

The Impact of Using Group Teaching Technique on Iraqi University EFL Students' Achievement in Critical Reading

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Abstract

Reading comprehension is an important skill in teaching and learning English as a foreign language in Iraq. The level of students' proficiency in it decides to a great extent their progress in the academic fields and in general knowledge. Teaching and learning reading comprehension is graded from simple words and statements to extents with different sizes and complexity levels. It targets enabling students to understand the meaning of new texts with suitable levels of speed and efforts.

Critical reading on the other hand is something higher than reading comprehension process. In critical reading the student is not only required to comprehend the meaning of a text, eg. vocabulary. He is also required to judge what he reads and identify the main ideas and restate them in his own words.

The aim of critical reading is to assess the strength of the evidence and the argument. It is just as useful to conclude that a study, or an article, presents very strong evidence and a well-reasoned argument, as it is to identify the studies or articles that are weak.

Critical readers usually examine the evidence or arguments presented, check out any influences on the evidence or arguments, examine the interpretations made; and decide to what extent they are prepared to accept the authors' arguments, opinions, or conclusions. Non-critical readers, on the other hand, usually accept what they read as facts.

Group work is an effective technique for teaching English to students learning a foreign language. Even those students who have no prior experience with this type of technique in the classroom can quickly learn to use it. This technique presents learning as an effective technique to involve EFL students in using English and to make learning more enjoyable.

The present study aims at investigating the impact of using group work technique on Iraqi University EFL students achievement in critical reading.

To achieve the aim of the present study, two groups from the 2nd grade students at the department of English AL-Yarmouk Private University College were randomly chosen. Each group consisted of 34 students. One of them was selected to be the experimental group which will be taught critical reading by using group work technique while the second group (the control group) was taught critical reading by using the traditional method.

At the end of the experiment, students of both groups subjected to an achievement test.

Findings proved that using group work technique in teaching critical reading has a positive effect on the achievement of Iraqi University EFL students.

At the end of the present study it was concluded that group work technique helps the students increase communicative skills. It has a number of psychological and social benefits, such as being exposed to other points-of-view and learning how to exchange opinions. It also trains the students to use the foreign language independently of the teacher.

Introduction :

Group work is an effective technique for teaching English to students learning a foreign language. Even those students who have no prior experience with this type of technique in the classroom can quickly learn to use it. This technique presents learning as an effective technique to involve EFL students in using English and to make learning more enjoyable.(Al-Ubeidy,2003)

A group work technique is intended to improve students learning through providing them with opportunities to ask questions and communicating with each other. In this respect, Gray,(2000:1)believes that a group work is an effective activity for teaching English as a foreign language.

Group work allows students to full use of language that they have learned, participating in the communicative process throughout the group

work; with practice progress, with progress comes motivation, and with motivation comes more learning.

Dickinson (1981:382) states that motivating students and creating an atmosphere of enjoyment and interest are the most important elements in teaching a foreign language by a group work technique. Students should be given practice not only in the forms of language but also in getting involved with the passage they read, reacting to the material, forming questions as they read a passage, writing in the margins, underlining important words and sentences and drawing conclusions.

It has been demonstrated that this technique allows for physical activity, i.e., to break the routine in the same place throughout the whole class period. Another advantage is that students always know that they are moving into groups, which will be congenial.

Critical reading is an important precursor to critical writing. The aim of critical reading is not to find faults, but to assess the strength of the evidence and the argument. It is just as useful to conclude that a study, or an article, presents very strong evidence and a well-reasoned argument, as it is to identify the studies or articles that are weak. To non-critical readers, texts provide facts. Readers gain knowledge by memorizing the statements within a text.

Non-critical readers usually accept what they read as facts; while critical readers usually examine the evidence or arguments presented, check out any influences on the evidence or arguments, examine the interpretations made; and decide to what extent they are prepared to accept the authors' arguments, opinions, or conclusions.

Critical readers usually reflect on information and think critically. Being reflective is an important part of active learning. By reflecting on what they are learning, we mean that they are thinking about it. In other words, the information is being processed in some way: They are making connections between the new information and they already know, they are identifying concepts they may not understand very well, they are evaluating the importance of what they are reading as they go along.
(Nist & Holschuh, 2000:28)

Problem of the Study and its Significance

To read critically is to make judgments about how a text is argued. This is a highly reflective skill requiring students to "stand back" and gain some distance from the text they are reading.

Most of Iraqi university EFL students used to look primarily for information and facts when they read a text and they don't look for ways of thinking about the subject matter. They also used to take notes and extract and compile lists of evidence; by asking themselves " what information can we get out of it ? "

In learning reading the focus should be on developing thinking skill. Students should be able to engage in an ongoing negotiation to arrive at meaning. This is fundamental to the act of reading . Essential to the success of higher level of reading is the reader's ability to relate what is known in order to find answers to cognitive questions. (Buscemi and Others,2010: 6).

A serious frustration for English teachers is that students do not read the assigned material. This is a problem across disciplines and years. Some students do not allocate the time necessary to do their reading, others may not understand the difference between reading and preparing. Some students do not know how to deal with difficult material and it often stops them from continuing reading and are not then ready to engage in class discussion.(Briskin,2011)

Students should ask themselves while reading a text," How does this text work? How is it argued? How is the evidence,facts,examples,etc.)used and interpreted? How does the text reach its conclusions? "

The significance of the present study stems from the effective role of critical reading in enabling the students to evaluate,conclude,analyse and argue.

The study is expected to shed light on some Iraqi university EFL students' problems in reading critically.

