

CHAPTER: IV

DESCRIPTION OF THE PHENOMENA

4.0. Introduction:

Data collection is an important phase in any research project especially when the design is emerging or eclectic and qualitative in nature. In most Qualitative Research, the entire research project becomes a 'cyclic process', as the investigator always remains open-minded to accept any change. Such a change may occur in its design, type, nature of data, method of analysis or even sometimes the entire research objectives and research questions get modified in the light of new understanding of the study. The present study has an evolving research design.

4.1. Orientation to Research Method adopted in the present study:

The type of research adopted in the present study is **explorative** in nature. As the phenomenon evolving in natural set up is considered as a “**case**” under the study, the present study has employed **descriptive approach** towards reporting of the data collection. The collected data are presented in the form of description of all critical and significant sequences of the entire event, as it evolved and occurred during an academic year 2011-12. The investigator had rather no control over any episode of the entire phenomena. Thus there was neither treatment nor manipulation of any data, nor even controlling any variable, or testing any variable to arrive at generalization of results. The procedure of data collection presented here is in its real natural sense. Moreover both the data itself and the investigator himself are the instruments of data collection. Research rigor and fulfillment of Creswell's criteria for trustworthiness are also given due place in the present study.

The present chapter is divided in two sections and each has various parts internally. The first section of the chapter starts with introduction, followed by the description of the phenomena, and then the chapter depicts the procedure adopted for the collection of data. Only Critical events and episodes are described that formed the entire complex phenomena. The events were taken place at two different locations or sites, they were lesson plan guidance at the main site i.e. B. Ed College, then the event occurred at local schools where student-teachers delivered their practice teaching lessons in actual classrooms and once again students got back to the institute where selected participants get themselves engaged in teacher assigned CL tasks.

- 4.2. Orientation to Procedure of Data collection:** The entire present study has been divided and carried out in mainly three phases keeping in view the time frame required for the study.
- **Pre-field work phase:** This is the Preparation phase before actual data collection procedure started. It includes tasks like preparing student's profile along with consent form, selection of CL methods, CL principles, selection of soft skills, forming components of Soft Skills, preparation of Evaluative Rubrics, Evolving a strategy, CLM based Lesson Plan Guidance, development of required Instruments or tools for capturing the Phenomena and Preparing Entry Behaviour and Terminal Behaviour tests.
 - **Field work phase:** This second phase of planning includes three stages in which Prior Performance (Entry Behaviour) Test is administered after first phase of Practice Teaching. The field work phase has two plans where CLM based Strategy is implemented in two separate instructional plans in two different stages:
 - Cooperative Learning Methods Based Practice-teaching Phase and
 - Cooperative Learning Methods Based Instructional Plan
 - **Post- field work phase:** This second phase of planning includes the 'when', 'where' and 'how' aspects of administering Posterior Performance Tests (i.e. Exit level or Terminal test) on select soft skills. The last phase consists of collection of documents and artifacts. These stages of data collection have been followed by data organization, coding, categorization and analysis.

The present study is aimed at exploration and description of the complex phenomena that occurred naturally. The focus of the study is tri-polar as it focuses first on CLM based Practice Teaching phase, second on CLM based Instructional Plan, and third is observation of development of soft skills during CLM tasks. The present study is conceptualized on certain tentative plans which is described in-depth in the following passages.

The method of reporting the procedure of data collection adopted is sequential or linear. Here only the most important elements of descriptive case study are mentioned. For description of phenomena it is necessary to mark event saturation points i.e. starting or entry into the phenomena and exit or end of the phenomena.

4.3. Description of the Phenomena as unfolded:

The phenomena has evolved in two parts of the strategy, i.e. CLM based Practice teaching phase and CLM based Instructional Plan. Both these parts have two stages: preparation stage at the beginning and post stage of collection of artefacts and documents. The following passages describe the procedure of the Phenomena occurred and evolved naturally for the present study. Reporting of the research work will be done through integration of two models i.e. chronology of events (Day wise/session wise thick description of events) and thematic. The writing style will be descriptive in nature. Participant's performance will be presented as Case in given task.

The investigator has maintained **Field Notes**. This contains written evidence as it was recorded major series of events and various aspects of the phenomena under study. The field notes included a written account of all sorts of factual data starting from seeking permission from the management-principal of the college, getting the consent forms filled up by participants and then the design of the phases of data collection, practice teaching details, record of lessons delivered, submission of lesson plans, orientation of CL Approach to student- teachers, CL activities programme and record of worksheets submission, individual and group reports, videography details.

During the entire phenomena the researcher had also maintained **Observation cum Reflective Diary**. This was in a way a written record of personal emotions and experiences. This tool was helpful for the investigator himself as it was by nature had two aspects in it, i.e. what he observed during the entire phenomena and what he felt during the course of time. It was a record of events starting from the study of the phenomena and it also included all feelings, personal experiences, difficulties faced by the researcher in his journey of the study.

