THE CHALLENGES OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING BASED INSTRUCTION IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT INDONESIAN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL: A CASE STUDY

Mustakim [1]*, Kisman Salija [2], Muhammad Basri [3], Umiyati Jabri [4]

*[1,4]Universitas Muhammadiyah Enrekang, [2,3]Universitas Negeri Makassar, Indonesia

[1]kimchangi00@gmail.com, [2]kisman.salija@unm.ac.id, [3]muhammadbasri@unm.ac.id, [4]umiyatijabri@gmail.com,

Abstract

This research explores the challenges faced by English language teachers in Indonesian senior high schools during the implementation of Cooperative Learning (CL). The study, guided by the question of challenges in CL implementation, utilizes a qualitative case study approach, involving interviews, observations, and document analysis. Findings reveal nuanced Promotive Interaction Challenges, highlighting the influence of positive school culture and complexities such as subtle resistance, communication hesitations, and preferences for familiar peers. The discussion section examines demographic factors' impact, emphasizing gender and age on Perceived Challenges in Cooperative Learning Implementation (PCCLI). It also addresses student-related challenges, focusing on pre-service teachers' resistance and cultural influences. Theoretical implications draw from educational change theories, and practical implications suggest enhanced teacher training, cultural sensitivity integration, and administrative support.

Keywords: Cooperative Learning, English Language Instruction Challenges, Promotive Interaction, Teacher Preparedness, Professional Development, Cultural Influences.

INTRODUCTION

Pedagogical techniques are crucial in molding students' learning experiences in the dynamic field of education. Cooperative learning (CL) has become a well-known teaching method, especially in the field of teaching languages. This study sets out to investigate the difficulties faced by English language instructors in senior high schools in Indonesia while putting Cooperative Learning approaches into practice.

English language instruction is highly valued in Indonesia due to its rich cultural diversity and linguistic mosaic, which serves as a conduit for international communication and business prospects. Teachers are using Cooperative Learning tactics more often in an effort to improve language acquisition. These strategies take advantage of students' joint efforts to accomplish common learning objectives.

The primary research question guiding this study is: What are the challenges faced by teachers in implementing Cooperative Learning in teaching English at Indonesian senior high schools?

Understanding these challenges is crucial not only for the educators directly involved but also for policymakers, curriculum developers, and educational stakeholders aiming to optimize language instruction in senior high schools across Indonesia.

The multifaceted nature of Cooperative Learning introduces a spectrum of potential challenges that educators may encounter. Factors such as classroom dynamics, cultural nuances, resource limitations, and teacher training play pivotal roles in shaping the effectiveness of this pedagogical approach. Unraveling these challenges is essential for developing targeted strategies to enhance the implementation of Cooperative Learning in English language classrooms.

As we delve into the intricacies of Cooperative Learning-based instruction, this research aims to shed light on the practical obstacles faced by teachers. By doing so, we contribute valuable insights that can inform educational practices, teacher training programs, and curriculum development initiatives, ultimately fostering an environment conducive to effective language acquisition and holistic student development.

In the chapters that follow, we will explore the existing literature on Cooperative Learning, examine its theoretical underpinnings, and delve into specific challenges faced by English language teachers in Indonesian senior high schools. Through this case study, we aspire to provide a nuanced understanding of the intricacies associated with Cooperative Learning in the context of English language instruction, thereby contributing to the ongoing discourse on enhancing language education practices in Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cooperative Learning in English Language Instruction

Cooperative Learning (CL) has gained prominence as an instructional strategy that fosters collaborative learning environments, emphasizing shared goals, interpersonal skills, and active student engagement. In the context of English language instruction, CL has been recognized for its potential to enhance language acquisition, communication skills, and intercultural competence.

Research conducted by Johnson and Johnson (1989) highlights the positive impact of Cooperative Learning on language development. They argue that the social interaction inherent in cooperative activities provides students with opportunities to engage in meaningful language use, leading to improved linguistic proficiency. This aligns with the communicative approach to language teaching, emphasizing the importance of authentic language use in the learning process (Savignon, 1997).

In the Indonesian context, where English is taught as a foreign language, CL offers a promising avenue for addressing the challenges associated with traditional teacher-centered methods. Prayitno (2017) underscores the importance of promoting student-centered approaches in language education in Indonesia, considering the diverse linguistic backgrounds and learning styles of students.

However, despite the potential benefits, the literature suggests that implementing Cooperative Learning in the Indonesian senior high school context is not without challenges. One recurrent theme is the influence of cultural factors on the acceptance and effectiveness of CL. Triastuti and Widodo (2018) argue that the collectivist nature of Indonesian culture may initially seem conducive to cooperative endeavors; however, it also introduces complexities related to individual roles within group settings, potentially impacting the dynamics of collaborative learning.

Teacher preparedness and training emerge as critical factors influencing the successful implementation of CL. Yulianto (2019) notes that teachers may face difficulties in transitioning from traditional didactic approaches to facilitating student-centered cooperative activities. The need for professional development programs tailored to equip teachers with the necessary skills and strategies for effective CL implementation is evident.