Findings of the study are expected to be useful for pedagogical implications, particularly in relation to the students ability in reading.

Aim of the Study :

The present study aims at :

Investigating empirically the impact of using group work technique on Iraqi university EFL students' achievement in critical reading.

Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that there is no statistically significant differences between students who are taught critical reading by using a group work technique and those who are taught it by using the traditional one.

Limits of the Study

- 1.The study is limited to the 2nd grade students at the department of English, at AL-Yarouk Private University College during the academic year 2012/2013.
- 2.The material selected is taken from reading comprehension textbook (Developing Skills, by: L.G.Alexander)

Definition of Basic Terms

1- Group Work

Al-Ubeidy (2003:8) defined group work as " work in which the class is broken into small groups from three to eight students; they work simultaneously on the same task, or be given different tasks of varied types or levels.

Group Work is described by Al-Mutawa,Najat and Taiseer(1989:104) as follows:

" The teacher divides the class into appropriate groups and appointing a group leader for each, then assigns the activity or task. They think that

this technique is more motivating and more useful for active communication.

The operational definition of group work as that technique which is used in the classroom to provide the students with opportunities to participate in language activities. The teacher divides the students into six groups of five students with a leader selected according to certain criteria.

2- Reading

In the context of language learning, reading means "reading and understanding". A student who says, "I can read but I don't understand what they mean" is not, therefore, reading, in this sense, but merely decoding: translating the written symbols into their corresponding sounds. (Ur, 2012:133)

Harmer (2013:283), classified reading into two types: **extensive reading**, in which the teacher encourages students to choose for themselves what they read and do so for pleasure and general language improvement, and **intensive reading** which is designed to enable students to develop specific receptive skills such as reading for gist (or general understanding - often called skimming), reading for specific information (often called scanning), reading for detailed comprehension or reading for inference (what is "behind" the words) and attitude.

3- Critical Reading

Buscemi and others (2005:14) defined critical reading as the ability to evaluate the validity (truth, accuracy) of a text's message and the effectiveness with which it is presented. It is the desire to engage the text in a conversation to draw the full meaning from what you read. Critical readers digest, interpret, and evaluate what they read. They interact with the text by considering explicit and implied messages, questioning facts and assumptions, analyzing arguments and logical structures, evaluating evidence, asking questions, and applying their own insights and experiences.

Nist & Holschuh (2003:31) defined critical reading as "The process of making connections between what the students already know and new information they read in texts. Critical readers usually question new information that is not in accord with what they already know. They read to

understand and remember and they usually take organized notes while they are reading.

Operational Definition

It is the process of thinking while reading and arriving at conclusions based on evidence. It is the process in which readers question, confirm, judge and evaluate what they read throughout the reading process.

Related Previous Studies

1. Jong-Shing's (1995)

The aim of this study is to examine the process by which a Chinese teacher used group work as a major instructional tool for teaching English as a foreign language. The study was conducted by the teacher himself in his classroom at a university in Taiwan for one school year. A qualitative research design was followed. Major data were gathered from observation notes, formal and informal interviews with five students participants, and the students' written journals.

The researcher used four small-group discussions and more listening activities during the second semester. This adjustment aimed at meeting the students' ongoing need for listening to more of native English-speakers' English.

2. Christina's (1995)

The aim of this study was to develop an instrument that would fully assess the effectiveness of small group learning that has been done so far with existing instruments.

The data used to develop the instrument came from four main sources:

- observation of actual small group work in four classrooms, as well as informal interviews conducted with students enrolled in an English literature course (N= 39) at a junior college,
- structural questions where nine students were asked to list positive and negative aspects of small group work,
- a survey of student, teacher and expert reactions to the items being considered for inclusion in the new instrument.

The study has concluded that students who work in cooperative classroom learn more, enjoy the content better and have more positive feelings towards their classmates.

3.AL-Ubeidi's (2003)

The aim of this study is to investigate empirically the effect of using group work in teaching oral practice on the achievement of preparatory school students. The sample of the study consists of 60 female students from the fifth preparatory grade (the scientific branch) in Diyala Province. The instruments of the study are written and oral tests.

At the end of the experiment, the tests were administered. After analyzing the results statistically, it has been found that there were significant differences between the two groups in both written and oral tests. The students of the experimental group have been better than the students of the control group, while indicates that teaching oral practice by using group work technique is more effective than teaching oral practice without using this technique.

Discussion of the Previous Related Studies

The related previous studies will be discussed according to their relatedness to the current study in: Population and Sample, Aim , Procedures.

Population and Sample

The sample of of the first study ,Jong-Shang's (1995) was drawn from college students at a university in Taiwan. Major data were gathered from observation notes, formal and informal interviews with five students participants, and the students' written journals. The sample of the second study, Cristina's,(1995) was 39 students at a junior college. The sample of the third study,AL-Ubaedi's,2003) was two groups, each one consists of 30 students from the 5th grade preparatory school students.

Concerning the sample of the present study, two groups of 34 college students from the 2nd grade at the department of English have been chosen.

Aims

Jong-Shang's(1995) aimed at examining the process by which a Chinese teacher used group work as a major instructional tool for teaching English as a foreign language. Christina's(1995) aimed at developing an instrument that would fully assesses the effectiveness of small group learning that has been done so far with existing instruments.AL-Ubeidi's (2003) aimed at investigating empirically the effect of using group work as a teaching technique in teaching oral practice on the achievement of the preparatory school students. The present study aims at investigating the impact of using group work teaching technique on Iraqi university EFL students' achievement in critical reading.

