

The Problem with the Implementation of Cooperative Learning in Speaking Classes for Elementary School

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ABSTRACT

Despite the well-established benefits of cooperative learning, implementation remains a challenge. This research aims to know the problems teachers face in implementing cooperative learning in speaking classes in elementary school. This study used a qualitative design with an interview approach with teachers to investigate problems in implementing cooperatives. This study report involves one teacher who has participated and has implemented cooperative learning for at least three years. The current study uses the interview data collection method to investigate the implementation of cooperative learning in MI TPI Keramat. The result indicates some problems the teacher faced in implementing cooperative learning in the classroom. The main problem faced by students in cooperative learning is group conflict.

Keyword: cooperative learning, speaking class, elementary school

ABSTRAK

Meskipun manfaat pembelajaran kooperatif sudah diakui dan mapan, akan tetapi implementasinya tetap menjadi suatu tantangan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui masalah yang dihadapi guru-guru dalam menerapkan pembelajaran kooperatif di kelas speaking di sekolah dasar. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kualitatif dengan pendekatan wawancara dengan guru untuk mengetahui permasalahan dalam pelaksanaan pembelajaran kooperatif. Penelitian ini melibatkan satu orang guru yang telah melaksanakan pembelajaran kooperatif minimal selama tiga tahun dalam kelas yang ia ajar. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode pengumpulan data wawancara untuk mengetahui pelaksanaan pembelajaran kooperatif di MI TPI Keramat. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan beberapa masalah yang dihadapi guru dalam menerapkan pembelajaran kooperatif di kelas. Adapun masalah utama yang dihadapi siswa sekolah dasar dalam pembelajaran kooperatif adalah konflik kelompok.

Kata Kunci: Pembelajaran kooperatif, kelas speaking, sekolah dasar

INTRODUCTION

There are some distinctions between spoken and written language, where students have to pay attention to things related to vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and fluency. It is widely known that the vast majority of elementary school learners struggle to

communicate in English effectively and naturally, even though they have sufficient vocabulary to express ideas and feelings (Silverman et al., 2017; Thompson et al., 2017; Zein, et al., 2017). They still do not know how to put them. According to Dewi (2016), several factors influence the unsuccessful improvement of

students' speaking skills, including the following:

a) English is not used outside the classroom or in the community as a foreign language, b) Lack of exposure to English in the community and environment, c) learning English in schools less emphasis on speaking skills, but focuses more on the structure and enrichment of vocabulary, d) Shame and fear of making mistakes when practicing speaking, e) English is not the main requirement unless there is an opportunity to go to an English-speaking country for further education or tourist visits.

Speaking skills have the primary goal of acquiring a second language by fluently communicating and interacting with other people. The teaching and learning process is very core to support this goal, and teachers can apply various techniques, methods, and learning, one of which is using cooperative learning. According to Ehsan et al. (2020), cooperative learning is a learning strategy carried out in groups with a common goal of solving a problem. On the other side, there are followed by several outcomes such as (1) improving social communication skills, (2) an atmosphere that makes students optimistic in solidarity with each other, (3) progress of interaction, (4) students become active during the group process. Moreover, Goodyear (2017) emphasizes that cooperative learning refers to a way of learning in the form of groups from different levels of student abilities working together.

Speaking is the most important skill people need to communicate in everyday situations, and it is putting ideas into words to make other people grasp the message being conveyed. According to a study, the term "speaking" is one

of the four skills related to language teaching and learning. English is now used as an instrumental language for a variety of purposes and enjoys a higher status than ever before (Namaziandost et al., 2020). According to Kandasamy and Habil (2018), English is today associated with advances in technology, commerce, tourism, the Internet, science, business, politics, etc., around the world, and English is the most important language in many aspects of life (Tiara et al., 2021). It has become. Therefore, speaking ability is required in many, if not all, of the above areas. However, most Iranian EFL students have difficulty speaking English.

