

Collaborative Learning Strategy for Enhanced Reading Comprehension in EFL University Courses

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of collaborative learning strategy on the reading comprehension of non-English department university students. An effective reading comprehension not only talk about the ability to understanding the text, but also the capacity to interpret meaning and synthesize information from different text genre. Moreover, for the non-English department students who generally have different language competence with English department students, they often encounter a difficult situation in reading activity because of their limitation in language exposure. Using a mixed-method approach, this study combines quantitative data from reading tests with qualitative insights from student interviews and classroom observations. Over one semester, students from various non-English department participated in collaborative activities, such as collaborative strategic reading and group discussions, designed to improve the development of critical thinking and collaborative problem-solving skills. The quantitative results demonstrate significant improvements in reading comprehension, particularly in identifying main ideas, making inferences, and understanding vocabulary in context. Qualitative findings reveal that students found the collaborative learning environment is enjoyable and motivating, with many reporting that collaborative learning reduced their anxiety and enhanced their willingness to participate actively. This study highlights the effectiveness of collaborative learning strategy in improving reading comprehension among non-English department students and offers practical recommendations for integrating these strategies into diverse academic disciplines.

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is an important skill in students' learning success, as it offers opportunities for personal development through reading activities. However, in the context of English as Foreign Language (EFL), many of students face some barriers such as vocabulary, grammar, and text structure. Grabe (2009) states that effective reading comprehension involves not only understanding the text but also the ability to interpret meanings and synthesize information from different genres. Moreover, for the non-English department students who generally have different language competence with English department students, they often experience a difficult situation in reading activity because of their limitation in language exposure particularly in English text. This often leads to frustration and negative feelings toward reading English texts. Research indicates that these students may lack familiarity with the discourse and academic vocabulary that are necessary for understanding complex materials

(Alderson, 2000; Kabir, & Kiasi, 2018).

Limited comprehension of English texts can hinder students' language development and academic progress. Therefore, there is an urgent need for effective reading instruction. Educators should implement suitable instructional approaches that enhance students' reading comprehension. One of the instructional approaches that can be an alternative to address this challenge is collaborative learning which can develop a meaningful, more engaging, and supportive learning environment (Klingner et al., 2007). By giving an appropriate way to comprehend thoroughly an academic English text, the educator can significantly develop students' reading comprehension, and leads them successfully achieving their academic success.

Collaborative learning is a teaching strategy developed in social constructivism theory that highlights the important of social interaction in knowledge construction. Vygotsky (1978) states that social interactions significantly contribute a valuable input in cognitive development, promoting that learning occurs most effectively and successfully within a collaborative environment. Klingner et al. (2007) support this idea, claiming that students are more engaged in collaborative learning, which deepens their understanding, interpretation, and synthesis of complex texts. This strategy allows them to share thought, idea, opinion, and also leads them to increase better understanding. Additionally, collaborative learning also promotes students' critical thinking and boost their motivation as they feel more comfortable and enjoy their learning activity. As the result, implementing collaborative learning in educational setting is able to increase both students' reading comprehension and their social skills like having effective communication and teamwork which are very essential for their future professional career.

Collaborative learning strategy, such as Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR), group discussions, and reciprocal teaching, significantly develop students' reading skills. Peer support and active learning become an essential feature for the success of these strategies in enhancing students' reading comprehension. By promoting an interactive learning environment, students are able to collaborate with their friends to solve a challenge in understanding a complex texts. This situation allows them to share insights and clarify misunderstandings in real time (Klingner et al., 2007). Research shows that CSR in reading strategies leads the students to involve more deeply with their friends within collaborative settings; promoting a shared responsibility among students in reading text activity (Klingner et al., 2012). Moreover, group discussions not only effectively enhance students' comprehension by allowing them to share and hear different ideas but also promote critical thinking skills essential for academic success (Vygotsky, 1978). Further, reciprocal teaching gives students chance to take responsibility in leading discussions related to reading material, which improve their comprehension while also developing their leadership and communication skills (Palincsar & Brown, 1984). Collectively, these collaborative learning strategies support the student-centered learning principles and supportive classroom atmosphere that very essential in improving students' reading comprehension and intrinsic motivation. Consequently, implementing these strategies in EFL classrooms activity leads to a better academic performance and a more enjoyable learning experience for students (Ahmed & AbdAlgane, 2024).