Procedures

The surveyed previous studies followed more than one procedure in gathering the data to achieve the aims of the study, for instance, the data of the first study is collected from observation notes, formal and informal interviews. As for the second study, the data is gathered from observation of actual small group work in four classrooms as well as informal interviews conducted with students enrolled in an English literature course at a junior college, the third study is gathered through achievement written and oral tests.

Procedures & Methodology

The Experimental Design

In order to achieve the aim of the present study ' the post test-only control group design ' has been used, in which two control equivalent groups were chosen randomly. This design takes this form :

Experiment al Group	Independe nt Variable	Pos t - test
Control Group	Pos t - test

(Al-Ubeidy,2003:47)

The experimental group is the group that is taught critical reading through group work. The control group is the group that is taught critical reading by using the traditional method.

Population and Sample Selection

population is the group to which a researcher would like the results of the study to be generalized. Sampling is defined as the process of selecting a number of individuals for any study in such a way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they were selected.(Gay,2010:128).

Population of the present study is the students of the second grade at the department of English, AL-Yarmouk University Private College in Diyala Province during the academic year 2012/2013. There are three sections of the second grade at the department of English. The total number of students is 120, each section has 40 students.

Two sections out of three have been selected randomly from the second grade. One section has been selected randomly as an experimental group, that is section (B), the other is the control one, that is section (c). After excluding the repeaters in every section, the total number of the sample of the subjects is 80 students, 40 students respectively in each section, as shown in the table below:

Table (1)

Group	Section	Types of Treatment	No. of subjects before Excluding	No. of Subjects after Excluding
Experimental	B	With group work technique	40	34
Control	C	With the traditional technique	40	34
Total			80	68

Equivalence of the Sample Subjects

Before starting the experiment, the two groups of students (the experimental group and the control group) have been equalized in some variables, as it is thought that these variables may affect the researcher's results and testees' achievement. As the students' gender, age, the academic level of the mothers, the academic level of fathers and students' achievement in reading comprehension in the previous stage may play an effective role and make a difference in their achievement in English. (Good and Colin, 1976:366).

Gender Variable

By applying the Chi-square formula, it is found out that there is no statistically significant differences between the two groups since the

computed X^2 value which is (0.629) is lower than the critical X^2 value which is (5.99) at (2) degree of freedom and at (0.75) level of significance.

Table (2)

The X^2 Statistics of the Equalization of the two Groups according to the Gender Variable

Group	No.	Male	Female	Computed X^2 -Value	Critical X^2 -Value	d.f	Level Of Significance
Experimental	34	12	22	0.629	5.99	2	0.05
Control	34	11	23				
Total	68	23	45				

Table (3)

The Mean, Standard Deviation and " T " value of the Subjects' Age According to their Gender in the Experimental and Control Groups

Gender	Group	No.	Mean Of their ages	Variance	Standard Deviation	d.f	T - Value		Level of Significance
Total Sample Subjects M + F	Exp.	68	5079	9775.2	98.87	134	computed	critical	Not Significant
	Cont.	68	5076	9531.6	97.63		0.208	1.96	0.05

Male	Exp.	34	5055	9802.9	99.01	66	0.372	0.998	Not Significant
	Cont.	34	5064	9535.52	97.65				
Female	Exp.	34	5104	9631.46	98.14	66	0.164	1.998	Not Significant
	Cont.	34	5088	9395.42	96.93				
Male And Female	Exp.	34	5055	9802.98	99.01	66	1.676	1.998	Not Significant
	Cont.	34	5104	9631.46	98.14				

The Academic Level of the Mother Variable

By applying the Chi-square formula it is found that there is no statistically significant differences between the experimental group and the control group at the academic level of the mother variable since the computed X^2 value which is (0.865) is lower than the critical X^2 value which is (9.488) at (4) degree of freedom and at (0.05) level of significance see Table (4).

Table (4)

The X^2 Statistics of the Equalization of the Two Groups at the Academic Level of the Mother Variable

Group	N	Primary Or Less	Intermediate	Preparatory + Institute	University	Computed X^2 - value	Critical X^2 - value	df	0.05 level of Significance
Experimental	34	16	8	5	5				Not signif

1									icant
Contr ol	3 4	7	11	8	8	0.86 5	9.4 88	4	
Total	6 8	23	19	13	13				

The Academic Level of the Father Variable

By applying the Chi-square formula it is also found out that there is no statistically significant difference among the experimental group and the control group at the academic level of the father variable since the computed X^2 value which is (0.44) is lower than the critical X^2 value which is (2.06) at (4) degree of freedom and at (0.05) level of significance , See Table(5).

Table (5)

The X^2 Statistics of the Equalization of the Two Groups at the Academic Level of the Father Variable

Group	No.	Primary and Less	Intermediate	Preparatory + Institute	University	Computed X^2 -Value	Critical X^2 -Value	d.f	Level of Significance (0.05)
Experimental	34	7	7	14	6	0.44	2.06	4	Not Significant
Control	34	6	7	12	9				
Total	68	13	14	26	15				

Achievement in Reading Comprehension in the previous Grade

The computed T-Value of significance of difference between the average achievement of subjects of the experimental and control groups in Reading Comprehension in the previous academic year is (0.099)which is lower than (1.998);the T-Value in degree of freedom(66)and the significance level (0.05).No significant difference is found between the two groups in this criterion.(See Table 6)

Table (6)

The Mean, Standard Deviation and T-Value of the Subjects' Achievement in Reading Comprehension in the previous stage in the Experimental and Control Groups.

