
PROMOTING FIVE KEY COMPONENTS OF SUCCESSFUL COOPERATIVE LEARNING AMONG ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS AT SKIP KRISTEN WAMENA

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ABSTRACT

There are many ways to help students learn, and one approach is to group them into teams, which is known as cooperative learning. This method ensures that every student in the group can learn, contribute, and receive help academically. To determine whether English students at STKIP Kristen Wamena comprehend and utilize cooperative learning, this research will use qualitative methods, such as interviewing students about their cooperative learning experiences. The goal is to identify any challenges they face and how teachers can effectively implement the five cooperative learning components in their teaching. The responses from the students will serve as a benchmark and guide for teachers to implement cooperative learning successfully in the classroom.

Keywords: Cooperative Learning, Five Cooperative Learning Components, STKIP Kristen Wamena

ABSTRAK

Ada banyak cara untuk membantu siswa belajar, dan salah satu pendekatannya adalah dengan mengelompokkan mereka ke dalam tim, yang dikenal sebagai pembelajaran kooperatif. Metode ini memastikan bahwa setiap siswa dalam kelompok dapat belajar, berkontribusi, dan menerima bantuan secara akademis. Untuk mengetahui apakah mahasiswa Bahasa Inggris di STKIP Kristen Wamena memahami dan memanfaatkan pembelajaran kooperatif, penelitian ini akan menggunakan metode kualitatif, seperti mewawancarai siswa tentang pengalaman belajar kooperatif mereka. Tujuannya adalah untuk mengidentifikasi tantangan apa pun yang mereka hadapi dan bagaimana guru dapat secara efektif menerapkan lima komponen pembelajaran kooperatif dalam pengajaran mereka. Respon siswa akan menjadi tolak ukur dan pedoman bagi guru agar berhasil menerapkan pembelajaran kooperatif di kelas.

Kata Kunci: Pembelajaran kooperatif, lima komponen pembelajaran kooperatif, STKIP Kristen Wamena

INTRODUCTION

Collaborating with others when working on a task can be very beneficial, particularly when the workload is shared. This is also true for students of English at STKIP Kristen Wamena who come from an environment that does not provide much support for learning the language. With the lack of guidance, students find it difficult to study and complete assignments on their own. Additionally, they have limited knowledge and experience when it comes to collaborative learning, making it even more challenging for them to work in groups. However, when working alone is difficult, group work can help students learn more, stay motivated, and complete tasks more efficiently. Fortunately,

there are several lecturers who are implementing cooperative learning in their classes to assist students in their learning journey.

Cooperative learning is a learning approach that involves students working in groups of two or more people to find solutions for working on a project. According to Keramati and Gillies (2022), cooperative learning is a platform that promotes positive cognitive, affective, and social benefits, which enables students to work together to make their learning and each other's learning easier. This approach enhances learning and critical thinking skills of a student. Small groups work together to support the learning of all members, according to Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec

(2008) as cited in Trung and Truong (2023). Similarly, John et al. (1991) in Singh (2011) describe cooperative learning as a learning tool that occurs in small groups of students working together to improve individual and group abilities. Cooperative learning is a situation where a small group of students learn together by taking the strengths of each group member to achieve joint group goals (Amita, 2006 as cited in Faryadi, 2007). The collection of strategies and principles used to make students interact is called cooperative learning, as stated by Jacobs and Ward (2000). Cooperative learning is generally understood to be learning that takes place in an environment where students in small groups share ideas and work collaboratively to complete academic tasks, according to Davidson and Kroll (1991) as quoted from DeLong (1996, p. 362). Applying cooperative learning in a classroom has a great impact on students' learning, as shown by several studies. Cooperative learning will occur if students work together to achieve common goals, says Singh (2011). To create active learning, cooperative learning is an important strategy (Loh and Teo, 2017).

