The Implementation of Cooperative Language Learning (Initial for Speaking and Writing Skills) in English Class of Secondary High School 2 Soe, South Central Timor Regency

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to explain the implementation of cooperative learning in English class of secondary high school 2 Soe and to examine the strength and weaknesses of CLL in teaching productive skills. This research belongs to descriptive qualitative research. Instruments applied here are observation, questionnaire, interview, and field notes. The second year students of VIII-D SMPN 2 Soe are a pilot to see how the cooperative learning is conducted. The finding proved that the implementation of cooperative language learning has a significant impact on students' productive skills in English. In qualitative analysis, this study noted some advantages and disadvantages of CLL in secondary school English learning. On one hand, cooperative learning created communicative teaching-learning sessions in which students took an initiative to develop their productive skills. Further, group studying exposed students to a set of English skills that encourage assistance and feedback throughout the learning process. On the other hand, this study concluded that CLL was influenced by social issues; a high number of participants in the classroom which then affecting the teaching-learning commitment. As such, it is recommended that more studies are conducted on social matters to enhance learning progress.

Keywords: *cooperative learning, secondary high school, strength, weaknesses.*

Introduction

As an international language, English is one of the required subjects in the curriculum and it is one of the subject which undergoes national examination. However, learning and teaching English is not an easy job. Most students struggle in English because of its articulation, vocabulary and multiple meanings; yet it is still learnt in conventional method. There are various ways of teaching English at different levels, but it is still not effective to improve the students language skills. In general, the teacher provides tight lesson plans before the learning process but sometimes, the teacher can also spend some time observing the students behavioural activities before applying any teaching approach. In order to find the best concept of English teaching for young learners, in this case students of grade eight at junior high school 2 Soe, the researcher attended the English classes to observe the teaching and learning process. At the end of the observation, the researcher noticed that the young learners commonly had short spans of concentration, low levels of curiosity, and were passive but attracted to group activities.

In order to increase participation and attention in English class, this study suggests developing the students' skills in speaking and writing. These skills are known as productive or active skills. Although students explore different activities in listening, speaking, reading and writing for their knowledge input, students are still required to produce their knowledge in speaking and writing. As Nunan and Hedge cited in Alves (2008), writing is not a spontaneous skill or acquired easily, in fact, it is viewed as 'probably the most difficult thing to do in language' (Nunan, 1999:271). While speech allows the users to exploit various devices such as body movement, gestures, facial expression, tone of voice, pitch, hesitation and stress to facilitate communication, this is not available to the writer. Nor can the writer clarify revise or backtrack ideas when there is miscommunication or misunderstanding between reader and writer (Hedge 2005, 7). Writing, to be affective, is dependent on a number of features which are not shared by

spoken language; not only in terms of linguistic and pragmatic features but also the context in which it will be interpreted (Nunan, 1999). Writing is a complex, cognitive process that requires sustained intellectual effort, over a considerable period of time' (Nunan 1999:273). as according to Hedge (2005), there is a need to organize the development of ideas or information; ambiguity in meaning must be avoided through accuracy;. The writer must choose from complex grammatical devices for emphasis or focus.; and finally they must pay attention to the choice of vocabulary, grammatical patterns and sentence structures to create a feasible meaning and an appropriate style towards the subject matter and reader.

Anisa, (2014) stated that a speaking class is a class where the students experience the language through speaking. Students also need to be taught with knowledge and skill in speaking. However, this does not imply that, to test the students' speaking comprehension, the class should focus on doing multiple choice or fill in the blank activities. Harmer (1998:26) introduce the notion of 'activate' as one of the elements of a successful language learning classroom; together with engage and study. The teaching of speaking deals with activate activities that afford the students to practice the language freely and communicatively with less control over using a specific bit of a language, such as grammar and vocabulary. The purpose is to let the students experience the language. Sometimes this method may result in mistakes, so the role of the teacher is very crucial.

