CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In this chapter, some practical implications of these findings are drawn together, as well as suggestions for the next research are suggested.

5.1 Conclusion

The purpose of the study is to find out the effectiveness of cooperative learning in improving students' reading comprehension skill. Thus, this study is focused on the application of cooperative learning in teaching reading and figured out the answers for the two research questions. The first question was answered by comparing the achievements between the group in which cooperative learning was applied and the one where traditional technique was applied. The second question was answered by examining students' opinions about the use of the technique.

5.1.1 Effectiveness of Cooperative Learning in Teaching Reading

Slavin (1995: 75) stated that group contingency is essential if a small group structures are to enhance achievement. Several studies using the STAD technique reported effects on academic achievement (Slavin, 1978). In the present study, again the cooperative learning technique was proved to be effective in improving students'

reading comprehension skill. Based on the data, there is a significant difference in the achievement between the experimental group and the control group.

The present study used pre-test to see students' initial ability in reading comprehension skill. Based on the pre-test, both classes' achievement was equally good. The result shows that the mean for the experimental group is 6.3, while the control group's mean is 5.9. After treatment, different treatments were given to each group.

Then, post-test was administered to find out the achievement between two groups after treatments. The post-test mean for the experimental group is 7.8, while for the control group is 7.3. This finding shows that the mean of experimental group is higher than that of the control group. Moreover, after computing the result between the experimental group that was taught by cooperative learning and the control group that was taught with conventional teaching reading method by using matched t-test formula (Paired sample test in SPSS 13.0), it was found that the mean of the experimental group is higher than the control group and based on the statistical result (0.012< 0.05) it is concluded that the implementation of STAD technique is effective in improving students' reading ability.

5.1.2 Strengths and Weaknesses of Cooperative Learning in Teaching Reading

In the experiment class where STAD was applied, students' perception is considered positive. Students' said the use of the technique: (1) helped them to get better understanding and knowledge; (2) increased motivation in learning and playing

while learning; (3) enhanced better relationship; (4) encouraged the students to discuss and share students' opinion; (5) improved students' respect to their friends and help each other; (6) answered questions better and faster; (7) improved them to be responsible and independent learners.

According to Kagan (1992: 109), cooperative learning might be a new technique to the teachers and students. Accordingly, there may be some problems found in teaching reading comprehension through this technique:

1. teachers get hardly the class's attention;

2. the noise level becomes too high;

3. some of the students do not want to work in group; and

4. some of the students might be frequently absent.

In accordance with Kagan's findings, the present study also found some weaknesses of using cooperative learning technique. Students said that: (1) the technique did not help them much in getting better understanding and knowledge; (2) they were bored of the technique after several lessons; (3) not all members got involved in group discussion; (4) there was domination within a group; (5) it created noisy atmosphere; and (6) different opinions could not be unified.

In short, the strengths outweigh the weaknesses. It could be seen from the given questionnaire, the percentage of the students' opinion toward cooperative learning was higher, and the results of interview reveled that many students felt that they benefited by cooperative learning technique.

5.1.3   Pedagogical Implication

The present study is expected to give contribution to the teaching and learning process, particularly in reading comprehension subject. Based on the study, there are several findings that may have pedagogical implication.

Firstly, teachers of English who would like to apply this method in their classes must be well-aware that preparation before teaching is very important, because it can determine the success of the teaching-learning process. Teachers should understand the important role that they have in classrooms to create a good learning environment. As Slavin (1995) stated, before beginning the team work, teachers should discuss the rules, such as (1) students must have a responsibility to make sure their teammates have learnt the materials; (2) no one is finished studying until all teammates have mastered the subject; (3) ask all teammates for help before asking the teacher; and (4) teammates may talk to each other softly.

Secondly, they also should be prepared for difficult moments, because teachers need to remember that hardly for them to do everything right at the first time, but by studying the handbook of cooperative learning carefully and taking each step slowly, teachers should have positive experience.

Thirdly, teacher also should consider about time management when using cooperative learning. They must be able to predict the time limit to work on a task in a group.

Fourthly, in order to gain students' motivation, it might be better if the students work in groups with friends that they are used to study with. This includes choosing materials that are appropriate to the students' interests.

5.2   Suggestions for Next Research

Based on the findings of the study, cooperative learning can increase students' reading achievement. Considering some weaknesses when using this method, thus the researcher would like to give some suggestions for any researchers who would like to conduct similar research.

Firstly, to have a maximum result of the research, a researcher needs to be very well-organized and well-prepared in facing teaching learning process in classroom by studying the handbook and get all the materials in advance. Importantly, they have to learn from the weaknesses of the technique in this research, so that they will be able to minimize its weaknesses.

Secondly, upcoming researchers are also expected to apply a creative technique through other cooperative learning techniques, such as Group Investigation, STAD, Jigsaw, TAI, and CIRC.