Cooperative learning has been found to have numerous benefits in the teaching and learning process. However, at STKIP Kristen Wamena, there seem to be some challenges in implementing cooperative learning effectively in the classroom. Therefore, this study aims to identify the obstacles that students in the English Department at STKIP Kristen Wamena face while studying in a group. Furthermore, the study seeks to explore how English lectures can promote cooperative learning in the class to help students develop better English learning skills.

METHOD

This study employs qualitative research methods, using interviews as the primary instrument. The interview questions are designed to be highly open-ended, allowing students to answer without limitation and contribute additional answers that are relevant to the topic. These questions will be given to the participants in written form, and the responses will be treated as the results and discussion of the study. The findings will be used to suggest improvements to the STKIP Kristen Wamena lecturers and students to cooperative learning in the class. The

participants in the study are students from an intermediate level speaking class, consisting of five males and three females. The written interviews will be conducted during the Speaking 4 class at STKIP Kristen Wamena on May 1, 2024.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Challenges

Cooperative learning is widely recognized for its numerous benefits. However, there are also a few challenges in applying it. According to a recent study, participants expressed difficulties in carrying out assignments and group discussions while implementing cooperative learning. The challenges mainly stemmed from their own language skills, and no external factors such as teachers, classes, or classmates were mentioned. One of the most visible challenges was passive students who did not contribute or participate in the group. DeLong (1996) notes that many students become silent during group work, allowing higher-ability students to take over the group or work independently. Additionally, research by Keramati and Gillies (2022) suggests that some students are very active and vocal, while others are quite shy. This was evident from the participants' interview responses.

Interview question No. 7; What challenges do you face when you work in a group?

...Work in some friends just did not say something but they followed what we discussed and never asked us in group (Wes).

Sometimes other friends just hope to a person or two people who can speak and are able to answer the question. Some students will depend on some students because they have lack of understanding in English and grammar problems (Elia).

...some friends may have lack of English understanding (sentences) and I have to translate it in Bahasa (Wesapla).

If my friends do not want to work teamwork and they really work individually, so they can make me emotion. They always busy with other business and so on (Yelinus).

When I do not have the idea for sharing (Fanny).

My challenges are if I want to speak sometimes, I forget, what I want to say, and forget vocabulary (Arina).

Sometimes, I feel trouble for explain or afraid to talk with my friends or a group work in the class when we have project (Alina).

My challenges are bored, tired, and lazy (Yoman).

Five key components of cooperative learning

1. Positive Interdependence

In his research, Gillies (2016) highlights the concept of positive interdependence, which refers to the knowledge that students have when they work in a group to achieve a shared goal. DeLong (1996) and Singh (2011) describe this as the idea of "sinking or swimming" together. Similarly, Faryadi (2007) argues that positive interdependence arises when a group collaborates to create a joint product.

The results of this study indicate that participants understand the benefits of working in groups towards a common goal, as evidenced by their responses to questions 1 and 2.

Interview question No.1; How do you feel when you work in a group?

I feel happy because I got chance to speak or give my opinion in the group ... because I can ask my friends in the group (Elia).

I feel it's better for me because in the group we can help each other and it's not difficult and a job will be easy (Mr. Wesapla).

I feel like good when my friends and I work together/teamwork. Why I said like this because when we work together, I can help them and they can help me too in what I cannot do by myself. So, teamwork is good for me (Yelinus).

I feel satisfied that the third time we worked on a group assignment because that's where I usually share my ideas (Yoman).

Interview question No. 2; Why is working in a group important to you?

Working in a group is very important for me, because when I don't understand or don't know I will learn from my friends (Alina).

I really love working in group, because we learn is very nice, while remind what we were learned (Wes).

Because we will help others. We will comprehend what other say and we can understand about that (Fanny).

Because we discussion in group we share our idea to other friends, and everyone speaks. It is very important for our speaking (Arina).

They do not yet comprehend the concept of positive interdependence, but they recognize that their individual work impacts the results of each person in the group and the overall outcome of the group.