Rusman, (2011) defined cooperative learning as working together to reach the goal. Cooperative learning is the learning approach in which students lean and work in small groups cooperatively. The group consists of two or up to six students in heterogenic group structure. The learning success of the group depends on the ability and participation of the group members, both as individuals and as a group. The teaching of English, in secondary high school 2 Soe, did not seem satisfactory because the students did not participate actively during the

lessons. Further, the teacher has a very limited lesson plan and teaching approach to enhance students interests in studying English. This study emphasized the planning and application of CLL on ESL language development in speaking and writing skills. The researcher thought that implementing the strategy, to develop the active skills, was more favorable to the students' language performance.

Identification of the problems

During the preliminary study, the writer observed the Eighth grade English speaking class in SMPN 2 Soe, and interviewed the English teacher and the students. The interview was completed after the English lesson. The problems that occurred in the class can be classified as external and internal problems. The students are highly affected by the large number students in the class. Thirty four to thirty seven students in the class contributed to the poor focus of students during the lessons. Further, there were no facilities, such as audio and visual facilities, to support the learning process. As the learning process began, the class was teacher-centered and the students were left without individual monitoring. The English class ran traditionally in ninety minutes every meeting and the students commonly copy the sentences from the board and answer the short answer question in a fix pattern. Although the teacher used a scientific approach, which meant the students observed and analyzed the language before creating their own sentences in a fix pattern, they do not have the ability to communicate the language in each personal situation. The students studied speaking, reading and writing in form of written based tasks, and they did not have a chance to perform the language within a group or in the form of a classroom presentation. In fact, the class should promote spoken and written English skills as much as possible. Students need more opportunities to expose the language skills actively to build their competence and interest in studying English. As a result, students possess a negative

attitude towards English as they keep struggling with pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar. The students did not seem responsible for the success of their English studying. They did not participate in the task completion, respond to the teacher's compliments or ask questions during the lesson. To conclude, the English class was dry; without interesting activities and there was no significant improvement in the students' productive skills. The students English skills were not progressing optimally.

Limitation of the problem

After investigating the issues, many problems occurred during teaching and learning of productive skills. Therefore, this study only focused on how the implementation of cooperative language learning could improve the students productive skills. This approach has been proved in many studies to be more favorable, in language learning, because students with different strengths are encouraged to contribute towards the success of the learning process. Further, this study also tried to examine the strength and weaknesses of cooperative language learning in teaching speaking and writing skills. The students of grade 8 D were the participants of this study and this study was conducted for nearly three months in the academic year 2018/2019.

Formulation of the problem

This research aims to answer the following question, ''How does the implementation of cooperative language learning improve the Eighth grade students' speaking and writing skill?'' and ''what are the strength and weaknesses of cooperative language learning in teaching speaking and writing skills?

Objective of the study

The main objective of this research is to find out how the implementation of cooperative language learning is used to enhance the speaking and writing skills of grade eight students', and to find out what are the strength and weaknesses of cooperative language learning in teaching speaking and writing.

Theoretical Framework

The nature of Cooperative language learning in teaching English
Definition of cooperative language learning

Cooperation is structured by creating positive interdependence among individual's goal attainment; individuals perceive that they can reach their goals if and only if the other individuals in the situation also reach their goals (Karlin & Johnson, 2011). Cooperative learning groups may be used to teach specific content (formal cooperative learning groups), to ensure active cognitive processing of information during a lecture or demonstration (informal cooperative learning groups), and to provide long-term support and assistance for academic progress (cooperative base groups) (Johnson & Johnson, 1999a; Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 1998). Any assignment in any curriculum for any age of student can be done cooperatively. Informal cooperative learning is students working together, for one class period to several weeks, to achieve shared learning goals and complete joint specific tasks and assignments (such as decision making or problem solving, completing a curriculum unit, writing a report conducting a survey or experiment, or reading a chapter or reference book, learning vocabulary, or answering questions at the end of a chapter) (Johnson, Johnson & Holubec 1994, 1998a). Any course requirement or assignment maybe formulated to be cooperative. In formal cooperative learning groups, teachers' pedagogy. The basic elements that determines the successfulness of cooperative language

learning are; positive interdependence, individual accountability, face to face promotive interaction, social skills, and group processing.