4.3.1. Pre-field work phase:

4.3.1.1. Stage: I. Preliminary phase:

Events dated from Second week of August 2011.

The admission of the new batch got completed with first week of July 2011. The study was started with attempts to get clarity in conceptual framework of the study long before the start of the academic year. The investigator in this phase was engaged in preparation of loosely structured tools and arriving at temporary design of the study. This took a lot of time as the investigator was working on a new topic with novel approach.

The first thing to do was getting the permission from the department of education where the investigator got registered for the study. Then the investigator started proceeding for getting the permission from the institute where the researcher wanted to collect data i.e. the site of data collection. The selection of the site for data collection was very crucial as the present study required such cases that have unique features and most heterogeneity. The site selected was Dr. H.R. Gajwani College of Education which was previously situated at Gandhidham, was later sifted to new building at Adipur, a small town mainly resided by two major communities of Kutch i.e. Kachchhi and Sindhi. The institute was a self-aided, privately managed trust, a non-government organization registered under the name of Kutch District Samaj Seva Kalyan Mandal (KDSKM). The institute was one and only English Medium co-education B.Ed. College of the Kachchh region, affiliated to KSKV Kachchh University, Bhuj.

The admissions to the students were given on merit by the university through specially appointed Centralized Admission Committee for B.Ed. -M.Ed. programmes. This college offers graduate secondary teacher education programme through English medium as far as registration and permission from NCET concerned but, since its inception, based on its past few years record, it hardly had got a cent percent English medium students. This meant that the students who opted for this institute had different educational and academic backgrounds. In addition, there were differences in terms of cultural, social, economic and family background; religion, schooling, mother tongue, their level of English language proficiency and their personality. Based on the above criteria of heterogeneity, and the nature, type, design of the study and its objectives; the site was selected for the present study. In the view of the investigator this college of education was most suitable for the present study.

[Note: For more details refer to the profile of the research site selected is attached in the appendices.

First of all the investigator got an oral approval for conducting research project in the institute and based on the permission given by the authority orally, the investigator started the initial phase of selection of cases for the study. Then on 11-08-2011, the investigator wrote an official letter of request to the college administration for allowing him to carry out the research study. Besides, the authorities were informed about the topic, goals and nature of the study and what sort of infrastructural and administrative support sought from them. Having listened to the investigator, the

authorities gave the written permission for research work but with a few conditions and restrictions.

The present study adopted **Case Study method to study the phenomena**. Participants were selected purposively based on the type of the present study. Having got permitted by the college management administration authorities to carry out the research, the first thing needed to do, was selecting and preparing participants who willingly got ready to engage in this kind of study which indeed needed longer span of time.

The reason for selecting very small no. of participants was that the study had limited scope and objectives. Besides, to study any natural phenomena one needs qualitative approach and the data would be mostly descriptive in nature. Such type of complex phenomena usually requires small number of cases or participants with possibly numerous tools and techniques employed.

With due permission from the college authorities again, an announcement of an open invitation was made in the morning assembly hall, about the research study that the investigator had started and he requested to the student-teachers for their support and help. Surprisingly, a large majority of student-teachers had shown their willingness to join in the study.

4.3.1.2. Stage: II. Preparation phase for the study

Event: Fishing for the suitable case: Event were dated from Second Week of August 2011

Though the investigator had not required a large number of participants, an overwhelming response was sought from all the students. When the investigator made a public announcement in the morning assembly after getting an oral consent from the administrative authority to carry out the research project, most student-teachers from the entire batch had shown willingness to join voluntarily the research project. Therefore it was necessary to churn out the required cases for the study from a large sample size.

In the preliminary phase of selecting the participants, a formal talk was arranged with student-teachers willing to join CL programme. The following simple questions were included in meeting: What is your full name? Where do you come from? What is your mother tongue? What is your father/mother? Do you like to join willingly? Will your parents/guardians give consent to be part of this study? Are you mentally ready to take up new challenges, tasks and extra time study, assignments?

Why do you wish to join? Based on the responses the greater number of cases were reduced for a small size of sample.

Hence, only one method subject group was selected for the convenience of the participants. Actually the administrative authority of the college i.e. Incharge principal suggested to work with only one method group. Thus, all the student-teachers from English subject who were ready to join, were first asked whether they were ready to join the study willingly and committed to stay with the study till the last session. When the response was positive, they were given consent forms to fill. From a considerable no. of aspirants willing to undergo the study, the investigator had to select based on the listed criteria a very small sample as per requirement of the objectives. Thereby a few of them did not turn up as their parents did not allow them to leave home early in the morning or staying at evening time as most of the student-teachers came from far places.