Many non-English department students face some problems with English academic text because most of them are less sufficient in language proficiency. It caused by their ability to understand the vocabulary, complex sentence structures, and specialized content is very low (Grabe, 2009; Fan, 2009). As a result, they encounter the situations where they feel so frustrated, demotivated, and even disengage with the reading activity, making worse their reading comprehension issue (Schunk, 2012). This may lead them far away from having a good learning opportunity through reading activity, making them into a situation where they have no enhanced

academic performance. (Hattie, 2008). Therefore, implementing a structured instructions that bridge these gaps is badly needed; focusing on improving language proficiency among non-English department students, building their skills, and successfully understanding English academic texts. By doing so, educators can help decrease feelings of frustration, demotivation, and disengagement, finally enhance students' reading comprehension and academic success.

Having collaborative learning strategies in university teaching learning process gives some challenges to the students, especially in reading comprehension course, since it requires them to have active involvement; fostering to engage actively with their friends, to share learning responsibility, and to have a sense of social community (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). This interaction is able to not only improve the learning process but also create a mutual support among students, they feel making them feel more comfortable expressing their ideas and asking questions within their collaborative activities. Thus, this overcomes the situation where the students feel anxiety during learning reading comprehension (Klingner & Vaughn, 1996). Besides, according to Wood, Bruner, & Ross (1976), collaborative learning strategy facilitates students to have a sharing-task where they are able to learn from one another's ideas. This interaction promotes the deeper understanding and retention of reading text content as the students being able to share their idea and clarify concept collaboratively (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Consequently, collaborative learning strategy promotes a good learning environment that improve students' reading comprehension and give them a skill for developing their critical thinking, as these take an important role in students' academic success. By doing so, educators can significantly improve learning outcome for their students learning process.

Some researchers have underlined the effectiveness of collaborative learning in improving students' reading comprehension. For example, Ahmed and AbdAlgane (2024) find that the implementation of collaborative learning can improve students' reading comprehension especially in students' way to identify main idea and inference English text. This is in line with what Fan's (2009) stated that during the implementation of the Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) in reading activity, Taiwanese students perform well reading comprehension, particularly in finding main idea and detail of the English text, and have high motivation due to they have opportunity to share their idea actively among their friends. It means that the collaborative learning strategy promotes active learning where students have more spaces to work collaboratively, share insights, and develop a deeper understanding of English text. Further, the social interaction in collaborative learning also provides a good learning environment where students feel enjoyable having discussion during the learning process. That's why it is suggested to the educators to integrate collaborative learning strategy in their teaching learning process since it can promote both reading comprehension and motivation among students.

When the benefits of collaborative learning in improving reading comprehension are well organized in some researches, the research that address its implementation in non-English department student context at university remains lack of attention. Most existing discussions have focused on English language students or English department student, giving a significant gap in understanding how collaborative learning strategy can enhance reading comprehension in different context, non-English department student (Ahmed & AbdAlgane, 2024). It is very important to conduct this kind of research since non-English department students have different background language competence compared to the English department students; they have limited vocabulary and inadequate understanding in language complex structure (Grabe, 2009). By exploring the implementation of collaborative learning strategies in reading comprehension activities, this study aims to provide insight into how these techniques can facilitate learning among non-English department students at university. The findings are

expected to contribute valuable insights to EFL teaching learning process, offering practical recommendations for educators to effectively implement collaborative learning into their teaching learning process, thus suggesting a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.

This study explores the effectiveness of collaborative learning strategies in improving reading comprehension skill of non-English department students using mixed-method approach. This research design investigates a comprehensive exploration of students' perceptions on reading when collaborative learning strategies implemented in the teaching learning process. It uses both qualitative data to measure students' reading comprehension improvement and qualitative data to gather meaningful insights during the implementation the collaborative learning strategy (Creswell, & Creswell, 2017). By focusing on these effects, this study is expected to provide a meaningful perspective on how collaborative learning strategy can improve reading comprehension for non-English department students. The findings will be beneficial for developing effective and meaningful teaching learning process, particularly in reading course, purposing on facilitating the various backgrounds of EFL students.