EFL teachers should train students to develop oral communication skills. According to Brown et al. (2007), oral communication can be maintained by having three components. Fluency, accuracy, and pronunciation are essential components in developing a student's speaking skills. Without good pronunciation, listeners cannot understand what another person says, making the communication process more difficult. EFL instructors need to introduce speaking activities. Guided, performance and creative activities are the three types of activities used. Guided activities include model dialogues that students can change to talk about themselves and communicate their own needs and ideas and tasks that they carry out using the language taught beforehand—allowing learners to practice communicating in the speaking skill (Sarte et al., 2021). Instead of focusing on grammatical accuracy, the speaker should focus on the meaning and intelligibility of the statement. Grammar mistakes should fade away with practice. The second type of activity is guided activities. They include repetition and

practice or predefined sentences triggered by visual or verbal cues to improve word and structural accuracy. Some activities for more accessible practice are interaction or information gap, role-playing, simulations, free discussion, games, a jigsaw activity, and problem-solving. These activities are combined with cooperative techniques to motivate students and improve their speaking skills (Kandasamy & Habil, 2018). These activities are essential in teaching language for communication and help create interactions in the language classroom (Rouzi et al., 2020).

Speaking is becoming increasingly crucial in English learning. Teachers should use the cooperative learning technique since few students can speak fluent English in class. Samples: A. Students work in groups of two. A number of items (for example, images) are organized in a specific way by one student. The other has the same elements, but they are loose, and he must arrange them in the same manner by conversing with his partner without glancing at his partner's image. B. Students work in couples to create comparable yet distinct images, and they must detect the discrepancies by conversing with each other rather than gazing at each other's pictures (Utami et al., 2021). Speaking activities may be highly motivated through cooperative learning methods. Students might be willing to open their mouths instead of being fearful of making errors in front of the entire class. Students will be extremely satisfied with the exercise if professors have correctly put it up and can provide relevant feedback

Furthermore, according to Rais and Sulistyawati (2014), cooperative learning is defined as an approach to learning that does not

solely rely on the teacher. It is a very effective alternative to improving students' speaking ability. The role of cooperative learning, it can be stated, is to divide students into several small groups designed to motivate them to have experiences with the concept of togetherness and assist one another (Handrianto et al., 2021). This study is made with the aim the crucial knowledge regarding the teacher informing that cooperative learning, apart from having advantages, also has problems so that there are needs for handling using cooperative principles such as positive interdepend individual accountability, face-to-face interaction, participation, and communication.

Cooperative Learning (CL) refers to teaching methods that allow students to work together on research projects (Namaziandost & Nasri, 2019). It may also refer to a teaching method in which students engage in groups on a specific task to optimize one another's learning and achieve certain objectives (Nasri & Biria, 2017; Handrianto et al., 2020). Cooperative learning includes small groups of people working together to facilitate the learning of all members, and it offers instructors guidelines for encouraging positive peer interactions. A cooperative classroom team is a relatively permanent, heterogeneously mixed, small group of students who have been assembled to complete an activity, produce a series of projects or products, and have been asked to master a body of knowledge individually (Vermette, 1998). The team's ethos must be one of positive interdependence or the belief that one's success is inextricably linked to the success of others. To put it another way, the cooperative learning method defines the class

as heterogeneous groupings, with groups of four or six students working together to complete a learning assignment.

Many experts presented their definitions, which were quite similar. "Group learning activities arranged such that learning is dependent on the socially structured information exchange between students in groups, and each learner is held responsible for his or her learning and encouraged to help others learn more" (Olsen & Kagan, 1992). In some form or another, cooperative learning has been implemented and researched in every major topic, with learners in a range of schools, extending from preschool to college. They have, however, proven particularly popular in primary schools, where more flexibility in daily routines makes cooperative work easier. CL-based teaching and learning is a learner-centered paradigm that has gained popularity as an alternative to lecture-based teaching and learning. Much of the current studies are based on the idea that CL has beneficial impacts on a wide range of outcomes (Johnson & Johnson, 2003). The majority of studies on the impact of CL have consistently shown that it enhances students' spoken English abilities (Pattanpichet, 2011; Ramadhani et al., 2021). Facilitating, modeling, and mentoring are all part of this position. Teachers that take on this responsibility should keep their classrooms safe, non-threatening, and learner-centered. This instructional atmosphere will encourage students to participate actively in the cooperative activities given to their group.