Group	No.	Mean	Variance	S.D	d.f	T-Value		Level of Significance (0.05)
						Computed	Critical	
Exp.	34	69.765	165.983	12.883	66	0.099	1.998	Not Significant
Con.	34	69.461	156.560	12.512				

The Experimental Procedures

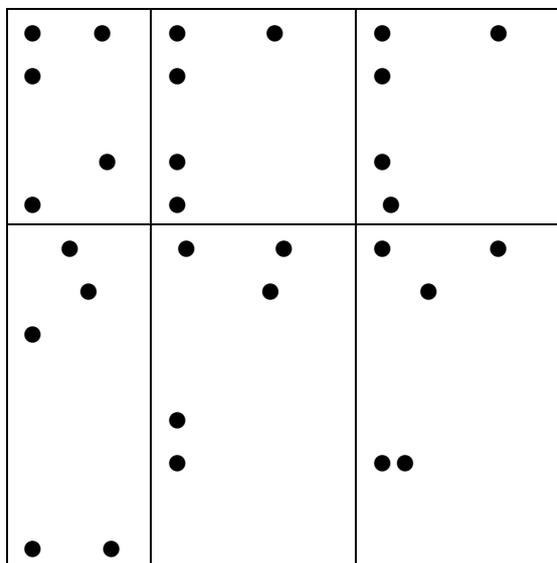
The Experimental Group:

The experimental group practices the drills through group work technique. Accordingly, the researcher used an organized lesson model, with clear goals and a systematic step-by-groups, each group has a step approach. He divided the class into six leader (peer),(See Figure – 1 -).The most advanced peers will be chosen to mediate learners.

The researcher trained the peers by presenting the material through modeling,supporting,correct answers, To use the language by themselves, it creates a positive effective climate in the classroom and increases students' motivation. responding to errors and giving instructive feedback.Also,the researcher trained the peers to give praise and reinforcement to other peers to create positive atmosphere among learners.

The researcher used to supervise the peers mediation actively and asses their progress systematically. He chose them according to their scores in reading comprehension in the previous year and their positive attitude towards reading comprehension.

Figure -1- Seating Arrangement



While conducting the group work, the researcher moves around the groups to help the students who may have troubles with getting started, answering the questions. Moreover, the researcher moves from one group to another taking notes about mistakes that are being made, but saying nothing unless being asked a direct question. (Al-Ubeidi,2003:37)

The procedures followed in conducting the group work technique are:

1- Explaining the topic of the passage:

The leader of each group presents the passage very briefly concentrating on the main theme of the passage, and the main points which are used to justify or support this theme.

2-Asking the students to write notes as they read the passage.

3-:Evaluating the reading material: After finishing reading the passage, the leader of the group asks his/her colleagues to evaluate the reading material, for example:

- Which paragraph do you consider to be the best in an academic sense?
- What do you criticize in the first and second paragraph?
- What do you notice about the third paragraph ?

4-Encouraging general participation: The leader should be positive that the member should not be embarrassed and can adequately perform what is required of him/her.

5- Making occasional summaries: The leader should provide the opportunity for the members of the group to make deletions or additions where necessary.

6- Remaining in the background: The leader gives aid and directions only when other students cannot make it by themselves or ask questions instead of answering them.

7- Concluding the discussion : Asking the students to use their own words as far as possible to arrive at conclusions based on evidence from the reading material.

The experiment has lasted for ten weeks; it has been started on 18th, February and completed on 21 April 2013.

Instrument of the study

The instrument of the present study is an achievement test in Critical Reading performed on the subjects of both groups at the end of the teaching period.

Bachman (1990:20) defines a test as "a measurement instrument designed to elicit a specific sample of an individual's behavior".

Davies and Pearse (2000:210) identified the test as " Exercise or activity used to measure the learners' progress in a course, or their more general command of English". AL-Samawi, (2000:123) defines tests as "Instruments used mainly for measuring performance before and after certain treatments. They can also be used to evaluate the progress of participants in certain programs after certain period of time".

The achievement test of the present study is composed of an " unfamiliar authentic text" that they have never read before (Nuttal,2000:31) followed by critical reading questions(Appendix-2-). The test is adopted from (Developing Reading Skills ,By: Linda Markstein & Louise Hirasawa,1983).

The questions have been designed to be in accordance with the following criteria:

1.General design of reading comprehension tests in the Iraqi EFL colleges suitable for both groups.

2. Basic skill to comprehend the meaning of a text, e.g. vocabulary.
3. Questions requiring judging what they read.
4. Questions require the subjects to identify the main ideas restate them in their own words.

Validity of the Test and Scoring Schedule

Validity refers to the correspondence between the test and what it intends or claims to measure. AL-Juboury (2004:6) defines validity as "The quality which a test should have if it is to achieve the outcome that is intended". In other words, a test is said to be valid to the extent that it measures what it is supposed to measure or can be used for the purpose for which it is intended. However, every test, whether it be a short informal classroom test or a public examination, should be as valid as the constructor can make it. (Harris, 2000:18).

Accordingly, a test cannot be a good test unless it is valid. The essence of validity means the accuracy with which a set of test scores measures what it claims to measure. Therefore, a valid test is a tool on which one can absolutely give consistent measure and sound judgment.

Face Validity

This type of validity is usually judged by specialists in education and language teaching depending on how the test look to them. (Harrison, 1983:12).