Cooperative language learning in teaching speaking

Castello (2007) stated that, when we are going to work on speaking, we can actually combine cooperative techniques with the types of activities chosen (*performance, controlled and creative or freer activities*) depending on what the learners want to do. Performance activities provide students with opportunities to communicate in the language. Teachers and students at this point should concentrate on the meaning and intelligibility of the utterance, not the grammatical correctness. With practice, grammatical errors should disappear. Controlled activities, such as repetition practice or set sentences prompted by picture or word cues, aim to improve the accurate use of words, structures and pronunciation. In controlled activities, the focus is usually on accuracy and the teacher makes it clear from feedback that accuracy is important. Some examples of activities for controlled practices are; find someone who, and I spy. Finally, creative or freer activities are usually designed to give either creative practice opportunities for predicted language items or general fluency practice, where the specific language focus is less relevant. Some activities for freer practice are interaction or information gap, role-plays, simulations, discussions and games. Another important key to consider, in teaching English, is how to give feedback on every error that is produced in a fluency-based activity. The teacher will need to make decisions about which items to focus on and what kind of balance, they wish to achieve; between positive and negative feedback. A useful way to think about the range of option is to categorize them. (1) The kind of feedback given (the two main categories are where students are encourage to correct themselves, and reformulations/recasts where the teacher provide the

correction); and (2) How implicit or explicit the guidance is. The following are the types of activities used in teaching speaking.

Group presentation

Group presentation is one of the performance activities in which each group works to decide their own topic and try to describe the topic in their own languages. In this situation, the students can choose to describe a thing, a person or a place. After preparing the assignment, the teacher ensures the accuracy and fluency of each speaker before they deliver the presentation.

Simulation

In this activity, the teacher models a short simple conversation and ask the students to repeat the conversation in pairs. Students have to pay attention to the articulation, structure and clarity of the words. The topic of conversation can be anything from a holiday trip, past activities, what family are doing, etc.

Games

There are many freer or creative activities including games. In cooperative language - learning class, the teacher modifies an icebreaker to get the students to participate. The point is to allow the students to create their own idea and to share it through language structure. Creative games might include 'who- am I' or hot seat or I spy, etc.

Cooperative language learning in teaching writing

In teaching writing, using cooperative language learning, the teacher will find many specific terms like cooperative writing activities. These are the types of activities, in teaching and

learning processes, that combines cooperative learning procedures and the writing process (Sargaent 2004:1). Cooperative writing activities have two aims. The first aim is focusing on messages and targeted communication, which is related to fluency, and the second aim is focusing on form or structure which is related to accuracy. If the teacher decides to focus on the first aim, he/she can use several types of activities such as brainstorming, speedwriting, story sequences, etc. However, if the teachers want to focus more on the second aim, they can use tasks like group letters or group timeline projects.

Types of writing activities

Brown, (2000) proposed four types of writing performance that can capture the range of written production. They are imitative writing, intensive/controlled writing, responsive writing, and extensive writing. In this study, the writer focused only on imitative writing and responsive writing.

Imitative writing

The first category is imitative writing. Students are at a basic level where they just need to master the mechanics of writing to be able to produce any written language. The fundamental skills are required to produce written words, punctuation, very brief sentences, and correct spelling. At this stage, form is the primary, if not the only focus. Meanwhile, meaning and context are simply secondary.

Responsive writing

The second type is responsive writing. Here, students start to do something more complicated that involves writing at a limited discourse level. At this stage, they will try to connect sentences into paragraphs, and link a paragraph to another in a sequence. There are many writing genres classified into responsive writing, and those are brief description and narratives, brief responses to reading, summaries, short report, and interpretations of graphs or charts. Students must have mastered all the fundamental skills in this stage so they can be more focused on the discourse conventions. In conclusion, the focus is still on form but is more concerned about the discourse level; it strongly involves context and meaning.