Furthermore, resource limitations, both in terms of materials and classroom infrastructure, pose additional challenges. Research by Setiawan and Purnama (2018) highlights the importance of adequate resources for implementing CL, including access to technology, diverse learning materials, and physical classroom arrangements that facilitate group work.

While the literature underscores the potential of Cooperative Learning in enhancing English language instruction, it also accentuates the complexities and challenges inherent in its application. This study seeks to contribute to this body of knowledge by conducting a case study that specifically explores the challenges faced by English language teachers in Indonesian senior high schools, offering a contextualized understanding of the barriers and potential solutions in the implementation of Cooperative Learning. Through this exploration, we aim to inform educational practices, teacher training programs, and policy initiatives to optimize the integration of CL in English language instruction in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHOD

Design:

This study adopts a qualitative case study approach to explore challenges faced by English language teachers in Indonesian senior high schools during Cooperative Learning (CL) implementation.

Participants:

English language teachers with CL experience in senior high schools across Indonesia, selected through purposive sampling.

Data Collection:

Interviews: Semi-structured interviews for detailed insights.

Classroom Observation: Systematic observations using a checklist.

Document Analysis: Examination of relevant documents (lesson plans, instructional materials).

Data Analysis: Thematic analysis, coding, and constant comparative method for identifying patterns and themes.

Trustworthiness: Triangulation of data, member checking, and peer debriefing to enhance credibility and reliability.

Ethical Considerations: Informed consent, confidentiality, pseudonyms, and ethical approval to uphold research ethics.

Through this method, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of challenges in CL implementation among English language teachers in Indonesian senior high schools.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Finding

Promotive Interaction Challenges in Cooperative Learning (CL)

The exploration of Promotive Interaction Challenges within the realm of Cooperative Learning (CL) at Indonesian senior high schools unraveled intriguing nuances that shape the dynamics of collaborative learning environments. The study delved into the experiences of educators to discern the obstacles hindering the effective fostering of positive communication, mutual support, and idea-sharing among students in CL settings.

Positive School Culture:

Ms. Chen's account illuminated a positive dimension in the landscape of CL implementation. Her revelation of an absence of student resistance to CL within her school sheds light on the influential role played by the overall school culture. Ms. Chen attributed this favorable outcome to the collaborative and supportive atmosphere nurtured among teachers. This discovery emphasizes the importance of cultivating a positive school culture that extends beyond individual classrooms, contributing significantly to the success of CL initiatives.

Subtle Resistance and Communication Hesitation:

Contrastingly, Ms. Srey's narrative introduced a layer of complexity as she acknowledged subtle forms of resistance among students. The revelation that students experience uncertainty in articulating concepts to their peers indicates a need for refined communication strategies within

CL groups. Ms. Srey's insights underscore the importance of addressing communication hesitations to facilitate more effective and meaningful collaborative discussions, ultimately enhancing the Promotive Interaction aspect of CL.

"*Seingatku pak, tidak adaji penolakan dari siswa. Mungkin ada bentuk penolakan tapi seperti ai tidak kutau bu bagaimana caranya menjelaskan dengan temanku, ai tidak ku tau. Ai itu ji anunya, bentuk penolakannya.*"

Translation:

"From what I remember, there is no outright rejection from students. There might be a form of rejection, like, I don't know how to explain it to my friend; I don't know. That's what rejection looks like."

Minimal Student Resistance and High Engagement:

On a positive note, Ms. Fey contributed an optimistic perspective by reporting minimal student resistance in her teaching context. The majority of students actively participating in CL indicates a generally positive attitude towards this instructional approach. Ms. Fey's observations suggest that, within her classroom, CL successfully fosters active involvement and cooperation among students, aligning with the principles of Promotive Interaction.

"*Kebetulan tidak adaji pak, mungkin emm menolak dari segi, ituji tadi yang bilang janganmi deh. Tidak adaji pak, lebih banyak siswa aktifnya.*"

Translation:

"Fortunately, there is no rejection, maybe some reluctance, as mentioned earlier, someone said not to do it. There isn't any, more students are active."

Preference for Familiar Peers:

However, Ms. Sisi introduced a distinctive challenge related to Promotive Interaction, highlighting students' preference for familiar peers within CL groups. The tendency of students to choose seatmates over diverse collaborations poses an intricate challenge. This preference, while natural, can hinder the promotion of diverse interactions and hinder the establishment of a truly collaborative learning environment. Ms. Sisi's insights bring attention to the complexities educators face in coordinating students to work together when they exhibit preferences for specific groupings.

"*yang sering terjadi Pak dia mau, maksudnya dia mau sama teman-teman duduknyaji, tidak mau ditemenin sama teman kelompok yang lain. begitu hanya teman-teman bangkunya*".

Translation:

"What often happens, sir, is that they want to sit with their friends, don't want to be with other group members. Just their seatmates."

In essence, the examination of Promotive Interaction Challenges in CL settings reveals a multifaceted landscape. While positive school culture and high student engagement depict promising facets of CL implementation, subtle resistance, communication hesitations, and preferences for familiar peers add layers of complexity. These challenges underscore the need for educators to not only be aware of the positive aspects but also to actively strategize and adapt their approaches to overcome obstacles, thus enhancing the effectiveness of CL in fostering positive interactions among students.