Students need to practice developing complete output (Swain, 1993) that incorporates all of the linguistic resources they have already learned. Learners can test hypotheses and

modify their evolving understanding of the language system by receiving feedback from the teacher and other students in the class. It is called negotiation of meaning when a group of students does this while discussing together, and the goal is to make the output more understandable. Interaction motivates learners to generate more correct and acceptable language, which gives input to other students, according to current ELT practice. Another reason why cooperative learning is so common in today's classrooms is this. The discussion becomes the most important tool in cooperative learning. Many teachers have discovered that conversation is a superior strategy to question-and-answer. However, having a class discussion is not always the greatest technique to get students to talk (Pernantah et al., 2022). Students that are shy or insecure might hide from the teacher and are not always helpful. Pairs or small groups (no more than six) joining to discuss and work on a specific goal is a great alternative for boosting effective discourse.

According to Isjoni (2009), in cooperative learning, there are several variations of models that can be applied, including: (1) Team Game Tournament (TGT). Students create groups to assist one another in learning the content and completing work as a group, and games are used to combine abilities among participants; (2) Student Team Achievement Division (STAD). Students are in small groups and use worksheets to master a subject matter. They help each other. STAD (Student Team Achievement Division) is a cooperative kind that emphasizes activities and interactions among learners and is able to encourage and assist one another in learning the subject matter and achieving maximum

achievement. The STAD type of cooperative learning goes through 5 stages in the learning process, including material presentation stage, work in a group, individual test, calculation of individual development scores, and group achievement; (3) Jigsaw. Students are divided into small heterogeneous groups. The learning materials are divided among each group member. They study the same material, gather to discuss the same material, and return to the original group to study the material they have mastered with their group members; and (4) Group investigation (GI). Students respond to a variety of instructional tasks in small groups. Each group divides the topic into sub-topics, and then each group member uses research activities to achieve the group's goals. Group investigation (GI) is a complex cooperative learning model because it combines cooperative learning principles with constructivism-based learning and democratic learning principles. The active involvement of students can be seen from the first stage to the end of learning will provide opportunities for students to sharpen their ideas further (Rahman et al., 2021). In this lesson, cooperatives play their role in giving freedom to learners to think analytically, critically, creatively, reflectively, and productively.

CL differs from merely putting students in groups to learn because of five crucial features (Johnson et al., 2014). Positive interdependence is the first. It refers to the concept of requiring students to collaborate in order to attain common learning goals. The second is personal accountability. It implies that each team member is accountable for contributing their fair contribution to the group's success. While working on a job, the group must understand

who requires additional assistance, support, or encouragement. Promotive interaction is the third component. It refers to the importance of students working together to complete the assignment and achieve the group's common goals. On learning assignments, students must communicate orally with others (Tesfamichael, 2017). Interpersonal and social abilities are the fourth component. It involves abilities such as providing constructive feedback, establishing consensus, communicating clearly and explicitly, and including all team members in the learning process. However, not all pupils are aware of these abilities (Rouzi et al., 2021). These abilities must be taught and practiced before the groups face a learning assignment. Finally, CL emphasizes the importance of group processing. It necessitates group members to assess their capabilities and commitment to completing all assignments. It focuses on positive rather than negative practices and activities, and it involves learners thinking about how they learn (Herlina et al., 2021). The instructor may also choose to devote time to specifically strengthening a skill, such as speaking. During the learning exercises, the teacher would be able to check the various groups and provide comments on what was observed.