4.3.1.3. Event: Seeking informed consent from the Participants:

Events dated 12th- August 2011

Having talked with the student-teachers in the beginning of the academic year, a small number of student-teachers were identified who had willingness to take part in the study. All select 14 participants were given **Student's profile cum consent form** to fill in. This was a semi-structured questionnaire which included their personal information along with a few more questions like - Do you face any difficulty in English? What problems do you face with English? What was the mother-tongue?, What was the family and cultural background?, What was the economic conditions of the family? In order to get the authentic information, the investigator requested the administration of the institute to provide database of student-teachers. **Database of the students from university** was actually a readymade database available with the university and the institute from where the investigator got information of all the participants who opted English as first or second method course. There were 32 student-teachers in English method course during academic year 2011-12. There were about 14 (being most regular) participants who voluntarily accepted to be part of the case under the study. Database was duly prepared in the format of digital university for the purpose of new registration of the students to generate student's unique identity by the KSKV Kachchh University. A few of the information that were neither covered in the casual interview nor in semi-structured questionnaire were gained from the database of the student-teachers.

4.3.2. Field work - Phase: I: It includes Practice Teaching based on CLM. This phase has three stages viz., pre-stage, through-stage and post-stage of practicum

4.3.2.1. Stage: I Pre-stage of Practice Teaching phase

Event: Orientation sessions:

Event dates occurred during second week of August 13-08-2011

Having finalized the cases under the study, the next step was to **prepare a session/lecture** on what is cooperative learning, its theoretical details, how CL works in ESL classrooms in schools, how the study would be carried out, what would be their role and responsibilities as participants.

Event: Orientation of CL theory:

Event dates occurred during second week of August 13-08-2011

A session with the participants was arranged in which almost all participants were present. The session started with brief self-introduction by each participant. This included personal information, name, native, strengths, weaknesses, interests and hobbies etc. After the introduction of the researcher himself given to the participants, the session started with a small brainstorming task in which participants had to work in pairs and list out various methods and techniques of teaching and learning. Having got ready with the list, the partners were changed and they shared their list, added a new one, deleted repeats and when the lists were ready, one of the participants shared lists in front of the class. This way a platform was created to know what participants know latest about ways or methods of teaching-learning. The researcher let them know a novel approach to teaching-learning, i.e. cooperative and collaborative learning. For the purpose of acquainting the selected participants with the theory of cooperative learning, an initial phase of Orientation session was prepared. .

Event: Orientation session for Cooperative learning methods:

Event dated 13-08-2011

An initial phase of Orientation session was prepared in order to acquaint the selected participants with the theory of cooperative learning. While implementing Orientation session for Cooperative Learning Methods, there were 30 participants present from both English and social science method course. The session included information about history and origin of cooperative learning, principles of cooperative learning, and various methods of cooperative learning, classroom environment and

roles of learners for cooperative learning, norms and general procedure of methods of cooperative learning.

First, views were gathered from the participants what they knew about cooperative learning and then theoretical information was provided by the researcher to the participants about the concept, meaning, definition, features and principles of CL. A lengthy description was given about the roles and responsibilities that each participant had to do during the sessions. A small task on poster making was planned on the norms and principles of Cooperative Learning so that students can remember the classroom norms and principles of Cooperative Learning and would apply them to create conducive learning environment in the classroom. They were informed about the usual procedure in the CL sessions, what was expected from them, what kind of tasks, worksheets etc. to be given to fill up, etc. Finally the last part concluded with clarification of doubts and questions raised by the participants.

4.3.2.1.2. Practicum based collection of data: It includes CL methods based Lesson Planning Guidance Programme:

Events occurred during from 16th August 2011 to 20th August 2011.

Guidance Programme on Cooperative Learning Lesson Planning was conducted during the first semester of the B. Ed programme in academic year 2011-12. All the participants under the study were requested to come an hour earlier for lesson planning guidance. Here in this programme, first the investigator had explained once again the theory, principles and norms, roles of the classroom following CL approach and accordingly the students had to incorporate the principles of CL in their subject based lesson plan.

For smoothness of organization of this programme only the student-teachers with English method were selected as participants of the study. As per the traditional practices of B.Ed. colleges, before the commencement of any practice teaching programme, student leaders of each group representing each practicing school would go to school to get topics to be covered in each core school subjects. Hence this special group of CL programme had participants with different practicing school and so had different topics from the subject of English from Standard six to twelve with variety of textbooks in various school boards like GSEB, CBSE. There also had variety in medium of instruction as a few participants went in Gujarati medium, a few in Hindi medium and Sindhi medium and some in English medium.

During Practice teaching Guidance programme guidance on CL Lesson Planning was given to 14 participants who remained present from both English method courses only. CL lesson planning was an open-ended programme to guide student-teachers as how to incorporate CL methods in traditional lesson planning and also how to design and plan activities and tasks based on CL methods. The selected participants were free to ask any query regarding the implementation of CL methods in their lesson plan. Along with the predefined schedule of practice teaching phases during Sept.2011 and Dec.2011 for all the subjects-methods groups, this guidance of CL methods in lesson planning was provided as per student's needs and as per their convenience of time.