Content Validity

According to Hughes (1995:27), a test is said to have a content validity if its contents constitute and represent sample of the language skills, structures, etc. with which it is meant to be concerned. Content validity can be approved also "If it appears to an expert judge to represent the domain adequately" (Brown, 2000:125).

To ascertain validity of the test, a jury of prominent professors who are specialists in language teaching has been consulted. The jury have agreed that the test is suitable and according to their points of view, the test has been approved. The jury members are:

1. Asst. Prof. Al-Alwani, Assim Abound. (Ph.D.), College of Basic Education, University of Babylon.

2. Asst. Prof. AL-Bakri, Shaymaa Abdulbaqi. (Ph.D.), College of Education (Ibn Rushd), University of Baghdad.
3. Asst. Prof. Abbas, Abbas Mohammed (Ph.D.), College of Basic Education, University of AL-Mustansiriya.
4. Asst. Prof. Abbas, Amthal Mohammed (Ph.D.), College of Education for Human Sciences, University of Diyala.
5. Asst. Prof. Abdul-Fattah, Shueib Saeed, (Ph.D.), College of Education, University of AL-Mosul.
6. Asst. Prof. Hassan, Safaa Issa. (Ph.D.), College of Basic Education, University of Missan.
7. Asst. Prof. Jassim, Muslim Mahdi, (M.A.), College of Basic Education, University of Diyala.
8. Asst. Prof. Mahmood, Ali Abdullah. (Ph.D.), College of Education for Human Sciences, University of Diyala.
9. Asst. Prof. Najim, Izzat Suheil. (M.A.) . College of Basic Education, University of Diyala.
10. Asst. Prof. Rijjia, Khalil Ismaeel. (Ph.D.), College of Education for Human Sciences, University of Diyala.
11. Asst. Prof. Yahya, Nagham Qaddori. (Ph.D.) College of Education, University of Tikrit.

Item Analysis

Item analysis is a statistical technique that is usually conducted to check the level of difficulty of a constructed test (how difficult each item is) and the discrimination tendency of each item in such a test (whether each item is in the favor of those who scored high or those who scored low). However, since item analysis is important, both difficulty level and discriminating power of each item have been calculated. AL-Samawi, (2000:129).

The aim of the pilot study is to determine the difficulty level and item discrimination power of the test items. In other words, level of difficulty has to do with the percentage of learners who answered the item correctly from (0.20 – 0.80) (Wood, 1960:87 and Ebel, 1972:35). As for the item difficulty analysis of the post-test which is (41-79), it has been found out that the difficulty level is acceptable within the average.

Test Reliability

The other critical characteristic of good test is reliability. A test is reliable measuring instrument for example if it is administrated twice under the same conditions in terms of the group sitting for the test and the amount of teaching and learning before the test and it gives similar results.(Madsen,1983:179)

A test is said to be reliable if it constantly yields similar, or ideally even the same results when conducted multiple times under the same conditions. The higher the correlation, the more reliable is the test.(Alderson,2005:87).

To measure the reliability of the achievement test in this study, the answer sheets of the pilot test have been copied to be rated by two raters, one of them is the researcher, the second rater is an instructor at the same department with an experience of (17) years in teaching at college.The marking criteria have been carefully revised with the second rater before rating.

Pearson's correlation coefficient between the means of the two scorings is 0.88 which is considered statistically a high stable correlation, Appendix(3) presents the scores.

Pilot Administration of the Achievement Post-Test

The pilot administration is carried out on 25th,April,2013.The achievement test has been done on a sample of twenty five students who are out of the actual sample of this study. They are randomly selected from section " A " at the Department of English,AL-Yarmouk University Private College to represent the pilot sample of the present study.

The pilot test is a try out for the test directions and the time required for the students to work out the test by counting the average length of time needed by the students to do the test, which is found to be (85) minutes. Pilot administration of the test shows that the directions of the tests are clear and that there is no ambiguity in it.

Final Administration of the Achievement Test

Completing the ten-week experiment, all the students of the two groups have been tested the achievement test at the Department of English,AL-Yarmouk University Private College, on 5th,May, 2013.

Presentation a of Results

Results obtained from the achievement test indicate statistically significant better achievement of the experimental group than the control group. This is represented by the statistical indicators of means, Standard Deviation, Variance, and T-Value shown in Table (7).

Table (7)

Group	No.	Mean	Variance	S.D	d.f	Computed T - Value	Critical T - Value	Level of Significance (0.01)
Exp.	34	28.265	41.958	6.478	66	3.363	2.657	Significant
Cont.	34	22.382	62.122	7.882				

Results presented in the table (7) prove that using group work technique in teaching critical reading has a positive effect on the achievement of students, accordingly, the null hypothesis is rejected. The alternative one is that there are statistically significant differences between the mean score of the experimental group and the control group by using group work technique on Iraqi EFL University students' achievement in critical reading in favor of the experimental group in their achievement on the post test.

Conclusions

In the light of the results and foregoing discussion, it can be concluded that:

1. Group work technique helps the learners increase communicative skills, encourage participation, change the attitudes towards language learning and above all, provided them a realistic opportunity to work with others in the classroom.
2. It has a number of psychological and social benefits, such as being exposed to other points-of-view and learning how to exchange opinions.
3. It gives the students more positive feelings about themselves and others, and waiting their classmates to do well.
4. It trains students to use the foreign language independently of the teacher.
5. It allows students to interact in the foreign language, stay active, underline important notes as they read, argue with the author, and do whatever they need to stay involved with the passage.

6.It is found that this technique lets students organize their thoughts with the class.