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study analyzes Classroom Action Research (CAR). An action research is defined as a systematic research that covers everything done by teachers, educational instructors, counseling teachers and educational advisers, who have an interest in the teaching and learning environment. The goal is to collect information about school activities, teachers' lesson plans, and the students' learning behavior (Mills, 2011). Kurt Lewin (Smith, 2007) – who is acknowledged as the founder of 'action research', also designed a picture of action research, that includes fact finding, planning, taking action, evaluation and revising the plan before moving to the second action. McMillan (2004) described action research as a research focused on solving the problems in a class or particular school, to improve practice, or to help make decisions in any local site. Action research offers an opportunity to replace the current practice with the next better practice. The main goal of action research is to improve direct practice in class or in

schools (McMillan, 2004). Based on the fact that most of the action research is the implementation of teacher's own practice, this study designed as collaborative classroom action research. The researcher collaborated with the senior English teacher, throughout the research implementation. The researcher delivered a teaching demo, in cooperative language learning classroom, while the senior English teacher observed and advised the researcher on the next lesson plan. Further, the senior teacher also helped the researcher to manage data collection and data analysis, for the production of this paper.

Setting and Subject of the Study

This study is organized at SMPN 2 Soe that is located in Nunumeu , South Central Timor Regency – Soe city, East Nusa Tenggara Province. The writer chose this school, as the field of the study, because this school is the second largest school in the region. After one week of preliminary study for identifying the problems, the writer proposed to apply a suitable learning approach to enhance the students' speaking and writing skills. The second year students, (grade VIII D) academic year 2018/2019, were selected as the participant in this study based on the consideration of their study term and academic competencies.

The Procedure of the Study

The writer used the procedure of Classroom Action Research suggested by Kurt Lewin. It consists of two cycle. Each cycle has 4 phases; planning, acting, observing and reflecting. Based on Lewin's action research, each cycle illustrates ongoing phases; the first cycle starts with planning, acting, observing and reflecting. Each cycle must follow the fix phases. If the first cycle is finished, but a problem in the learning process is still found, the writer decided to repeat

the process on cycle 2 until the results improved. Before entering the cycle, the writer began a preliminary study to observe the typical issues in language learning. Then the research began in cycle 1. According to Mills, preliminary information gathering is taking time to reflect on our own beliefs and to understand the nature and context of the general idea. This aims to gain data about problems faced by the teacher and students in teaching learning activities. The researcher observed the class; the observation were conducted from 28-30 January 2019. Further, the researcher conducted interviews with the English teacher, concerning the general techniques and activities employed in teaching writing, and the researcher provided questionnaires to the students concerning the learning of English.

Technique of Collecting the Data

In this study, the data is collected both in qualitative and quantitative methods. The instrument of interview, field notes, questionnaires, and tests categorized as qualitative data. Meanwhile, students' speaking and writing test scores are quantitative.

Interview

An alternative observation of a human being is by asking them questions directly. This is what happen through interviews. Interviews were used prior to action research to find out the students' difficulties in speaking and writing skills, and the techniques used by the teacher in teaching. The interviews were also carried out after the classroom action research to evaluate the teacher and students response toward the cooperative language learning process.

Field Notes

The writer and researcher kept a class journal to record all activities in the classroom, including teaching instructions, students' creative participation and attitudes during the lesson.

Questionnaire.

A questionnaire is a form containing a set of questions. The form was used to gain students' response prior to and after the action research. The writer asked 5 questions the first time, to learn about students experience and interest in studying English, while the last five questions inquired about the students experience throughout the action research.

Test

There are pre-test and post-tests in this study. Pre-tests were conducted prior to the cooperative learning process, in order to identify students' competence and learning issues. Meanwhile, post-tests were applied at the end of action research to measure the efficacy and students' competencies during the cooperative language process.

The technique of data analysis

According to Anderson & Anderson (2003:92) , (7) there are six components present in the analytical scoring rubric for writing, namely; idea & development, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, spelling capitalization and punctuation. The writer used the analytical scoring rubric to analyze the data related to the students' paragraph writing, as a test of writing ability.

The analytical scoring rubric used in this study was as follows. The data gathering through field notes and interviews was analyzed by presenting the description of the result of field notes and interviews. The questionnaires were analyzed in the form of percentages and presented by using the description of the results of the questionnaire. Meanwhile, the test results were analyzed through the use of a Statistical Package for the Social Science, known as SPSS software.