The major aspects included were CL methods that were suitable for the level or grade of school children and as per nature of content assigned in the subject of English, various tasks were planned and designed like warm up activities, team building activities, small evaluation exercises, tasks that involve the basic principles and norms of CL.

The investigator guided the participants as how to prepare lesson plans in their subject based on CL methods, and they were also guided to prepare pair-group work, tasks to develop communication, cooperation and critical thinking skills. The student-teachers or participants of the study were provided abroad guidelines as what are the steps of each selected 12 CL methods and how either CL methods can be incorporated in regular format lesson plan or design entirely a new format exclusive based on CL methods. The participants were also provided sample of both lesson plans and were guided accordingly.

The following schedule was followed for lesson plan guidance.

Table.4.1 Schedule of Cooperative Learning Lesson Planning

Phase no.	Teachers Activities	Student's Activities	Remarks
Cycle-1 Phase-1	Guidelines given for techniques of preparing CL method based lesson plan A sample plan was provided to participants.	Brain storming Pair work/group work to understand the format that they like to adopt	Group of participants showed interest in CLM based teaching.
Phase-2	Checking lesson plans Suggestions for improvement	Preparing lesson plans as per content given by practice teaching school	Participants were irregular in getting checked lesson plans
Phase-3	Rectification of the technical aspect, language aspect in lesson plans	Follow up improvement individually	Most participants copied format instead of creatively designing plans.

For each lesson selected for making as CL method based lesson, the above cycles of guidance followed. The student-teachers were free to select any of CL methods from the list of 12 selected methods and also free to choose which lesson, how many lessons to be prepared using CL method.

For the purpose of peer evaluation only those student-teachers were provided schedules that were part of the research project as participants .The participants had to observe at least one CL method based lesson if all were not possible due to random distribution of students as per groups and schools. The participants had submitted afterwards the self-assessment sheet and peer observation schedules to the investigator.

[Note: Practice teaching Guidance programme guidance on CL Lesson Planning; Self-assessment sheet and peer observation schedules are presented in the appendices.]

- **Difficulties and Problems faced by the investigator:**

There were certain problems and difficulties faced by the investigator in this phase of practicum as the investigator could not be physically present in all the practice teaching cooperating school near and far, where almost more than eight groups were engaged and the student-teachers of English method were distributed equally as per need of the school, hence the investigator resorted to the other instruments of data collection i.e. self-evaluation, peer evaluation sheet and lesson plan transcripts. It was not possible for the investigator to observe all the CL based lessons delivered by all participants of the study.

4.3.2.2. Stage: II Through-stage of Practice Teaching Phase:

It mainly includes Delivery of CLM based tasks incorporated in lesson in practicing school on core school subjects. During the practice teaching phase the participants were given self-evaluative rubrics to rate themselves to check where they stand on four soft skills in comparison to other participants.

Episode: Stray teaching during first semester and Block teaching during second semester

Events dated from 23th August 2011 to 29th August 2011 in first semester Block Teaching Phase -1 –Stray teaching

Events dated from 16th January 2012 to 23rd January 2012 during second semester Block teaching Phase-2- Unit planning

The selected student teachers delivered at least one CLM lesson during the first and/or second semester in stray and block teaching phases respectively. The lessons were either based on CL method exclusively or a lesson designed entirely in traditional lesson plan layout but includes suitable CLM in it. The participants were free to select the CL method from list of twelve CL methods oriented to them. The investigator had no control over the selection of schools for the practice teaching for the participants as practicing schools were finalized and allotted to them by the authorities of the college.

[**Note:** Schedule of practice teaching at HRGCE, Adipur in practicing schools is attached in appendices for further details.]

4.3.2.3. Stage: III. Post-stage of Practice Teaching phase

Having completed the practice teaching in semester-1 and semester-2, the participants submitted the artifacts i.e. lesson plans, self-evaluation sheet, peer observation sheet. The results of the analysis of these artifacts were communicated to the participants in the group sessions of sharing experiences during the ongoing practice teaching programmes.

- **Self-Evaluation Sheet for Assessing One's Own Practice Teaching Lesson was submitted by 14 participants.** There was at least one CLM based lesson delivered by the participants during first and second semester during block teaching phases in August 2011 and Jan.2012. Self-Evaluation Sheet for Assessing One's Own Practice Teaching Lesson was meant for the student-teachers themselves. They would use this tool for collecting and recording data of their own teaching. There are twenty items in this questionnaire. The items were based on the lesson delivered by student-teachers in the actual classroom when they went for the practice teaching. The questions were reflecting the student-teachers experience of teaching the content using Cooperative learning methods and evaluating one's own performance at what extent they could teach through cooperative learning methods and also they assess their own skill of reading, writing, time management, critical thinking, Grammar and teamwork skills.
- **Peer Observation Schedule for Performance Evaluation of other participants during Practice Teaching Lesson was submitted by 14 participants.** There were about 28 Peer Assessment schedules i.e. Peer Observation Schedule for Performance Evaluation of other participants during Practice Teaching Lesson collected. This questionnaire was meant for the student-teachers who would observe their peer learners' lesson. There were 25 items consisting area of lesson planning, use of cooperative method used, use of communication and critical thinking skills along with time management and teamwork skills. There were a few open ended questions which required the students to describe their observation in detail. These were simple sheet wherein some close and open- ended questions were given. The participants were asked to reflect upon what and how their peer participants delivered their lesson in the classroom at the actual school during the practice teaching phase.

