

## **A STUDY OF EFL LEARNERS: STUDENT TEAM ACHIEVEMENT DIVISION METHOD IN INCREASING STUDENTS' ARGUMENTATIVE TEXT WRITING**

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### **Abstract:**

English has become a necessity for everyone to be able to communicate in today's global era. This study aimed to identify the application of the Student Team Achievement Division (STAD) learning method to improve the ability to write argumentative text in fifth-semester students of STISIP Banten Raya. This research used a mixed method and the object of this research are 28 students of STISIP Banten Raya Pandeglang. In learning English there are four skills that must be possessed, namely listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills. In STAD method there is one component that must be implemented, namely team formation, students are organized based on their pre-test result. Each team consists of from three students with different level English proficiency such as high, medium, and low proficiency. Thus forming a team with heterogeneous member abilities is a best choice. The research instruments used were tests and observations. The test used as a pre-test and post- test. Students worked in a team and assisted each other in learning the assigned material. All team members had to sign the worksheet as proof of their study. After then, each student completed a test or quiz on their own, without help from other students. Lastly, their test results are contrasted with those from earlier assessments. The team score that determines whether a team is good, outstanding, or fantastic is the average improvement in scores of all team members. According to the study's findings, pupils' average pretest score was 66, and their post-test scores rose to 74. Furthermore, the study's findings demonstrated that pupils were more enthusiastic in learning English writing than they had previously been. gital competence still need to be addressed for optimal implementation.

### **Keywords:**

Cooperative Learning; STAD Method; Argumentative Text



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## **INTRODUCTION**

English has long been used as a bridge between countries and nations around the world. This, of course, has led to English playing a very important role in modern life, especially in improving quality of life and especially in education. Knowledge of English has become a necessity for everyone to be able to communicate in today's global era. English

classes are taught in Indonesia from primary school to university. Most students formally learn English from kindergarten, but the effectiveness of this education remains limited. Students' English scores on national exams are still relatively low, and the frequency of English use among students and their surroundings is also low. Generally, English lessons are conducted in a monotonous manner, lacking creative and active teaching methods, which results in low student interest in learning. Good writing skills are essential for learning English. However, the writing skills of students learning English remain inadequate. According to data from the English First - English Proficiency Index, or EF EPI, Indonesia ranks 28th out of 63 countries worldwide in English proficiency. The survey involved 750,000 respondents. Indonesians have average English proficiency, with 52.74% falling into this category. Meanwhile, neighboring countries such as Malaysia rank 12th (59.73%) and Singapore 13th (59.8%) in terms of high English proficiency. For vocational students ready to enter the job market, English proficiency is one of the most important skills. According to Richards's (2015) research, speaking skills are crucial for professional and everyday communication. However, difficulties speaking in class are often associated with low student motivation and a lack of participatory teaching strategies. Cooperative learning is a student-centered learning method. It has been proven effective in improving student achievement in social studies. Agustini and Ariawana's (2017) stated that study of simulating cooperative learning methods in micro learning courses also indicates improved teaching quality. This method should also be used in teaching English grammar in Indonesia. As discussed above, knowledge of English grammar is very important. Good grammar knowledge will determine the success of communicative activities. This study was designed to determine the effectiveness of the STAD (Student Team Achievement Divisions) cooperative learning method in teaching English grammar. One learning method that can activate and increase students' interest in learning is STAD cooperative learning. STAD is one of the simplest cooperative learning methods and is the best cooperative learning method for teachers who are new to cooperative learning. When using this method, it should be adapted to the needs of the students, as each learning method has different goals, principles, and main focuses. In order for students to grasp the material and enhance their learning outcomes, the STAD cooperative learning method can motivate and engage them in problem-solving. Additionally, the group interaction in the method enables teachers to establish a learning environment that encourages students to rely on one another and share their knowledge with other students. Since the Student Teams Achievement Division (STAD) learning approach can enhance problem-solving and decision-making abilities and foster teamwork, the researcher chose to employ it. Pupils can grow to appreciate others, respect their friends, and value other people's viewpoints.

