and complete transition to English immersion with a sound implementation strategy achieved the best results. Many respondents in his study openly admitted that

immersion was the most coherent program ever offered to students with limited English proficiency in their institutions. One of the respondents was amazed by the fact that his students actually began to speak English with each other (Soifer, 2000).

According to many studies (Soifer, 2000; Gumz, 2000; Met, 1993), total immersion is the most effective way of developing foreign language proficiency. Studies outside the US as well as inside (Soifer, 2000; Met, 1993) show that the intensity of the immersion experience coupled with the amount of exposure to the foreign language assures that students have the necessary language skills to deal with the curriculum. It was also proven, in the above-mentioned studies, that students in partial immersion do not develop the same level of foreign language proficiency as students in total immersion. A consequence of this is that students may have greater difficulty dealing with the curriculum in certain subjects. However, those in partial immersion programs were still doing better than those not under immersion, i.e., immersion students do better than comparable non-immersion students on measures of verbal and mathematics skills.

In Thailand, Assumption University in Bangkok has one of the most successful English immersion programs. The immersion program of the English Language Center at Assumption University is designed for students who have not yet mastered the ability to communicate effectively in English. The immersion program aims to give students an intensive experience using English in an all-English environment, which includes reading, writing, speaking and listening under the guidance of professional English language teachers. The ELC immersion program is a 360-hour course that consists of three 90-minute daily periods, five days each week for fifteen weeks. Elango (1997) indicates that the program enjoys a high success rate. He particularly cites as an example learners who could handle only grade 2 (D) at their entry level but who have progressed to grade 5 (A) at the end of four months in the immersion program. We have therefore more or less an "immersion success story" in Thailand which can be used as a model for accelerating English language learning.

Another immersion institution in Thailand is the Asian University of Science and Technology in Pattaya, Chon Buri, which was the research site of this present study.