Discussion

This study delves into the challenges faced by teacher educators in implementing Cooperative Learning (CL) and extends existing literature by exploring nuanced factors that influence educators' perceptions and practices. The research aligns with prior studies, revealing a general acceptance of CL among teacher educators, while also shedding light on prevalent challenges hindering its widespread adoption.

Demographic Factors and Perceived Challenges:

A significant contribution of this study lies in the exploration of demographic variables, such as gender and age, and their impact on Perceived Challenges in Cooperative Learning Implementation (PCCLI). The findings resonate with earlier research, affirming that while teacher educators generally accept CL, the predominant use of traditional methods persists due to perceived implementation issues. Drawing on the theoretical lens of Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations, the study uncovers how gender influences CL practices and highlights nuanced differences in responses to feedback and evaluation based on gender. Additionally, the identification of age-related differences in attitudes toward CL corresponds with the notion that older educators may resist innovative methods, influencing teaching cultures within institutions, as theorized by Fullan's work on educational change.

Educator Experience and Hands-On Training:

Furthermore, this research explores the negligible impact of teaching experience on CL implementation challenges, emphasizing that both experienced and untrained teachers may encounter difficulties. This aligns with existing literature suggesting that experienced educators may prefer traditional teaching methods due to established routines, while untrained teachers may struggle with the adoption of new pedagogical approaches. The study underscores the lack of hands-on experience during teacher education programs as a significant barrier to effective CL implementation, aligning with Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory, where practical training is deemed crucial for preparing educators for diverse classroom scenarios and aligning with Bruner's theory that education is an active process where learners construct new ideas based on their existing knowledge. Student-Related Challenges and Cultural Influences:

A crucial aspect of this study delves into student-related challenges, highlighting the impact of pre-service teachers' resistance to CL and their prior experiences with active learning. The findings resonate with earlier studies emphasizing the role of student attitudes in shaping the success of CL strategies. Moreover, the research touches upon the complex interplay of cultural influences, negative opinions, and their impact on the perception of CL as unnecessary or ineffective. Grounded in Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory, the study explores how cultural factors add a unique dimension to the existing literature, underscoring the need for a comprehensive understanding of sociocultural contexts in CL implementation.

Practical and Theoretical Implications:

The study carries significant practical implications for teacher education institutions. Enhanced teacher training programs, informed by Diffusion of Innovations and Socio-Cultural Theory, are imperative, addressing resistance, lack of hands-on experience, and demographic influences. Cultural sensitivity should be integrated into teacher education curricula, and administrative support initiatives, guided by organizational change theories, are crucial for creating an environment conducive to CL adoption. Theoretical implications involve expanding frameworks to accommodate demographic factors, environmental influences, and communication dynamics, drawing on educational change theories. In conclusion, this research significantly enriches our understanding of CL challenges, providing actionable insights for educators, researchers, and policymakers striving to enhance teaching practices in higher education.

CONCLUSION

Varied Challenges are Faced by Teachers. The study identifies several challenges in implementing CL, including resource limitations, varying levels of teacher preparedness, and the need for professional development. Teachers often face difficulties in managing group

dynamics, aligning CL activities with the curriculum, and assessing student performance effectively. Additionally, cultural and contextual factors in Indonesian high schools pose unique challenges in the adoption and effective application of CL strategies.

References

Basri, M. (2010). An Ecological Approach To Researching Biliteracy Development Of Indonesian Bilingual Children In Australian Social Contexts. A thesis submitted in total fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy School of Communication and the Arts Victoria University, Australia.

Creswell, J. W. (2009). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method approaches (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hennessey, A., & Dionigi, R. A. (2013). Implementing cooperative learning in Australian primary schools: Generalist teachers' perspectives. Issues in Educational Research, 23(1), 52-68. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/docview/1413417485?accountid=13158

Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1989). Cooperation and competition: Theory and research. Interaction Book Company.

Juan-Garau, M., & Salazar-Noguera, J. (2014). Content-based Language Learning in Multilingual Educational Environments. Springer International Publishing. https://books.google.co.id/books?id=3YVxBQAAQBAJ

Prayitno, H. B. (2017). The implementation of student-centered learning in EFL context in Indonesia. Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 6(2), 319-328.

Savignon, S. J. (1997). Communicative competence: Theory and classroom practice. McGraw-Hill.

Setiawan, A., & Purnama, J. (2018). Teacher and student perspectives on the use of cooperative learning in EFL writing class. English Education Journal, 8(2), 226-239.

Slavin, R. E. (2014). Cooperative Learning in Elementary Schools. Education 3-13, 42(1), 5-14.

Triastuti, R., & Widodo, H. P. (2018). The implementation of cooperative learning in EFL reading classroom in Indonesian higher education. Register Journal, 11(2), 199-223.

Yulianto, A. (2019). The challenges in implementing cooperative learning in EFL classrooms: A case study of a senior high school in Indonesia. International Journal of Instruction, 12(1), 407-424.