7.Findings of this study imply that this technique allows for physical activity to break up the routine of sitting in the place throughout the whole class period.

Recommendations

On the basis of the yielded results and conclusions mentioned earlier, some pedagogical recommendations have been stated as follows:

- 1.Teachers of English are advised to change their role from instructors who dominate the class into educators whose role is to help, guide and support the students to acquire language.
2. Teachers should be encouraged to use this technique in teaching English.
3. Teachers of English should put into their considerations that learning happens when their students have many informal opportunities to appreciate the language and use it effectively through participation in discussion and in a variety of other classroom activities.

Suggestions

As a complement for the present study, the studies below are presented for further work, as follows:

- 1.Experimenting the effectiveness of using group work teaching technique (in teaching other English subjects like drama,novel,grammar,etc).
- 2.Finding out the effect of group work teaching technique on the performance in the foreign language skills.

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Appendix – 1 –

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A Letter to the Jury Members**Dear Sir/ Madam**

The researcher intends to conduct a study entitled "**The Impact of Using Group Work Teaching Technique on Iraqi University EFL Students in Critical Reading**". The present study aims at finding out the impact (effect) of using group work teaching technique on Iraqi university EFL students.

Attached is the achievement test consisting of a reading passage followed by comprehension questions. As a specialist in the field, you are kindly requested to pass judgment on the validity and suitability of the study instrument.

Any comments and modifications will be taken into consideration and highly appreciated.

Asst.Prof.Sami A. Mohammed (Ph.D.)

Appendix – 2 –
Achievement Post - Test

Read the following passage carefully and then answer the questions that follow:

TOW BILLION MORE PEOPLE BY CENTURY'S END

[By the end of this century, it is expected that the world's population will reach 6.4 billion people . This article discusses some problems that will likely occur when so many people must compete for space, food, and jobs.]

1 The world's exploding population signals even more growing pains ahead for already crowded areas. A new United Nations study forecasts that by the year 2000, 2 billion persons will be added to the 4.4 billion in the world today.

2 Even more troubling than the increasing number of inhabitants is the projections of where they will be concentrated. The study by Rafael M. Salsas, executive director of the U.N. fund for population Activities, notes that by the year 2000:

- Nearly 80 percent of all people will live in less developed countries, many hard pressed to support their present population. That compares with 70 percent today.
- In many of these Third world lands, metropolises will become centers of concentrated urban poverty because of a flood of migration from rural areas.
- The bulging centers, mainly in Asia and Latin America, will increasingly become fertile fields for social unrest. Younger residents of the urban clusters will be better educated, unemployed, and demanding of a better lifestyle.

3 To slow the rush to urban centers, countries will have to vastly expand opportunities in the countryside, the study suggests. Says Salas: "The solution to the urban problem lies as much in the rural areas as in the cities themselves."

4 Worldwide, the number of the large cities will multiply. Now 26 cities have 5 million or more residents each and a combined population of 252

million. by the end of the decade , the number will escalate to 60 , with an estimated total of almost 650 million people.

5 In the more developed countries of North America and Europe , however ,the growth trend for two decades has been away from urban clusters . In the United States , for instance , only three urban areas centered on New York , Los Angles, and Chicago--- are among the top 25 population agglomerates in the world. By 2000 , only two, New York and Los Angeles , will be in the top 25.

6 Ray of hope: The world population now is growing by 1.8 percent a year: by 2000 , the rate is expected to drop to 1.6 percent as individual women have fewer children in their lifetimes.

A. Analysis of Ideas and Relationships :

Circle the letter next to the right answer

1 . Which sentence from the passage best describe the main idea ?

- a . " Already crowded areas should except more problems as the world's population increases".
- b . " Third World countries should encourage their citizens to become farmers".
- c . " people all over the world should have more children".

2. In paragraph 2, all the listed items are:

- a. examples of the current world population .
- b. Rafael M. Salas 's personal opinions about the future .
- c. conclusions reached by the U.N. study.

3. According to paragraph 2, the first listed item ("Nearly 80 percentage") states that a _____ of people will live in less developed countries by the year 2000.

- a. Larger percentage.
- b. smaller percentage.
- c. similar percentage.

4. Please read the section beginning with "The bulging centers" in paragraph 2. The second sentence explains:

- a. Why young people are better educated.
- b. Why social unrest is likely to occur .
- c. Why there are more young residents.

5. In paragraph 3, **although he doesn't directly say it, Mr. Salsa** would probably agree that:

- a. there is no solution to the urban problems.
- b. governments should encourage people to live in the urban centers.
- c. people should be encouraged to live in rural areas.

6. In paragraph 4 ("By the end of the decade , the number will escalate to 60,....."), **60** refers to

:

- a. people.
- b. cities.
- c. estimated total.

7. Paragraph 5 implies , **but does not directly state**, that in North America and Europe:

- a. growth is slowing down in large cities.
- b. large cities are growing rapidly.
- c. urban clusters are disappearing.

8. According to paragraph 5, what will happen to Chicago by the year 2000 ?

- a. Chicago will be the biggest city in the United states.

- b. Chicago will no longer be an urban area.
- c. Chicago will no longer be among the largest 25 cities in the world

9. The subject of paragraph 6 is:

- a. the birthrate in the year 2000.
- b. individual women.
- c. the rate of population growth.

10. This article:

- a. explains the difficulties that are caused by the exploding population.
- b. suggests some solution to the problems caused by the exploding population .
- c. both (a) and (b)

B. Interpretation of world and phrases: Circle the letter next to the best answer .

1. "The world's exploding population signals **even more** growing pains"

- a. quiet.
- b. regular.
- c. additional.