Research Findings

The result of pre-tests.

The pre-test had completed before the Classroom Action Research (CAR). The test conducted on Wednesday 6th February 2019. The speaking subject test was that each students in pair asked to introduce their partner before the student introduced himself/herself. The following is the SPSS data analysis for the result of speaking and writing in preliminary study. The data explained that the mean score accumulated for speaking was 26.3%, which means that only 3 students reached maximum score of 70.00, thus they passed minimum mastery criterion (KKM). In terms of writing, the data reported that the mean score was 38.9% and there were only 4 students met the criterion. The range accounted for the difference between the lowest and the highest score. From that analysis, it could be seen that the students speaking skills was very poor.

The result of post-tests

To begin with, the results of the speaking progress tests showed a significant improvement. The mean (class percentage) has around a 20% increase in the last progress test. The median explains the difference between the lowest and the highest score in both class. While

the Mode accounted for the most frequent scores that students achieved in speaking and writing. In test one, 10 students passed the standard point with a frequent score of 70.00. In test two, 23 students experienced a significant improvement, as they passed the test with a frequent score of 75.00. In comparison to speaking scores, the students' performance in writing also experienced a large increase. In the first test, 11 students met the criterion with the highest score of 79.16. Then in the last test, the data reported that the class percentage improved to more than 70%. There were 20 students who reached the minimum mastery criterion, with the highest score of 91.66.

Conclusion

Conclusion

Tit can be concluded that he implementation of the Cooperative language learning method, in the second year of VIII-D of SMPN 2 Soe in academic year 2018/2019, improved students' competency both in speaking and writing. This can be proven from the following facts. Firstly, the improvement can be witness from the increase in students' mean speaking score. The score started from 26.2% and increased by a factor of two in the final test. More than 20 students met the minimum master criterion after the whole cycle. In regards to speaking, students also witnessed great development of their verbal communication skills. The previous data showed that, from the total of 34 students, more than half of them reached the KKM with higher scores compare to that of the other skill. The result of the questionnaires and interviews also gave positive reinforcement that CLL was a beneficial concept to culminate students' interest and opportunity to interact with language through productive skills. However, the data accumulated from questionnaires and interview, with both teacher and students, also indicated issues in the implementation of cooperative language learning. From the students' side, the

cooperative classroom identified issues in developing the elements of cooperative learning. Students struggled to prove their point in the team environment. Thus, it reduce their commitment to teamwork. In the perspective of a senior teacher, CCL demanded more effort to adapt and monitor the students' learning behavior. When groups were settled, the teacher worked hard to keep the students on track to ensure that students had less time for unnecessary chatting. The large number of students in class also affect the efficacy of the cooperative learning; the groups were loaded as homogenous or single-sex groups, which then had limited contribution to learning interaction.

Suggestion

After the writer carried out the research, it was concluded that CLL should be recommended for improving students' productive skills, in a continuous lesson plan to gain satisfying results in student performance. It is also possible to develop and modify the activities in CLL, allowing teachers to boost the students' interest in participate in the class. This was the first experience of the second year participants, in being taught in cooperative environment. Therefore, more studies are recommended to examine the influential factors in CLL classroom, such as social issues.

Table 1. The results of preliminary test for speaking and writing.

N	Post_test1_ speaking	Post_test 2_Speaking	Post_test1_ Writing	Post_test2_ writing

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean
Pre_test_Speaking	34	55.00	15.00	70.00	897.50	26.39
Pre_test_writing	34	45.84	29.16	75.00	1324.84	38.96

Table 2. The result of students' speaking and writing in post tests

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N	34	34	34	34
Mean	43.57	65.70	57.47	70.21
Median	46.25	70.00	50.00	70.83
Mode	70.00	75.00	50.00	58.33
Range	60.00	48.00	50.00	33.33
Minimum	15.00	27.00	29.16	58.33
Maximum	75.00	75.00	79.16	91.66
Sum	1481.50	2234.00	1954.11	2387.40

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