The mixed-method integrated both quantitative and qualitative data aims to discover how collaborative learning strategies influence reading comprehension and overall learning process among non-English department students. By giving pre- and post-reading test, this study provides measurable data for reading comprehension improvement. While having interviews and observations give data for students' different responses both emotionally and cognitively toward the implementation of the learning strategies (Creswell, & Creswell, 2017). For example, students may describe how collaborative learning strategies give improvements not only for their reading comprehension but also their sense of responsibility. Besides, they perhaps have insight on how the strategies be able to reduce their anxiety, leading on improvement of the students' involvement during reading task (Dörnyei, & Ushioda, 2021). This focus explains the specific mechanisms how collaborative learning gives impacts on students' reading comprehension and also highlights the importance of collaboration in learning process. Finally, applying a mixed-method approach give a deeper understanding of how collaborative learning strategy enhances students' reading comprehension and their overall learning experience.

Despite the advantages provided by collaborative learning strategy, it also has some disadvantages that can influence its effectiveness when it is implemented in teaching learning process. Such as managing group dynamics, it can be a problematic situation that will be encountered by educators because of various students' personality and language proficiency level. This situation sometimes causes a conflict or less participation within collaborative setting (Klingner et al., 2007). In several research findings, cleverer students may dominate the discussion, quitter students just keep silent without trying to share idea, and even the expected collaboration never works as expected (Slavin, 1995; Johnson & Johnson, 2009; Gillies et al., 2023). Ensuring equal and balanced participation in collaborative activity is very crucial, unless the expected learning outcome is never achieved well. Thereby, the educator must create and implement a structured activities that promote individual roles and responsibility within group; leading on the understanding what the students have to do during the reading task. Slavin (1995) suggests that by carefully managing group dynamics and promoting equal participation in collaborative reading activity, educators can take more benefits from the effectiveness of collaborative learning strategies that can enhance the students' learning outcome.

This study significantly provides meaningful ideas for the expanding research on collaborative learning by evaluating its effectiveness in a different context that has lack attention; non-English department students in language teaching and learning process. Previous studies

have meaningfully provided insights that collaborative learning strategies successfully improve students' language proficiency especially in reading comprehension, yet most of them still focus on English department students or specific demographics (Ahmed & AbdAlgane, 2024). By having a focus on non-English department students, this study offers different perspective on how this collaborative learning strategies can be implemented to facilitate students who have various language proficiency level and background in reading comprehension course. Additionally, the exploration in this study provides best practice for EFL instructors, providing them effective strategy to teach reading comprehension for any students who have different background and language proficiency level in which fostering a more meaningful, supportive, and collaborative learning process.

METHOD

This study employs a mixed-method approach to explore the effectiveness of collaborative learning strategies in enhancing reading comprehension among non-English department students in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching and learning process. The research was conducted at a university with a diverse student background, aiming to understand how collaborative learning strategies can benefit students in a reading comprehension course. One hundred undergraduate students from different non-English departments who were enrolled in an English subject participated in the study. The students were selected through purposive sampling to ensure a representative sample from different departments. This diverse sample aims to provide meaningful insights that reflect the experiences of students with varied academic backgrounds, aligning with Creswell and Creswell's (2017) emphasis on the importance of diverse populations for drawing generalizable conclusions.

To address the objectives on this study, data were collected using both quantitative and qualitative methods, providing a comprehensive analysis of how collaborative learning strategies improve students' reading comprehension. A reading pre-test was administered to assess students' prior reading comprehension skills, serving as a baseline for their performance. Following this, a series of collaborative learning strategies were implemented over one semester, which included structured group activities like jigsaw reading, reciprocal teaching, and peer feedback sessions. These activities were designed to facilitate students having more interactions, more dialogues, more sharing session among themselves, encouraging them to collaboratively build a meaningful learning activity. To complement the quantitative data, qualitative data were gathered through interviews and class observations. The qualitative data from this study provided deeper understanding of the students' experiences during the implementation of collaborative leaning strategies in their learning process, contextualizing how these strategies impact students' reading comprehension. Observation allowed the researcher to capture direct information about students' interactions during collaborative activities, providing insights into their natural learning processes. Through interviews, the researcher gained insights into students' perspectives on how collaborative learning impacted their reading comprehension. Additionally, focus group discussions were conducted at the end of the semester to gather further perceptions on the implementation of collaborative learning strategies and their impacts on their learning process, especially on their reading skills. The quantitative data were analyzed using simple statistical method by comparing the result of pre- and post-reading test to determine the improvement of students' reading comprehension skill. This qualitative aspect allows for a deeper understanding of student experiences and the contextual factors influencing their learning (Yin, 2009).