- **Lesson Plan transcripts:** Each participant submitted at least one CL method based lesson plan transcript.
[**Note:** Sample of CLM based lesson plan transcript is attached in appendices for further details.]
- **Self-evaluative rubrics** on four soft skills were given to participants. After the completion of practice teaching, the selected participants submitted their rating of soft skills on self-evaluative rubrics.

4.3.3. Field work Phase: II:

4.3.3.1.1. Stage: I: Orientation sessions:

Event: Orientation of Soft skills

Event dated 13-08-2011

In **Orientation session for Soft Skills**, there were 14 participants present from English method course. Having oriented the participants on theory of Cooperative Learning, another session was conducted for the student-teachers to inform them about what soft skill are. In the second phase of orientation, the selected participants were acquainted about the selected soft skills. This session included concept, meaning, definitions of soft skills, list of various soft skills important for a profession, significance in present competitive world of work, how soft skills are evaluated, how to make use of self-evaluation sheets and peer evaluation sheets on use of principles of Cooperative Learning, how to evaluate oneself by using Individual Performance Evaluation Rubrics of each selected Soft skill. In concluding part, student-teachers got clarification of their doubts regarding any matter of how to use various Performa during the practice teaching and during CL instruction programme.

4.3.3.1.2. Event: Orientation session for writing assignments, evaluation and rubrics: Event dated 14-08-2011

In **Orientation session for writing assignments and rubrics**, there were 14 participants present from English and a few were from social science method course. As part of Student -Teacher's Portfolio many of the assignments and tasks were involved in the study hence the participants must know how to fill up information in various forms, write reports, worksheets, write assessment in assessment sheets, and evaluative rubrics etc. With the goal of making student-teachers aware about the self and peer assessment and evaluation, a special session was devised for the participants in order to acquaint them about the evaluation procedure and how to write rubrics based on cooperative learning and soft skills.

4.3.3.1.2. Stage: II. Implementation of Cooperative Learning Methods based Instructional Plan [CLMIP]

Event dated 6th January 2012 to 12th March 2012.

Cooperative Learning Methods based Instructional Plan was an open-ended, flexible set of classroom strategies that helped the investigator to create the CL environment in the classroom. This included simple general steps of each session that were conducted. Although the CL methods selected were highly structured, there was some sort of freedom taken with implementation of general instructional plan. This plan included various items like Direct Instructions, Participants Observation, field notes, Distribution of materials of reading, worksheets, assessment task sheets etc. collecting individual and group reports, writing steps on Chalkboard. The plan mainly included Cooperative Learning Instructional lesson plans based on CL methods/activities for Investigator. The strategy was implemented in three subparts.

[**Note:** Schedule of practice teaching at HRGCE, Adipur in practicing schools is attached in appendices for further details.]

4.3.3.3.1. Pre-phase events: It includes Classroom environment setup.

With a view to implement CLM strategy, the investigator had paid special attention to create CLM based classroom set up. The physical set up was very important for the natural environment. Hence, the site where the Instructional Plan on CLM was planned was selected keeping in view the requirements of CLM based tasks. The classroom was multipurpose hall where more than hundred chairs with flexible operative writing desks were arranged in circle form. One key aspect for pupils to work together cooperatively was to consider the actual physical set up of the classroom. Some of its reasons included-the physical arrangement gives clear messages about the teacher's values and expectations for behavior, desks in rows give a different message from desks in small groups or in a horseshoe arrangement; Classroom design has been shown by research to affect pupil achievement, time on task and acoustics. The layout impacts on opportunities for interaction, for example, a formal lecture is the worst kind of learning environment. The lecture-room arrangement encourages students to sit passively listening to the lecture, not scope to engage in meaningful interaction with peers to support their learning. Therefore, well-designed classrooms define learning patterns and support transitions from one type of

activity to another (such as whole-class work with pupils seated in front of the teacher in a large space, and groups of tables and chairs of group and independent work). CL group work is generally best arranged with pupils working at tables that seat four, with pairs side by side. Keeping in view these ideas, the investigator selected the site and classroom very carefully. Another reason was to avoid any sort of external disturbance. The multipurpose hall was situated at ground floor, exactly opposite to the Assembly and general lecture hall as per the college building layout plan. It was most convenient for the administration and students. The class environment was spacious, stress free, bright lighted. The movement should be easy and convenient for the students and teacher both.