According to the findings of the researcher's observations, a teaching strategy must be used in English classes in order to enhance students' proficiency in the language and facilitate learning activities, particularly in the current digital age. The author conducted a study based on the previously described research background, and the results are reported in the paper ***"A Study of EFL Learners: Student Team Achievement Division Method in Increasing Students' Argumentative Text Writing."*** The research aim to determine the effectiveness of the Student Team Achievement Division learning technique in the English argumentative writing course for government science students at STISIP Banten Raya, as well as the enhancement of students' argumentative writing abilities. This learning method's success in terms of activity is the reason the researcher

is presenting it. Rewarding students will thereby increase their enthusiasm. Additionally, rewarding them shows their appreciation for the effort they have put in to become the most engaged group in the class and to receive the highest quiz results. This implies that the STAD method syntax's reward stage can help the learning activities of students.

### **Cooperative Learning Method**

In order to help students meet predefined learning objectives, the learning method is a set of planned learning activities that are used to guide and lead the teaching and learning process in the classroom. The goal is to make learning fun. In order to give students the chance to work through challenges in groups with their peers, teachers employ cooperative learning techniques. The cooperative learning approach known as STAD places a strong emphasis on student interactions and activities that encourage and support one another in learning the material to the best of their abilities. This is to help pupils practice and improve their social skills. As stated by Joice and Well in Yessi (2018), a learning method is a strategy or pattern that can be used to outline learning materials or learning media, including books, movies, and various multimedia computer programs, as well as a curriculum that directs the design of learning in order to assist students in meeting learning objectives. The goal of cooperative learning is to teach students social and intellectual skills, including how to interact with others (Riyanto, 2012).

The socio-cognitive conflict theory of Piaget serves as one of the theoretical underpinnings of small group learning. This conflict occurs when pupils start to reframe their understanding of a problem that differs from that of the people they are engaging with, according to Piaget. In order to resolve the current discrepancies, students are forced to consider their own understanding, look for further information to support that knowledge, and work to "reconcile" their new understanding and perspective when this conflict arises (Huda, 2014). The foundation of cooperative learning is constructivist theory. The premise behind this teaching strategy is that students will uncover and comprehend complex ideas more easily if they discuss them with their peers. Students collaborate in groups on a regular basis. Peer groups and social nature so become important components of cooperative learning (Trianto, 2011). The best approach for teachers who are new to the cooperative approach is Student Teams Achievement Division (STAD), which is one of the most straightforward cooperative learning strategies (Slavin, 2015). In keeping with this, Rusman (2014) claims that Student Teams Achievement Division (STAD) is a general approach to classroom management rather than a thorough teaching strategy for a particular subject; teachers utilize their own teachings and resources.

### **STAD Learning Method**

One of the most straightforward teaching strategies that can spark and boost students' enthusiasm in learning is Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD) cooperative learning. One of the most straightforward cooperative learning strategies is Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD), which is also the most effective strategy for teachers who are unfamiliar with the cooperative approach. Since every learning technique has its own goals, tenets, and primary areas of emphasis, it must be implemented with the needs of the students in mind. Through group interaction, the STAD cooperative learning method enables teachers to create a learning environment that

encourages students to rely on one another and share what they have learned with other students, which helps students master the material and improve their learning outcomes. Additionally, the method can make students active and motivated to seek solutions to problems. Because the Student Teams Achievement Division (STAD) learning approach can improve students' abilities, knowledge, discussion activities, problem-solving skills, decision-making abilities, and teamwork, the researcher chose to employ it. Pupils can grow to appreciate their peers, their perspectives, and their sense of appreciation. According to Slavin, students in STAD are assigned to mixed-gender, ethnicity, and achievement-level learning teams consisting of four to five people. Following the teacher's presentation of the lesson, the students collaborate in groups to make sure that everyone on the team has understood it. After that, each student takes an exam covering the subject matter, and they are not permitted to assist one another. According to previous context, the STAD cooperative learning approach is a teaching strategy that prioritizes student engagement and interactions to inspire and support one another in learning the material and achieving optimal performance. Slavin (2015) lists the following steps in the STAD method:

1. The instructor creates groups with four diverse participants (mixed based on race, gender, achievement, etc.).
2. The instructor gives the lesson.
3. The instructor provides the groups with assignments to finish. When someone in the group understands the task, they can convey it to the others until everyone is on the same page.
4. All students are given a quiz or questions by the teacher. Students cannot assist one another in answering the quiz.
5. Analysis
6. The instructor creates groups with four diverse participants (mixed based on race, gender, achievement, etc.).
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10. Analysis