The quantitative data were analyzed using simple statistical methods by comparing the

results of the pre- and post-reading tests to determine the improvement in students' reading comprehension skills. The analysis involved calculating mean scores and assessing whether there were significant changes in performance following the collaborative learning. The qualitative data gathered from interviews and classroom observations were transcribed and analyzed thematically to identify general ideas or patterns related to the effectiveness of collaborative learning strategies. The thematic analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) framework, which involves systematically coding data to capture patterns and themes, thereby providing a cohesive understanding of how students experienced collaborative learning.

In this study, the combination of quantitative and qualitative data provides a strong foundation for interpreting findings and drawing conclusions about the effectiveness of collaborative learning in an EFL context. The quantitative data highlighted measurable improvements in reading comprehension, while the qualitative insights offered valuable context on the social and cognitive processes involved in collaborative learning. By integrating these perspectives, the study aims to present a holistic view that not only informs EFL educators about the potential benefits of collaborative strategies but also offers practical recommendations for implementing these methods in diverse educational settings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section provides the results findings of the study, exploring the effectiveness of collaborative learning strategies on enhancing reading comprehension among non-English department university students. The data includes quantitative data taken from the pre- and post-reading test score as well as qualitative data from interviews and classroom observations, followed the FGD in the last meeting.

The analysis showed a significant improvement in students' reading comprehension score after the implementation of collaborative learning strategies. The comparison between the pre- and post-reading test scores presented that there was a significant mean score (9.45 points). Besides, the p-value (6.899e-23) showed less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) In addition, the post-test score was relatively more consistent with the standard deviation score 8.93, it was less than the pre-test scores standard deviation 10.87. Besides, the difference score range decreased from 45.00 in the pre-test to 40.00 in the post-test. These results indicate statistically that the improvement in reading comprehension scores was significant after the implementation of collaborative learning strategies.

Table 1: Reading Test Statistics

Statistic	Pre-test	Post-test	Change
Mean	61.75	71.20	+9.45
Median	65.00	70.00	+5.00
Standard Deviation	10.87	8.93	Decreased
Range	45.00	40.00	Decreased
P-value	-	6.899e-23	Highly significant

(Julius Statistics Analyst)

The statistics findings from this study highlight the significant value that collaborative learning strategy is able to improve students' reading comprehension among non-English department university students. The statistical data presented in finding, represented by the p-value (6.899e-23) showed less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) as standard p-value, indicates that the improvement in reading comprehension scores was significant after the implementation of collaborative learning strategies. This is in line with the existing literature that collaborative learning strategy gives significant impact on academic success (Johnson & Johnson, 2014;

Slavin, 1995).

These findings align with the existed literature that emphasizes the positive effects of collaborative learning on academic outcomes. For instance, Johnson and Johnson (2014) emphasize that collaborative learning fosters not only cognitive development but also interpersonal skills, both of which contribute to improved academic performance. Similarly, Slavin (1995) notes that collaborative approaches encourage active engagement, peer support, and higher levels of motivation, all of which are essential for academic success. By allowing students to work together, share ideas, and support each other's learning, collaborative learning strategies provide an environment that promotes deeper comprehension and retention of material, which is particularly valuable in reading course.

Additionally, the collaborative learning which is developed by social constructivism theory highlights the important of social interaction in knowledge construction. Vygotsky (1978) and Johnson & Johnson (1987) argue that social interactions significantly contribute a valuable input in cognitive development, promoting group success in learning. This theory suggests that collaboration take important role in achieving learning outcomes. When students work collaboratively in meaningful learning environment, they are able to share their ideas, knowledge, or even suggestion among others; leading to have deeper understanding of reading material. Gillies et al. (2023) support this idea that collaborative works performed by students give more spaces for them to share knowledge and to engage in meaningful communication that enhance their understanding of the material. The significant improvement in reading comprehension score in this study reflects these theories describing how collaborative learning strategy is able to develop a meaningful and interactive learning process that very important in improving students' learning outcome.