2. "The world's exploding population signals even more **growing pains**....."

- a. Minor pains.
- b. difficulties that occur when something is expanding or growing.
- c. problems in providing enough food for a large population.

3 .According to paragraph 1 , what will the world population be by the year 2000 ?

- a. 6.4 billion people.
- b. 2 billion people.
- c . 4.4 billion people.

4. **Nearly** 80 percent of all people will live in less developed countries.

- a. living near each other .
- b. more than.
- c. almost.

5. Many countries **are hard pressed** to support their present population.

- a. are trying harder.
- b. are finding it difficult.
- c. are looking for new ways.

6. Many **third world** lands will become centers of urban poverty.

- a. one---third of the world's population.
- b. industrialized.
- c. less developed.

7. "The bulging centers will increasingly become fertile field for social unrest " This mean that:

- a. the crowded cities will be a likely place for revolutions to take place.
- b. many people will become farmers because they are dissatisfied with city life.
- c. resident of large cities will have lots of opportunities for a better life.

8. By the end of the decade, the **estimated total** will be almost 650 million people.

- a. approximate number.
- b. exact number.
- c. wild guess.

9. According to paragraph 5 , "By 2000 , only two , New York and Los Angeles, will be in the top 25."

The **2000** refer to:

The **25** refers to:

- a. cities b. people c. the year /
- a. cities b. people c. the year

10

. "The rate is expected to drop to 1.6 percent as individual women have fewer children in **their** lifetime." **Their** refers to :

- a. children.
- b. women.
- c. rate.

C. **Synonyms:** From this list , choose a synonym for the word in bold type in each sentence .Use appropriate **tenses** for verbs and singular or plural forms for nouns.

to crowd together	must	to rise
to hurry	pattern	total
group	to predict	swollen
inhabitant		

1. This study **forecasts** a shift in population growth.
2. Thirty percent of Japan's population is **concentrated** around Tokyo.
3. The **bulging** centers of population will cause problems for Third World countries.
4. The **residents** of my city are concerned about pollution and housing problems.
5. Cities near each other will grow until they form urban **clusters**.
6. Many countries **have to** expand opportunities in the countryside.
7. Population problems **have escalated** quickly in the past few years.
8. The worldwide **trend** is towards smaller families.
9. The people **are rushing** to urban centers.
10. The **combined** population of the 26 largest cities is 252 million.

D. Prepositions and verb-completers : Write any appropriate preposition or verb-completer in the blank spaces.

1. ___ the year 2000, 2 billion people will be added ___ the 4.4 billion ___ the world today.
2. Mr. Salas is the executive director _____ the U.N fund _____ population Activities.
3. Nearly 80 percent _____ all people will live _____ less developed countries.
4. That compares _____ 70 percent today.
5. There will be a flood _____ migration _____ rural areas.
6. Countries will have _____ expand opportunities _____ the countryside.
7. The number will escalate _____ 60, _____ an estimated total _____ 650 million.
8. The growth trend _____ two decades has been away _____ urban clusters.
9. By 2000, only New York and Los Angeles will be _____ the top 25.
10. The world population now is growing _____ 1.8 percent a year.

E. Word forms : Choose the correct word form to fit into each sentence referring to the chart as necessary .Use appropriate verb tenses , singular or plural forms for nouns, and passive voice where necessary.

<i>Noun</i>	<i>Verb</i>	<i>Adjective</i>
<i>Adverb</i>		
center	to center	central
centrally		
	to centralize	
demand	to demand	demanding
expanse	to expand	expanding
expansion		expanded
explosion	to explode	explosive
explosively		

growth	to grow	growing
grown		
hope	to hope	hopeful
hopefully		
hopeless	hopelessly	
increase	to increase	increasing
increasingly		
projection	to project	increased
projector		projected
society	to socialize	social
socially		
		sociable
solution	to solve	solvable

1. explosion , to explode, explosive, explosively.

- There was a terrible _____ and then we saw the smoke.
- The storm began suddenly with _____ force.
- The storm began _____.
- Many countries have holidays on which firework are _____.

2. growth , to grow , growing , grown.

- My two _____ children have both finished college.
- _____ children need good nourishment.
- The _____ of world population is being studied.
- As cities _____ , there will be a need for more housing and transportation.

3. increase , to increase , increasing , increased, increasingly.

- The population of the world _____ at a rapid rate now.
- The problems of urban clusters will become _____ difficult.

- c. The last census reported an _____ in the number of the households in my city.
- d. An _____ number of women are having fewer children.
- e. With my _____ ability in English ,I was able to get a good job.

4.projection , projector , to project , projected.

- a. Do you think that all the _____ for the year 2000 are accurate ?
- b. Many people try _____ what there lives will be like in the future.
- c. Mr. and Mrs. Ramirez like to make family movies and show them on a movie _____ at home.
- d. The budget was voted down because the _____ figures were too high.

5. center , to center ,to centralize ,centrally.

- a. The lawyer has a _____ located office downtown.
- b. If you want the two sides to be even, you must measure _____ from the _____ .
- c. The _____ point of this article is that the world population is increasing.
- d. First you must _____ the pattern on the paper. Then you can cut it.
- e. The Omega Company has branches all over England , but last year it _____ all its records in the head office in London.

6.society , to socialize , social , sociable , socially.