In regards to the discussions above, the writers claim that a further discussion on the implementation of cooperative learning in speaking class for young learner such as in elementary school is paramount. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the application of this method of learning in the elementary school specifically at MI TPI Keramat in order to contribute a new insight about the use of the cooperative learning in English language

teaching context.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current study uses a qualitative design with an interview approach with teachers to investigate problems in implementing cooperatives. The authors consider the interview the most appropriate approach for the current research because the authors seek to understand and interpret the teacher's conception of cooperative learning. This conception supports the construction of a complete explanation of the phenomenon as a whole to develop more deeply. The interview approach has drawn more in-depth information and different insights into a phenomenon. This study report involves one teacher who has participated and has implemented cooperative learning for at least three years. In several cases, problems were found in each session, and they were willing to carry out developments throughout the research project. Teachers teach English subjects in speaking skills in elementary schools, which are discussed more fully below. The teacher's pseudonym is Siti Muiyasaroh.

Siti Muiyasaroh is a teacher with eight years of experience in MI TPI Keramat. She several times applied the strategy of cooperative learning. The MGMP (subject teacher discussion forum) for English instructors also helps Siti Muiyasaroh learn CL. The forum included topics such as the evolution of the English language and concerns related to teaching and studying English. The forum discussed various teaching methods, including CL and instructional methodologies.

Due to the limited research time available to observers, the current study uses the

interview data collection method to investigate the implementation of CL in MI TPI Keramat. Semi-structured interviews were used as primary data, and documents such as teacher lesson plans and student assessments as secondary data. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore the knowledge of CL teachers, CL learning experiences, and the implementation of CL teachers in the classroom. Documents such as teacher lesson plans, teaching materials, teacher assessment sheets, and student peer assessment sheets were analyzed as secondary data. The teachers kindly provided these documents (Rahman et al., 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data from the interview with one participant with the pseudonym Siti Muiyasaroh are presented as follows:

Interviews with teachers were conducted to find out :

Q1: What are the suitable learning methods used by the teacher in speaking class? Siti Muiyasaroh said, *"I used cooperative learning methods in speaking class such as jigsaw, team game tournament, or group investigation."*

Q2: How do communicate assignments so that they are easy to understand by students? The result is, *"Before I was given an assignment, I briefly explained the lesson first, and then all my students were randomly divided into several groups. After the groups were divided, I directed them to work together to understand the material I gave. I will guide and direct if there is a mistake in the small group discussion, but because they are still young learners, it is tough to arrange for them to be serious in carrying out the discussion"*

so that they do not get bored. I usually give a gift to appreciate the group that understands the material the fastest and can explain.

Q3: What problems did the teacher face in cooperative learning implementation in speaking class? *“The problem that I often encounter is that first, some children do not like their group mates, so they do not like it tend to be more silent and do not participate in discussions with their friends. And then the second one is some students like to work alone than in a group. Because some of them are a little shy to communicate with other students. The third one is that students do not take responsibility for their role, even if it is the smallest role in the group. Sometimes I caught them chatting or playing with their friends, either in the same or different groups. So they seem to ignore the task I gave because their friends have already done it.”*

Based on the interview with Siti Muyasaroh, there is some problem that teacher face in the implementation of cooperative learning in speaking class in elementary school:

Group Conflict and Cohesion

The main challenge faced in cooperative learning is group conflict (Baloche, & Brody, 2017; Buchs et al., 2017; Fernandez-Rio et al., 2017). As the teacher said, few students do not like their group mates, which could bother the cooperative learning process in the class. Because they are not in the same group as their best friend or close friends, they will not feel enthusiastic about doing the tasks that have been given. Students must learn to collaborate, and it is not always something that individuals are naturally good at. The teacher can teach

skills like praising others, taking turns for equal participation, and shared decision-making.