Along with taking care of physical set up, the teacher needs to develop the management techniques to reduce noise level. While deciding on the formation of the groups, the best size for informal groups is three to five members as this allows for a range of opinions and makes it livelier that all members will be included in the discussion. The investigator therefore had selected a small group of participants who actually voluntarily participated in the research project. The investigator had also tried to vary the composition of groups so that students were not always working with the same group members.

Participants were explained about variety of roles that they need to rotate and play in each session. The following Group roles (as suggested by Jacobs at el. 2002) were presented to the student-teachers to choose on their own as per need in the specific task.

- Organizer: provides the group with the overall process structure
- Recorder: writes down important information (e.g., directions or group work)
- Checker: Makes sure that all team members understand the concepts and the team's conclusions.
- Questioner: generates questions and involves all students
- Assessor: evaluates the progress of each work session
- Encourager: models and reinforces appropriate social skills
- Summarizer: Restates the team's conclusions or answers.
- Spokesperson: represents the group and presents group work to rest of the class
- Timekeeper: keeps group on task and on time

- Team facilitator: Moderates discussions, keeps the team on schedule, ensures that work is completed by all, and makes sure that all have the opportunity to participate and learn.
- Elaborator: Relates the discussion with prior concepts and knowledge.
- Research runner: Gets needed materials and is liaison between teams and between their team and the instructor.

4.3.3.3.1.2. Classroom norms and rituals formed

Every CL based classroom requires to follow certain rules, regulations and norms. Some of the rituals were followed in class in every session that included warm up activities, main tasks, announcing objectives of the sessions, explaining the steps, clarifying doubts if any, distribution of task materials and report writing sheets, rubric sheets, worksheets. The quiet signal was used to reduce noise in class while students work in task. Even the chalkboard was used as instructional aids so that student-teachers can easily follow the steps on their own. Some Expected Behaviors (Jacobs, at el.2002) were told to the participants as follows:

- Everyone contributes and helps
- Everyone listens to others with care
- Praise helpful actions and good ideas
- Ask for help if you need it (Ask first your pair mate/group mate and then the investigator)
- Check to make sure that everyone understands
- Stay with your group.
- Decide roles,
- Take leadership of the group,
- Write group reports in each session.

4.3.3.3.1.2. CL principles executed through selection of CLM tasks

Johnson and Johnson (1999) opined that there are five basic elements needed to make cooperative learning work viz., Positive Interdependence, Social Skills, Individual Accountability; Group Evaluation, Face-to-Face Interaction. All of these principles were executed in the selected CL methods. Each CL method was selected based on the principle it focused. The selection was made based on the ideas given by Jacobs, at el. (2002) in ‘The Teacher’s Sourcebook for Cooperative learning’.

4.3.3.3.2. While phase Events:

Cooperative Learning Methods based Instructional Plan [CLMIP] was second part of CLM strategy and it was implemented during field work phase. There were initially more number of participants that attended the first few sessions and most of them from both English and social science method course. But gradually the number of the participants got decreased and at last it was about 14 participants from English as one of the methods remained present till last session.

(Note: Although these 14 participants finally became the sample of the study, at different points of the time during study other B.Ed. students were also participating and hence, the number increased sometimes to 17 in some sessions. The number of participants thus vary at different times.)

Session 1: Team building activities:

Event date: 6th January 2012

The first session was meant for team building which is the most essential thing for natural classroom set up for cooperative learning. The first session therefore was not considered for any sort of assessment. The general layout plan of the session had three stages and each stage had sub steps.

The first stage of the session was **Pre-task stage** which had key features like Warm up and declaration of learning objectives, Introduction of content selected, Explaining the steps of the CL task, Formation of pairs or groups.

The second stage was **While task stage** which had key features like Monitoring and facilitating, Observing and participating, Taking field notes.

The third **Post task stage** had Task completion, Collection of artifacts, Oral feedback and Follow up of task.

Session 2: Team building activities:

Event date: 7th January 2012

Due to some of the new participants in this session, the second session was also treated as team building session and hence meant for the team building among the learners. The procedure remained the same as the session had three stages i.e. Pre-task stage, While task stage, Post task stage; but here the CL tasks were changed.

Stage: I. Prior Performance Test on Soft Skills:

Entry behaviour tests on RCS, CTS, WCS and Grammar skills was implemented. For TMS, the first CLM based session was considered for assessment at entry level. The investigator had prepared working tests to check entry level

behaviors on selected soft skills. About 14 participants took Prior Performance Test on select four Soft skills. It was administered before implementing the tasks on CLM.

[**Note:** Prior Performance Tests are attached in appendices for further details.]

Session-3 to 14:

Events occurred on dated 27-01-2012 to 10-03-2012

Each session here designed as part of instructional plan, was based on the selected twelve CL methods. These sessions were in a way structured task in mainly three to four stages and each stage had different sub-steps as per the CL method. There were about 14 participants roughly who remained physically present consistently in almost all sessions in the CLMIP. The following sample explains the ‘how’ of sessions. [**Note:** Sample of Investigator’s instructional plan is presented in appendices for further information.]