Another study has proven that the implementation of collaborative learning strategy is able to improve students' reading comprehension. As stated by Öztürk (2023), collaborative learning strategy allows students to have more opportunities to improve their reading comprehension, resulting better outcome in reading course compared to those who have independent or individual work. The findings in this study support this argument; by doing reading activity collaboratively, students can actively engage in group work – sharing idea, clarifying idea, refining understanding – leading them to better reading comprehension. The collaborative activities designed in the reading class significantly promote students' interaction among others in which becomes an essential point to foster deeper comprehension.

Overall, the significant statistical outcome of this study, supported by literature, highlights that collaborative learning is a valuable pedagogical approach for enhancing reading comprehension, especially in diverse educational settings where students from non-English department may benefit from additional support in developing language skills. This reinforces the idea that collaborative learning strategies can serve as an effective tool in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) education, providing measurable academic benefits and encouraging positive learning experiences.

Furthermore, the data gathered from the interviews and classroom observation presented some thematic points regarding the effectiveness of the collaborative learning strategies employed in students learning process. Here are some points derived from the data of interviews and observations.

- ***Enhanced Engagement***

Students performed active performance during the class activity. Many notes show that they shared ideas among others while discussing the text and working in group allowed them to have more opportunities to speak; sharing opinion. A student told,

“Discussing the English text with my friends in group helped me to share idea and see different idea from others. Besides, it helped me to have active participation during class”. (Interpreted from VETA, 2024)

Collaborative learning strategies are able to increase more student engagement in reading activity through shared goal, role, and responsibility. This research finding shows that during the collaborative activity, students shared anything related to what, why, and how the given challenges accomplished. It indicated that they have better engagement during the class activity. Every student took part collaboratively in the discussion, led them to have a good learning situation where they could learn from one another. This is very vital since togetherness leads a better success in learning process. Togetherness also becomes an alternative to overcome the large gap between the smarter and the less smart, the active and the passive, the confident and the less confident, the motivated and the demotivated student in EFL context. Since they were working together, it led them to have better success in academic process. Research shows that collaborative environments provide students with a sense of purpose, as their contributions are crucial for group success (Ghaith, 2002).

- **Increased Confidence**

Group work provided students opportunities to improve their confidence in reading activity. Most of them were confident enough to share their idea, even though their ideas occasionally were irrelevant with the topic discussed. Nevertheless, in group work, students' support during discussion gives them a space to revise and strengthen their idea without being fear of making mistakes. As stated by another student,

“When joining collaborative activity, I felt more relax and confident in reading activity within group discussion, because when I made a mistake, then there were some of my friends helped me to correct it.” (Interpreted from IAM, 2024)

Another good point of collaborative learning strategy is its impact on students' psychological aspect. Collaborative strategy supports the existence of good learning atmosphere where students are able to have good motivation, be more confident, and reduce their anxiety during learning activity. The supportive atmosphere created in cooperative settings promotes self-efficacy and reduces anxiety, particularly in language learning contexts (Bandura, 1997; Dornyei, 2001). During the collaborative work, the students performed good responses, such as actively giving and responding ideas and expressing good motivation and confidence during their learning process in the classroom. It happened because students felt that they had a supportive and good learning environment which supported them to express their idea confidently and it successfully reduced their feeling of anxiety since they worked collaboratively with their friends. This aligns with what Gosling (2013) states that encouraging students' support and collaboration not only enhances academic performance but also fosters a positive learning environment.

In addition, collaborative learning strategies which provide a good learning environment for students also contribute to solve some language barriers as they faced in traditional learning activity; teacher-centered classroom. Teacher-centered gives less chances to the students to explore their idea and to involve more in discussion; teacher always becomes the center of learning. However, in collaborative learning, students are stimulated to participate more in discussion without having too much worries and being afraid during learning process. In collaborative setting, students are encouraged to contribute without the pressure of immediate correctness, which fosters risk-taking and promotes engagement with texts (Gillies et al., 2023). The findings in this study indicate that during the group activity, students felt better in their learning - they enjoyed their learning - so they were able to overcome some language problems that they faced before, such as less confident to speak, lack of vocabulary, and difficult language

structure. As they work collaboratively, they learn something new from others' contributions and develop their learning outcome together (Ghaith, 2002).