2. Group Interaction

The existence of interaction within the group is the second component that makes cooperative learning successful. DeLong (1996) argues that when students work in groups, they engage in continuous interaction. They discuss, debate, and explain the lesson being studied. Gillies (2016) adds that working in groups gives students the opportunity to help each other, share ideas, and offer feedback on tasks. Singh (2011) calls this type of interaction "promotive interaction," which occurs when group members work positively together to achieve shared goals. This type of interaction is characterized by efficient assistance, the exchange of information and materials, feedback, problem-solving, and joint decision-making.

During interviews, participants reported interacting with each other in group discussions and using the opportunities provided by the teacher.

However, some participants acknowledged that they didn't give proper feedback or argue properly, and just shared ideas or asked for help when they didn't understand the material or tasks.

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Because we will help others. We will comprehend what other say and we can understand about that (Fanny).

Because we discussion in group we share our idea to other friends, and everyone speaks. It is very important for our speaking (Arina).

We will comprehend what other say and we can understand about that (Fanny).

We can share to each other (Elia).

According to the study, interaction among students was not ideal due to various reasons. Some students did not participate in the discussion, while others had poor English skills and were unable to express their ideas. Additionally, some students relied heavily on their friends to do the talking. This conclusion was supported by multiple sources.

Interview question No.7; What challenges do you face when you work in a group?

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... some friends just did not say something, but they followed what we discussed and never asked us in group (Wes).

When I do not have the idea for sharing (Fanny).

Interview question No.3; What does make you feel "I have to contribute in my group project"?

Sometimes I am feeling tired, bored when I do my project (Yoman).

3. Personal Responsibility

As per DeLong (1996) and Faryadi (2007), every member of a group has a responsibility to contribute ideas, feedback, and criticism to complete their group project successfully. Personal responsibility is a crucial element in cooperative learning. Gillies (2016) also states that individual responsibility is when a member ensures that they and the other group members share their ideas. Therefore, apart from being responsible for one's tasks, a member should also check that other group members are contributing and carrying out their roles. Research shows that only some students are aware of their responsibility to contribute to group work. However, at least three participants understand their responsibilities as group members.

Interview question No.3; What does make you feel "I have to contribute in my group project"?

I have authority in group to give the idea (Fanny).

Responsibility as a member of group ... when I have an idea, I should contribute to my group (Elia).

I feel, I have to contribute my idea in a group for our homework, and it motivates me to speak in front of friends (Alina).

4. Social Skills / Interpersonal Skills

The fourth element of successful cooperative learning is social skills or interpersonal skills. Unfortunately, many students in the English department at Wamena Christian STKIP lack these skills. To manage groups effectively and

productively, students must learn interpersonal skills, such as communication, leadership, problem-solving, and building trust (DeLong, 1996). These skills also teach students to express opinions and ideas confidently. To build productive cooperative learning, students need social skills, including knowing and trusting their classmates, communicating effectively, actively listening, respecting each other's opinions, and making decisions based on mutual agreement (Gillies, 2016 and Signh, 2011). While there is no detailed application of interpersonal skills in this research, it is clear that the participants in the class lack these skills.

5. Group Evaluation

Effective and productive cooperative learning requires group evaluation at the end of each work. According to Gillies (2016) and Singh (2011), effective teamwork is achieved when each group member circles back and checks on everybody's performance in the group, regardless of whether they contribute ideas or participate in group tasks. Additionally, DeLong (1996) suggests that group evaluation involves assessing everyone's performance and identifying areas for improvement.

Interview question No.6; Is there group evaluation after having a group work? If yes, who does it? By your English teachers or by yourself?

Yes, by my lecture (Sir Rein) and by me. And sometimes my friends. I will evaluate and I will learn (Fanny)

Yes, but by myself. After explaining the project, I will evaluate from our explanation what paragraph I have to collect it or study more (Alina).

Yes! Sometimes teachers evaluate the way discussion. But some teachers forget to evaluate (Elia).

Yes, my English teacher ever evaluates or give feedback from what I do (Yoman).