- **Pre-task stage:** This stage consisted of steps like
- **Warm up and declaration of learning objectives:** Here the researcher plans out a few warm up activities. The investigator first explains the CL method and associates the focus of the study i.e. soft skills. Thereby he explains the objectives and what is expected from the participants.
- **Introduction of content selected:** having informed about the objectives, the researcher introduced the selected task and thereby informed students about the content, its type, genre it belongs and other relevant information.
- **Explaining the steps of the CL task:** Here the investigator explains the steps which are actually written in each session on chalkboard.
- **Formation of pairs or groups:** This step is concerned with Norming and forming of the groups. There was freedom on part of students/participants. Yet many a time’s random number method was used to form groups-‘pods’.
- **While task stage:** This is the most important stage of the session. It is also called the Main Task stage. Here, the steps of the selected CL method are executed along with participant and/or non-participant observation. The task is initiated with distribution of task materials. Apart from this, the participants are engaged in the task completion guided through steps written on the chalkboard. The investigator would provide the required instructions to help participants carry out their learning in pairs or groups.

- **Monitoring and facilitating:** Here in this stage the investigator will not only monitor the class but also facilitate in learning process
- **Observing:** the investigator will make the observations of the performances of the participants on selected soft skills. The investigator also participate in the task where ever needs arise.
- **Taking field notes:** the investigator will make observations and keep record of what he observed. The field notes help in detail description of the phenomena.
- **Post task stage:** In this last stage of the session, the task is almost complete and the investigator distributes the worksheet.
- **Task closure:** The investigator will direct the participants to complete the task and collects the artifacts and written documents from the participants.
- **Collection of artefacts:** Worksheets are collected by the researcher.

(Note: The samples of the session or CLM task were given in appendix.)

For the details of the tasks refer to the Actual plan executed exclusively during Cooperative Learning Methods based Instructional Plan [CLMIP] based on field notes maintained by the investigator.

[Note: Details of the Actual plan Executed is attached in the appendices.]

All of the above sessions were recorded through **Videography and the written Transcripts of Video Sessions** were also prepared. The sessions conducted during the Cooperative Learning Methods based Instructional Plan were recorded in the form of videos. It contained dialogues from about 14 participants who remained present regularly in all 12 CLM sessions. Transcripts were prepared of all the accessible video sessions i.e. 13 sessions. The last session was meant for final assessment of performance of soft skills. All participants had submitted documents and artefacts during all 14 sessions.

[Note: DVD copies of video sessions and transcript of video sessions of CLMIP along with participants' attendance during video session's record sheet are attached in appendices for further details.]

4.3.3.4. Post-field work Phase Events

Episode: Participant's reflection on overall experiences of learning under CL methods **Event dated 12-03-2012**

Having completed the sessions during CLMIP each time, the participants were given opportunity to express themselves orally. They can give overall feedback and

share one's own experiences, perceptions and views on their participation in Cooperative Learning Instructional Plan.

After the completion of each session, having videographed, the participants were provided with worksheets based on the task, rubrics for the individual self-assessment of each selected soft skill. The following data were collected by the investigator when the participants filled in all information in worksheets and rubrics.

- **Collection of artifacts:** The investigator collected individual, group reports, worksheets, rubrics on soft skills.
- **Oral feedback:** The participants were asked to provide what they perceived, what they learnt, how they develop skills and Competencies.
- **Follow up of task:** The investigator collected the rubrics from the participants.

Some of the instruments designed by the investigator were meant only for the participants' use and they were made in user friendly versions so that the participants could easily understand them. The participants made use of them without any issues.

Student-teacher's Portfolio was an instrument which was in evolving form and not in any concrete form. 'Portfolio' as its concept suggest is a collection of all information about the attendance, artifacts submitted, tasks engaged in and completed, participation as evident in video sessions, lesson plans documents submitted, progress record task wise. This is comparatively a modern instrument, used for continues and comprehensive evaluation of students especially at present in schools abroad and in some educational institutes in India. Portfolio can be seen in digital form for the college students especially in foreign universities. It includes student teachers' internal and external exam results, unit test results, participation in curricular, co-curricular, activities, seminar- debate presentation, life skills, attendance, behavior, dressing, cleanliness etc. The terms here in the present study refers to student-teacher's handwritten worksheets based on task assigned, peer and self-assessment sheets for practice teaching, self-evaluation rubrics of soft skills selected, lesson plans transcripts, individual and group reports on task, Self-assessment sheet for Cooperation skill.