- ***Development of Critical Thinking Skills***

The notes from observation indicate that students performed critical discussion. They tried to analyze the text and discussed each other's ideas. This situation encouraged them to have critical thinking and presented their idea better than learning alone. The reading task given in the group discussion required the students to actively formulate argument in a good manner supported by evidences they found in the text; improving their skill on analysis reading text. Another finding of this study is the role collaborative learning strategies in promoting critical thinking among students. Collaborative learning strategy also develops students' critical thinking skills. This study findings indicate that when the students involved in group activity, they were required to analyze the text, to give argument, and to synthesize some information they got from the discussion. This activity required a high-order thinking skill, means that the students performed critical thinking. Critical thinking is very important for students in higher education level since it will lead them to learning success. Gilles (2016) suggests that critical engagement in reading activity is essential for developing higher-order thinking skills, which are vital for academic success. In addition, during the implementation of collaborative learning strategies, students also participated actively in discussing the text given, requiring them to critically think about the matter. This is in line with research that underlines the importance of collaborative learning in developing analytical skills and fostering deeper cognitive engagement (Hattie & Donoghue, 2016).

Further, when students involved in collaborative situation, they could take some benefits from logical debate caused by different opinions or perspectives. During discussion, a cognitive conflict often occurred among students because they tried to defend their arguments. This is good for students, because it requires them to employ critical thinking. Research suggests that such conflict, when managed constructively, pushes learners to reconsider their viewpoints, refine their reasoning, and justify their positions with evidence (Mercer & Howe, 2012). By having debate or conflict academically, students are bale to develop their awareness related to their thinking process; how to develop thought, how to express it, how to evaluate it, and how to have good decision in a discussion. Collaborative works, therefore, give opportunity to students improving logical thinking that very important in academic context. Additionally, not only the logical thinking skill but also communicative skill could be developed by applying collaborative activities. As said before that during discussion, students were encouraged to have critical thinking and it would be complete if they were able to express their analysis through good communicative way. By having continuous dialogues and feedbacks, students are able to express their reasoning clearly, leading them to improve communicative skills. Warsah, et.al. (2020) strengthen this idea that collaborative discussions encourage students to articulate their thoughts clearly and provide justifications for their ideas, which improves both their analytical and communicative abilities. So, again collaborative learning strategy is very beneficial to improve logical thinking as well as communicative skill.

- ***Positive Interpersonal Skill and Relationship***

Many students noted that during the implementation of collaborative learning strategies, they showed strong interpersonal skill and relationships. They helped each other as they were a unity that had same purpose and same challenge that needed to be achieved together. Further, they also built good communication and connection during the group discussion, creating meaningful learning atmosphere in their group. This situation also extended beyond the reading comprehension context, it could be seen from their activity after class, showing that they had

good interpersonal relationships. The collaborative learning strategies can develop students' interpersonal skills which are very important for learning success and personal growth. Being able to share idea, to negotiate, to listen others, and to give feedback in a good manner are skills that they learnt during having collaborative work. These skills not only improve their performance in reading activity, but also improve their confidence in expressing their idea thoroughly. Besides, having good interpersonal skills will be very beneficial for students in their real live. They will encounter the real situation where skills of negotiating, expressing idea logically, listening different opinion, and giving constructive feedback are badly needed. Johnson & Johnson (1989) supports that in a wider social community, successful people will be seen from how effective they develop their interpersonal skills in their community. Thus, this collaborative learning strategies provide the students to learn developing their interpersonal skills.

To complement the prior explanation, collaborative learning strategies also promote students' sense of empathy. Empathy is the ability to understand and feel the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of others without having to experience it by himself. With empathy, one can see a problem from the perspective of others and build good relationships with fellow humans. As students interacted closely with their friends in collaborative activity, they learnt how to build trust and empathy, helping each other to achieve learning target. Gradually, there were no more students dominated more the discussion, playing too much roles and trying to leave others, but there were equal opportunities for each student to share their thoughts, to develop concept, and to respond others respectfully. Study shows that collaborative activities reduce social barriers and create equitable participation opportunities for students from different backgrounds since they employ sympathy and empathy among others (van Leeuwen & Janssen, 2019).