STAD cooperative learning approach has the following benefits: a) Students' confidence and individual skills are naturally enhanced because they must participate actively in groups. b) Students learn how to socialize in their surroundings (the group) by the social interactions that naturally arise within it. c) Students learn how to be dedicated to the growth of their group through the group. d) It instills in students a sense of mutual respect and trust. e) Students learn to comprehend the subject matter together in the group, which encourages information sharing and lessens competitive tendencies. In the meantime, Slavin in Sudarsana (2018) states that the following are benefits of implementing cooperative learning techniques in the classroom: 1. Enhancing student learning outcomes 2. Promoting teamwork 3. Building camaraderie among underachievers 3. Boosting pupils' self-esteem 5. Motivating students' enthusiasm for learning, critical thinking, problem-solving, and application of prior knowledge and abilities.

However, the STAD learning approach has the following drawbacks: a) high-achieving pupils may become less motivated because there is no rivalry among group members. b) High achievers may become domineering and unruly if the teacher is unable to mentor them. c) More capable students are expected to help other group members comprehend the course content. d) Group assignments that call for collaboration are given to the students. This learning approach's core tenet is raising grades, which inspires pupils to do better than they have in the past. The student assessment system has a base score that can be used as the average quiz performance. Students receive points according to how much higher their quiz results are than their prior base scores.

**Table 1** Criteria of Improvement Points

NO	Quiz Score	Improvement Points
1	More than 10 points below base score	5
2	10 –1 points below base score	10
3	Base score to 10 points above base score	20
4	More than 10 points above base score	30
5	Perfect Paper	30

As for student assessment, team scores can contribute up to 20 percent of a student's individual assessment. If a team achieves a score above the average score criteria, it can be given an award or prize to motivate other students to work harder. The average student score criteria can be divided into three levels: excellent team, good team, and super good team.

Criterion (Team Average)	Reward
15	Good Team
20	Great Team
25	Super good Team

### Argumentative Writing

One ability that can be developed while learning English as a second language is writing. Writing is everything we write that can be read again and that helps us recall what we have written in the past. Writing enables us to communicate our experiences to both our current and future generations. To put it another way, writing is a way for pupils to express their knowledge and information and put it on paper. As stated by Feretti et al. (2019), argumentative writing is a process of problem-solving that uses goal-directed self-regulatory techniques to control task demands. Argumentative writing is a form of critical

thinking and rhetorical production that includes identifying a thesis (also known as a claim), providing empirical or experiential evidence to support the thesis, and evaluating the warrants that link the thesis, evidence, and context in which the argument is being made. Argumentative writing needs to anticipate rebuttals and provide responses that honor the range of opinions in a diverse society. A text that includes the author's arguments regarding a certain topic is known as an argumentative text. The goal of the argument, according to Longknife & Sullivan (2011), is to persuade readers. An argumentative document that uses facts, arguments, and examples to support the author's views in an effort to convince the reader to agree with them. An argumentative essay, on the other hand, is a type of writing where the author makes a case for a particular viewpoint and attempts to influence readers to agree with it. To persuade the intended audience that the message is sound, an argumentative text presents opposing viewpoints or, if required, offers a counterargument.

## METHOD

The research method used in this study is mixed method which involved descriptive qualitative data and quantitative data. This method is used to identify how the STAD learning method is applied and how it improves students' ability to write argumentative texts in English at STISIP Banten Raya. Students will be given a pretest and a posttest. Initially, all students participating in this study were given a pretest to measure their abilities in grammar (parts of speech and tenses) and writing. Then, after the research was conducted, students were given a post-test to determine the progress made by each student. This resulted in the average class scores before and after the research was conducted. The test could be completed in 90 minutes. The data collection methods used in this study were tests, interviews, and observations. The learning steps in applying the STAD cooperative learning method in English lessons for Government Science students at STISIP Banten Raya are as follows:

1. The instructor delivers the learning goals and inspires pupils to learn.
2. Based on factors including gender, ethnicity, and academic achievement, the teacher separates the students into diverse groups, each of which consists of four to five kids.
3. The instructor teaches the lesson, and the learning process is aided by questions, media, examples, and real-world issues that arise in everyday life.
4. In order to ensure that each student comprehends the subject and makes an individual contribution, the instructor supplies worksheets as a guide for group projects. Throughout the group project, the instructor watches, offers direction, support, and help when required.
5. Using quizzes on the subject matter, the instructor assesses each student's learning outcomes.
6. The instructor computes each student's score separately, then adds them up to determine the group score.
7. The group with the highest score receives an award from the instructor.