Individual Performance Evaluation Rubric each on selected four Soft Skills were filled by Participants. About 14 participants submitted these documents. There were four Soft Skills selected for the present study, viz. Reading comprehension skill, Critical thinking skill, Written communication skill, Time management skill. All Evaluative rubrics were designed keeping in view the needs of the study, the objective

of the research and also the basic principles of rubric designing. Both investigator and participants could use rubrics as they were user friendly.

Task based Worksheets were submitted by about 14 participants who remained present in CLMIP sessions. Hence the total number of documents were 12 sessions and 12 tasks * 14 participants = **168 task based worksheets**. These worksheets were based on content selected for each CL method and the major objective for this worksheet was to have record for assessing participants' reading comprehension skill and writing skill.

[**Note:** Task based Worksheets are given in appendices for further information.]

Task based Individual Report of the participants was also submitted by about 14 participants as per the sessions they attended in CLMIP. Task based Individual Report of the participants were designed to explore the experiences of the participants. There were two kinds of blank papers distributed to the participants. Individual report sheet was one sort of blank sheet of paper, where the participants were required to write the main task given in CLMBIP and another sheet of papers which every member of the team/group was required to write her own experiences while getting engaged in the task.

Task based Group Reports were submitted by the Participants as per the sessions they attended in CLMIP. Group Report sheets were also in blank paper form and it was the group leader, whoever was unanimously selected by the teammates, would write the report as how the members of the group played their role and how they could complete the task, what problems they faced and what resolutions they brought in. This would also tell their experiences of CLM based learning.

Cooperative Learning Self-assessment Rating Scale: It was submitted by about 14 participants. This tool enabled investigator to collect information on student-teacher's performance regarding cooperative learning methods. It was based on third objective of the study. This semi-structured tool was constructed using five point scale and learners were expected to respond on five points from Fully Agree, Agree, Indifferent, Disagree and Fully Disagree levels of responses. There were a total of 54 items (statements) equally distributed on positive and negative polarity of sentences on Cooperation skill, so that same responses can afterwards be verified by comparison of responses. The self-evaluation sheet also contained items which were open-ended in nature where participants were free to reflect and describe themselves as cooperative learners.

[**Note:** Cooperative Learning Self-assessment Rating Scale used as tool is presented in appendices.]

Opinionnaire on cooperative learning instructional plan for development of soft skills was last artifacts-document of data collection. About 14 participants submitted this document. This Open –ended semi structured tool was prepared for the research objective -3. There were statements that were close ended in nature whereas participants were given some space for describing their own experiences, observations, suggestions, etc. that they feel to provide. This tool was meant for student-teachers to record their reaction against the general experiences and learning gained in the CL programme. There were 60 items in this scale and half of them on positive polarity whereas rest were on negative polarity in order to cross check the authenticity and honesty of the responses provided by the student-teachers. Participants were free to give their feedback and comments with regard to their opinion and approach towards CL programme and also to ascertain whether CL helped or hindered in developing soft skills.

[**Note:** Opinionnaire or Reaction scale is attached in appendices for more detail.]

Stage. II Posterior Performance Test administered:

Having completed the practice teaching sessions with selected CLM, and CLM based Tasks, all 14 participants who remained till the end of the programme were given a Posterior Performance Test on select soft skills in order to check their terminal behaviour. Last session was meant for assessment of participant's performance on TMS. Their performances were evaluated separately as well as in comprehensive form.

[**Note:** Posterior Performance Tests are attached in appendices for further details.]

4.4. Problems and Challenges faced by the Investigator during data collection

In any qualitative research there are a few challenges involved. The biggest challenges in the present study that the investigator encountered was to record episodes with minute details and to analyze, relive each event. Moreover the greatest difficulty was to organize the complex data from verity of tools. In order to keep a check on personal bias in terms of data collection, most instruments were designed in such a way that the participants had to provide information in the form of reports and self-assessment sheets.

One of the challenges was to design instruments suitable for the objectives and nature of inquiry. Most of the time of the study esp. earlier phase was spent in designing, correcting, commenting by experts and finalizing the user-friendly version of tools. No standardized ready-made tools could serve the purpose of the study therefore all of the instruments were self-designed by the investigator as per needs of the objectives.

The researcher was highly dependent on the participants to collect data. Many a times the session couldn't be shoot due to insufficient number of participants in a particular CLM task. Besides, the schedule of the education college was so stringent that it was hard to find space to accommodate CLM sessions during regular college working hours. Therefore the researcher had to call the participants either in the morning or in the evening time to conduct sessions. Sometimes the researcher had to utilize free time slot during the afternoon or evening for conducting the remaining part of the session started in the morning.

The investigator was one of the instruments in data collection plan and procedure. The investigator had tried his best to describe the passages in objective manner using variety of data collection instruments. Being an explorative case study, no intervention, no manipulation of any variable were involved in the present study. Thus, the phenomena was complex and spread over an academic year with fourteen participants. Another difficulty that the researcher faced was to manage budget and time frame of the study. The study proved to be a time consuming project because of organization, coding and analysis of the huge data collected from a variety of sources.