- a. The city built a _____ center with a swimming pool and gymnasium.
- b. Rita is very _____. she loves to go to parties.
- c. Is it _____ acceptable to eat fried chicken with your fingers ?
- d. People who like _____ generally belong to clubs.

e. For a _____ to function well , people must obey the laws.

7.demand , to demand , demanding.

- a. I _____ to speak to the manager.
- b. Judge Lee has a very _____ job on High Court.
- c . The company met the _____ of the employees for better insurance benefits.

8. expanse , expansion , to expand ,expanding ,expanded.

- a. The Sahara Desert is a large _____ of sand in North Africa.
- b. The _____ opportunities in the computer industry are providing new jobs.
- c. Mrs. Van Vleit _____ her knowledge of computers by taking some classes next winter.
- d. The company's _____ facilities provided more warehouse space.
- e. The company's _____ will provide new jobs.

9. solution , to solve , solvable.

- a. Every problem is _____ , but it might not be easy to find the answer .
- b. Many problems _____ already ,but new ones always arise.
- c. There must be a _____ to this problems

10. hope , to hope , hopeful , hopeless , hopefully, hopelessly.

- a. This study is _____ that the rate of population increase will slow down.
- b.Despite her problems , she looked to the future _____.
- c.The family felt so _____ when their car broke down on the highway.
- d. They stood _____ at the side of the road.
- e. I _____ to see you again soon.
- f. My _____ is that all your plans will succeed .

Appendix (3)

The Scores of the subjects rated by two raters in the pilot administration of the achievement test.

	Rator 1	Rator 2
1	56	61
2	62	58
3	72	67
4	55	54
5	44	50
6	77	74
7	58	60
8	72	74
9	71	64
10	84	80
11	52	54
12	67	65
13	77	72
14	43	48
15	51	58
16	70	68
17	74	73
18	80	83
19	44	42
20	86	81
21	66	64
22	76	69
23	67	63
24	59	55
25	76	65
Total	1639	1602
Mean	65.56	64.08

اثر استخدام تقنية عمل الجماعة على تحصيل طلبة الجامعات العراقية متعلمي اللغة الانكليزية لغة اجنبية في القراءة الناقدة

أ.م.د. سامي عبد العزيز محمد المعموري

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المستخلص

يشكل استيعاب المقروء أساساً مهماً لتعلم اللغة ويحدد إلى درجة كبيرة مدى تقدم الطلبة في الدراسة الأكاديمية كلغة أجنبية في تعلم الحروف والكلمات المفردة ثم الجمل فالنصوص باختلاف أحجامها ومستويات التركيب في مضامينها. ويهدف تدريس اللغة الإنكليزية كلغة أجنبية في الكليات العراقية إلى تمكين الطلبة من استيعاب المعاني المقصودة في نص معين لم يسبق لهم قراءته بأكفاً ما يمكن من حيث الوقت والجهد.

القراءة الناقدة، من جهة أخرى، هي مرحلة قد تكون أعلى من مرحلة مجرد استيعاب المقروء. ففي القراءة الناقدة يطلب من الطالب ليس فقط معرفة معاني الكلمات الموجودة في النص المقروء، بل إصدار الحكم على ما يقرأه وتحديد الأفكار الرئيسية فيه وإعادة صياغتها بكلماته وعباراته الخاصة. الهدف من تدريس القراءة الناقدة هو تحديد نقاط الضعف والقوة في أي نص مقروء. والقراء الناقدون في الغالب يتفحصون ما يقرءوه ولا يصدقوا كل ما يقرءوه، أما الذين يقرءون بطريقة غير ناقدة فنجدهم يصدقون أي شيء يقرءوه على أنه حقيقة.

طريقة العمل الجماعي تعتبر طريقة فعالة في تدريس وتعلم اللغة الإنكليزية لغة أجنبية. حتى الطلبة الذين لم يسبق لهم أن يحصلوا على خبرة حول هذه الطريقة، وجد إنهم يتعلمون استخدامها بسرعة. هذه الطريقة تقدم التعلم بشكل فعال بحيث تجعل من التعلم عملية ممتعة ومشوقة. الدراسة الحالية تهدف إلى استقصاء أثر استخدام طريقة عمل الجماعة في تحصيل طلبة الجامعات العراقيين متعلمي اللغة الإنكليزية لغة أجنبية في القراءة الناقدة.

ولتحقيق هدف الدراسة الحالية تجريبياً، تم اختيار مجموعتين بطريقتين عشوائيتين من طلبة المرحلة الثانية من قسم اللغة الإنكليزية في كلية اليرموك الأهلية الجامعة وبطريقة عشوائية لتكون المجموعة الأولى تجريبية والأخرى ضابطة. تألفت كل مجموعة من 34 طالباً.

بعد انتهاء التجربة وتدريب المجموعة التجريبية القراءة الناقدة بطريقة عمل الجماعة وتدريب المجموعة الضابطة بالطريقة التقليدية، تم إخضاع طلبة المجموعتين إلى اختبار تحصيلي مقنن.

بعد تصحيح الاختبار أظهرت نتائج التجربة تفوق طلبة المجموعة التجريبية على زملائهم الذين يدرسون القراءة الناقدة بالطريقة التقليدية. وأظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن تدريس القراءة الناقدة باستخدام طريقة عمل الجماعة له أثر إيجابي في نفوس الطلبة لأنه يساعد في زيادة تواصلهم مع بعضهم البعض ويساعد على اعتمادهم على أنفسهم بدلاً من مدرسهم كما أيضاً على تبادل الطلبة للأفكار والآراء فيما بينهم.