**Table 4** Indicator Activity Student Learning

No	Type of Observed Learning Activities	Learning Activities
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1	Visual Activity	Notice teacher's explanation
2	Oral Activity	Respond explanation Teacher in the question and answer session
3	Social Activity	Cooperation in discuss
4	Mental Activity	Dare to express opinions when explaining the results of the discussion in front of the class

**Table 5** Indicator of students' result

No	Realm	Verb
1	Visual Activity	Showing
2	Oral Activity	Explaining
3	Social Activity	Making Conclusion
4	Mental Activity	Compiling

This study was conducted in the Government Science study program at STISIP Banten Raya Pandeglang. Eighteen female and ten male fifth semester students participated in this study. Both observation and testing were employed as collective data methods in this study. The observation approach involves seeing and documenting students' learning activities while they are in class as well as watching teachers carry out the STAD learning method. Using tools to record an event for scientific or other reasons is what Moris defines as observation (Hasanah, 2016). Tests are used to determine whether students' learning outcomes in English can be improved

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Results*

According to Marzban and Alinejad (2013), "small groups of learners working together as a team to solve a problem, complete a task, or accomplish a common goal" is the definition of cooperative learning given by Artz and Newman (1990). According to this definition, cooperative learning occurs when a small group of students collaborate to solve an issue, finish a task, or reach a shared objective. According to Siradj's (2014) research, this approach contains components that encourage active engagement in learning, including the drive to meet goals, the capacity to adhere to the learning process, and chances to use the knowledge gained in social or real-world settings. Students can gain a deeper understanding of the material using this strategy, which is consistent with the growing demand for such knowledge. According to even Agustini and Ariawan (2017), constructivism theory, which holds that developing one's own knowledge through rational thought develops cognitive structures, is where the cooperative method gets its start. This approach will therefore encourage students to be engaged and keep exploring

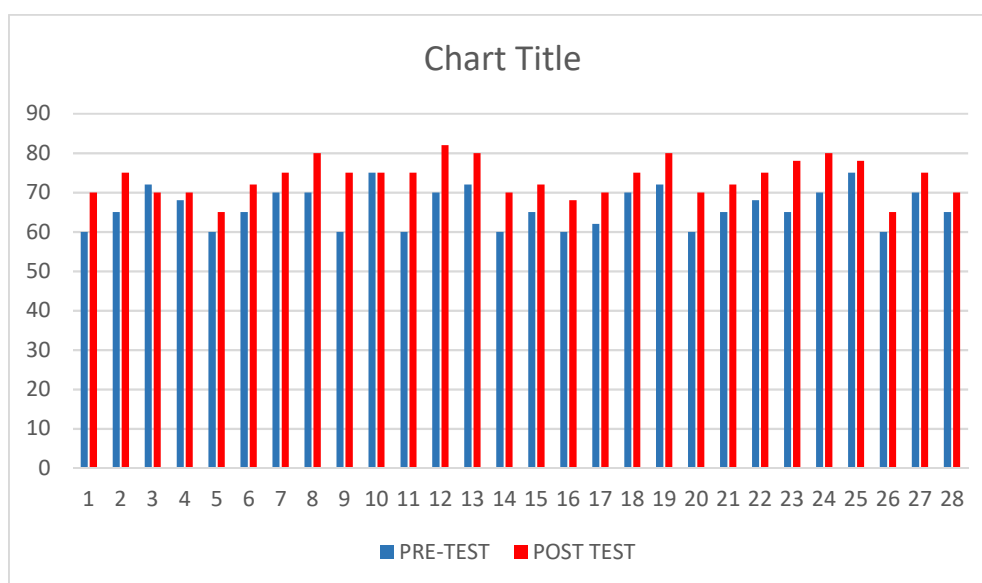
their intellectual potential. Research indicates that the Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD) approach improves learning outcomes for English. To implement it, pupils are split up into five teams, each consisting of pupils with different skill levels, to carry it out. Following the instructor's instruction, the students form groups and begin studying the material. The pupils then share what they have learned in class with the assistance of their classmates. After that, they are assessed separately using examinations that cover the content that the students and their teams spent studying. The pre-test and post-test results for the students during the study are displayed in the following table