The fact that “groups are unable to generate appropriate cohesion because they fail to manage conflict effectively” is another component of cooperative learning that leads to group members acquiring group hatred. Students seldom spend enough time in a group to build strong group cohesiveness and practical conflict resolution skills. The issue is that most students have had a bad experience with groups and are apprehensive about doing it again.” Showing how groups outperform individuals at solving problems is one method to tackle this dilemma.” It will be a huge step toward removing group hostility if instructors successfully do this.

Loafing

Another problem that is no less often faced by cooperative learning is loafing (Zhang et al., 2019). This happens because the child is lazy, wants to play around, and does not pay attention to the instruction given until ignoring the task, causing unrest in his/her group of friends and making him an object of hatred.

“The idea that certain group members will pose as passengers or social loafers in exchange for a benefit (typically a good grade) from group activities undercuts the group’s efficacy.” Some students store their intellectual capital to protect it from being improperly utilized. Ironically, some of the students most offended by “slackers” or “freeloaders” make quick judgments about their peers and insist on taking care of everything to maintain control. Concerns about equity can cause a group’s function to be skewed. To defuse student resistance to cooperative learning, the most crucial thing an instructor

can do is emphasize the concept of “fairness.”

Group Hate

Almost every student group has some hatred toward one another. There are many reasons for this, including prior poor experiences, anxiety about how the project will come out, a preference for working alone, concerns about group members loafing, and a lack of information about how to manage arguments that may arise inside the group properly (Sánchez-Hernández et al., 2018; Alghamdy, 2019). On the other hand, Group-based learning is an essential aspect of higher education and should be used more frequently. More businesses are turning to team-based ways to increase productivity in the workplace. If students can reduce their sentiments of group hate, they will have better group experiences and learn how to perform better in groups.

Cooperative Learning has several flaws that could make the process more complicated than it appears. Sharan (2010) sees cooperative learning's continual growth as a threat. Because cooperative learning is constantly evolving, it is possible that teachers will become perplexed and lack a thorough comprehension of the process. Because cooperative learning is such a dynamic technique, it cannot be employed effectively in various circumstances. Teachers may also develop the habit of relying on cooperative learning to keep pupils occupied. While cooperative learning takes time, the most successful use of cooperative learning relies on an active and engaged teacher. Students who feel their slower teammates are holding them back, or less confident students who believe their team is ignoring or disparaging them, may oppose and antagonize teachers who promote

cooperative learning.

From teachers' perspective, cooperative learning has long been considered a benefit to students - an opportunity for them to gain additional help while working closely with their peers. We had never given much thought to what a dreadful experience some disgruntled students must go through or why sure students only had pleasant experiences in classes that used group learning strategies.

CONCLUSIONS

The current study aims to investigate the problem of implementing CL in the speaking skills of elementary school children. Evidence shows that teachers as teaching facilitators in this study varied learning desire teacher-centered and a more active learning approach to students. The teacher in this study used a cooperative because the strategy offered to involve students in playing an active role and practicing speaking skills in learning and offering students emotional, solidarity, and emotional benefits. In this study, the interview results show challenges or obstacles to the teacher's expectations because cooperative learning does not necessarily have significant results. In many contexts, the teacher is considered an expert who can transition the material while students accept it. Questioning teachers about learning may be a way for teacher educators to overcome problems in implementing learning strategies to embrace cooperative strategies. The results also underline that teachers do not consider cooperative learning strategies very easy to implement. More specifically, they are not comfortable assessing students by embedding cooperative learning. Offering teachers with textbooks or resources on cooperative learning

and teaching sample materials adapted to the curriculum would also be a helpful aid in this dissemination. In summary, interviews about the challenges of implementing cooperative learning show the importance of teachers' beliefs about the variety of learning and practical barriers such as the time needed to prepare for group division and the development of interactions between group members to improve speaking skills. This study suggests that the teacher education program must overcome these two interrelated problems because the variables included in this study are how the implementation of cooperative learning can run optimally and result in an increase in speaking skills. Further research could investigate additional variables related to teachers (personal and their self-efficacy) and ideology (the value of social communication).

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