To recap, the results of this study have demonstrated the meaningful impacts of collaborative learning strategy in the university context, particularly in reading comprehension for non-English department student. By implementing this strategy in teaching learning process, educators can create and promote active engagement and collaborative activity in teaching reading context. This strategy not only effectively affects the students' language acquisition process, but also prepare them to have good team work for their future life. Suwassi (2022) highlights that collaborative engagement in learning process not only supports linguistic acquisition but also prepares students for the collaborative nature of the modern workforce. As this study describes, the implementation of collaborative learning strategy leads to improvement in reading comprehension, suggesting it as a meaningful way for teaching learning process. The findings of this study provide convincing evidence for the effectiveness of collaborative learning strategies in enhancing reading comprehension among non-English department university students. The results showed by quantitative improvements in reading scores and qualitative insights into student experiences emphasizes the meaningful benefits of collaborative learning. These findings contribute to the existed literature on collaborative learning, suggesting practical implications for EFL instructors and also seeking to improve student outcomes. By fostering engagement, building confidence, developing critical thinking skills, and promoting positive interpersonal relationships, collaborative learning can be a powerful approach in various educational contexts.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION(S)

This study demonstrates the impact of collaborative learning strategies on the reading comprehension of non-English department students at the university level. The findings show

that the collaborative learning strategy is able to enhance reading comprehension among students who may encounter lack of language exposure, especially for the non-English department students. The statistical data present significant improvement in reading skills, such as identifying main ideas, making inferences, and understanding vocabulary in context, after the implementation of a series of structured collaborative learning activities over one semester. Moreover, the qualitative insights from student interviews and classroom observations reveal that collaborative learning not only improves a conducive learning environment but also reduces student nervousness and encourages active participation and interaction. These findings align with the research objective, highlighting the impacts of collaborative learning as a teaching strategy in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) contexts, particularly for students in non-English department.

In addition, this study theoretically contributes to existing literature by providing evidence that collaborative learning strategies improve not only reading comprehension but also support other outcomes such as increasing motivation and reducing anxiety in EFL learners. This is in line with Johnson and Johnson's (2014) social mutuality theory, which suggests that collaborative efforts enhance individual performance through mutual support and shared goals. The data support the idea that collaborative learning in reading comprehension raises cognitive engagement and interpersonal skills, covering the theoretical understanding of collaborative learning's impact on language acquisition and comprehension.

Furthermore, the study demonstrates that collaborative learning environments can encourage a sense of community, mutual support, and shared learning objectives among students with various academic backgrounds. This approach promotes inclusive and equal opportunity in learning, offering students who may struggle with language barriers to improve their skill using various meaningful ways. The change of students' mental aspect such as the improvement of motivation and reduction of anxiety performed by students indicate that collaborative learning can accommodate students' psychology by creating a non-threatening and engaging classroom environment. Educators are encouraged to consider these methods not only for academic benefits but also for fostering social skills and principled learning class activities that beneficial for each student.

Moreover, the findings support the integration of collaborative learning strategies into the curriculum for non-English department students who study English as a secondary subject. Policymakers and educational institutions might consider allocating resources to train educators on collaborative learning techniques, ensuring they are equipped to implement these strategies effectively. Furthermore, policies could inspire collaboration between English language departments and other academic units to provide language support to the specific needs of non-language majors students.

The next, this study opens opportunities for further research into the long-term impact of collaborative learning on reading comprehension and other language skills. Future studies could discover whether the benefits observed in reading comprehension could be implemented to other areas of language proficiency, such as writing or speaking. Additionally, research could investigate the effectiveness of specific types of collaborative activities for different student populations, including various level of language proficiency. Having a series study to examine how collaborative learning strategies impact students' language skills and academic success over multiple semesters would also provide valuable insights.

In summary, this study highlights the significant potential of collaborative learning strategies to enhance reading comprehension for non-English department students. The findings offer practical recommendations and emphasize the importance of these strategies in

creating engaging, supportive, and effective EFL learning environments. By addressing cognitive, social, and affective dimensions of learning, collaborative approaches have the potential to enrich university EFL programs, contributing to more holistic student development and academic success.

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