NO	PRE-TEST	POST TEST	TOTAL
1	60	70	130
2	65	75	140
3	72	70	142
4	68	70	138
5	60	65	125
6	65	72	137
7	70	75	145
8	70	80	150
9	60	75	135
10	75	75	150
11	60	75	135
12	70	82	152
13	72	80	152
14	60	70	130
15	65	72	137
16	60	68	128
17	62	70	132
18	70	75	145
19	72	80	152
20	60	70	130
21	65	72	137
22	68	75	143
23	65	78	143
24	70	80	150
25	75	78	153
26	60	65	125
27	70	75	145
28	65	70	135
Rata-Rata	66.21429	73.64286	

Based on the table, it can be said that the average score of students in the pre-test was 62% and the average score in the post-test was 74%. This shows that there was a significant improvement in students' writing skills from 63% to 74%. Students' competence was measured by comparing their current scores with their average competence scores in the previous test. If students can exceed their previous exam results, they will receive improvement points. The team score is calculated by adding these improvement points and dividing them by the total team points. Additionally,



observations made during the study showed that students appeared enthusiastic about participating in lessons and working together to complete tasks. Therefore, it was decided that cooperative learning methods such as Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD) can improve students' writing skills in English classes. In cooperative learning classes, all students are in a learning environment that fosters their academic, personal, and social growth. Students' motivation to stay in class and work hard in teams is driven by the support and attention they receive from their instructors and peers. It is concluded that cooperative learning is an approach that can meet the diverse needs of students with varying levels of English proficiency. The chart below is pre-test and post-test results of the students in writing activity.



Observation Results of Learning Process Activities

NO	Observed Components	Meeting		
		I	II	III
1	Present students	25	24	28
2	Noticed students	20	23	27
3	Active students	22	25	25
4	Asking questions	25	24	28
5	Guided students	6	8	3
6	Unenthusiastic students	7	5	4

## Discussion

### a. First Meeting

To get reliable respondent data for this study, the student attendance list was examined at the first meeting. Second, pupils were split into multiple groups according to their

gender (male and female) and performance (pre-test scores: high, medium, and low). The pupils were then split up into five diverse groups. The STAD technique was used to teach argumentative text-related material, elucidating the general structure of texts and using text examples. They were forced to bring dictionaries to every English class because the majority of them lacked vocabulary. Students had a brief opportunity to ask questions about the issues they were having. The pupils finished the assignment and turned it in. The group's score was used as the group score, and the top-scoring group received a reward. The kids were inspired to work harder in order to improve their grades. Following a last review of the material, the class was adjourned.

b. Second meeting

The class started off this meeting with games designed to help students unwind and enjoy the material. Then, using a different book, the teaching and learning process was conducted in the same manner as in the second meeting, and attendance was verified. The title of the literature used in this meeting was "Politics and Societies." Students were then given an activity pertaining to today's content so that they may collaborate and learn how to comprehend and master the shared knowledge. Students finish the work and turn it in. The researcher assigns the highest score to the group, and the group score becomes the group score. Students are motivated to increase their study time in order to raise their grades as a result. Once the material has been reviewed, the class is adjourned.

c. Third Meeting

To get accurate respondent data for this study, attendance is verified at the last meeting. This meeting serves as the last one before each student receives a post-test privately. It takes about forty minutes to complete the post-test, which comprises of reading an argumentative text with ten questions. After that, each group is instructed to compose an argumentative essay on the preset subject of education in the digital age. During the exam, students must finish the assignment on their own; they are not permitted to assist one another. All of the pupils' papers were gathered once their assignments were finished. After that, gifts were given to the class's most engaged participants, and before the session ended, everyone was thanked.

## CONCLUSION

The study's findings suggest that using the STAD method to help Government Science students at STISIP Banten Raya sharpen their argumentative text writing abilities yielded noteworthy outcomes. The test results clearly demonstrate this, with students achieving an average pretest score of 66 and an improvement to an average score of 74 on the posttest. Students' enthusiasm was also evident from the observation results. They took an active part in the learning process by participating in discussions.

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