First my friends said like very good for your presentation or read something keep strong. Second Kaka Rei always gives feedback and say something to all of us. I never evaluate by myself (Ariana).

Yes, we ever evaluate what have learned in our group (Yelinus).

Yes, my teacher and myself ... myself I check my grammar, vocabulary, when the teamwork (Pilatus).

Participants have the option to evaluate themselves or be evaluated by their teacher. However, they do not engage in group processing or group evaluation. The only evaluation they consistently perform is of their own performance. In order to create a successful cooperative learning environment, it is necessary to provide instruction on how to properly conduct group evaluations.

CONCLUSION

This research aims to identify the challenges that students face while learning through a cooperative learning approach and how they can enhance the important components of cooperative learning. The research results and discussions provide answers to these two aspects. Although the research does not cover everything related to the use of cooperative learning in the classroom, it reveals that students lack knowledge of cooperative learning due to its ineffective use. Cooperative learning can help build critical thinking skills, foster connections with others, and create awareness of the importance of learning (Du, 2015). However, there may be obstacles that students and teachers encounter during the teaching and learning process with cooperative learning. This study has been conducted to contribute to the English research field, but there may still be some gaps in the details that future research can cover.

After conducting this research and analyzing the results, several issues were discovered that could be addressed to improve the use of cooperative learning. These issues include the lack of research exploring the experience of using cooperative learning by

both students and teachers, as well as students' lack of knowledge about cooperative learning. Addressing these issues can help teachers and lecturers better utilize cooperative learning in their classrooms and effectively develop the five essential elements of successful cooperative learning.

Based on the findings of this study, it raises the question of whether lecturers at STKIP Kristen Wamena or English teachers in Wamena are aware of the use of cooperative learning or not. It has been shown that one of the reasons cooperative learning fails is when teachers do not implement it properly (Garcha and Kumar, 2015). Therefore, it is important for lecturers to be more careful when assigning students to groups, as many students tend to remain silent and not contribute (DeLong, 1996; Keramati & Gillies, 2022). Teachers should make a conscious effort to ensure that each student learns and develops well when placed in a group.

One recommendation that can be given is for teachers to learn more about the cooperative learning approach and implement it in their classrooms. When assigning group work or projects, teachers should give each student in the group a specific responsibility so they can practice contributing, particularly in speaking and interpersonal skills. Johnson and Johnson (2002) and Singh (2011) suggest that teachers can assign tasks and roles to each group member to ensure equal participation. Interview question No. 5; What things should be English teachers do to make students work effectively in a group discussion or group project?

The things form Papua, no form outside, and students will use contextual method ... (Yelinus).

My opinion = teacher divides students in the group, and in group each student got job or something to do. Example: one student is writing, one student reads, one explains, etc. (Elia).

Based on the input from participants, it is recommended that teachers should design the context of their lessons around Papuan culture or topics that are familiar to students in Papua. This is important for effective learning. Furthermore, teachers should play an active role in promoting cooperative learning by specifying

objectives, grouping students, explaining tasks, monitoring group work, and evaluating achievement and cooperation, as suggested by Ding, Li, Piccola, and Kulm (2007). It is also important to note that designing cooperative learning requires a lot of preparation (Grey, 2017), but it is worth the effort as it is one of the most effective ways to improve students' English skills.

In terms of students, it is important for them to develop self-awareness of their own learning and interpersonal skills. This research indicates that students generally lack good interpersonal skills, which is something that needs to be addressed as it is crucial for academic success. Finally, students should understand the importance of contributing to the group and helping each other to complete tasks.

This research still has several shortcomings and is far from being perfect. As a first recommendation, future research should explore the lack of interpersonal skills among STKIP Kristen Wamena students. The skills they lack may be influenced by their teachers, culture, and the surrounding environment. Additionally, research should be conducted on STKIP Kristen Wamena lectures using cooperative learning to identify the challenges and advantages of this approach.

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