

Cooperative Learning as the Method to Stimulate and Motivate Students in Schools of Linguistics Class at English Department Andalas University

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Keywords: Cooperative Learning, Schools of Linguistics, Students.

Abstract: Schools of Linguistics is one of optional course for the students who are interested in Linguistics to take as a must. The Schools of Linguistics mostly talks about the development of Linguistics since Greek era until now in America, Europe and Indonesia. Because the lack of implementation, the students often get bored and the expected learning outcome is not fulfilled. This writing is aimed at describing the implementation of cooperative learning method in Schools of Linguistics class at English Department of Andalas University. The objective of the research is to identify the effectiveness of the method to stimulating and motivating the students in learning Schools of Linguistics. The research is conducted at Schools of Linguistics class English Department of Andalas University. The data are collected by the questionnaire, interviewing and focused with group discussion. The analysis has been done related to the concept proposed by Wahab (2009) and Jack and Richards (2002). The result of the analysis is presented descriptively.

1 INTRODUCTION

English Department is one of the four departments in Andalas University provided that Linguistics as their concentration. In English Department, Linguistics is one of the concentrations beside Literatures. Both concentrations have English Language as their objects.

One of the subjects offered in English Department of Andalas University is Schools of Linguistics. Schools of Linguistics is provided at even semester for the second year students. However, not all the students would take this course since it is not an obligatory subject. The Schools of Linguistics is compulsory for those whose interest and concentration is on Linguistics. Thus, the class is usually not divided into two.

However, in last four years, the number of students who took this course was boomed. One class comprised more than 50 students. English Department then decided to prepare two classes in order the class may run effectively. Since then, English Department of Andalas University provides two parallel classes for Schools of Linguistics to be conducted by three different lecturers.

Schools of Linguistics deals with the development of Linguistics since Greek Era until modern era in Europe, America and Indonesia. Mostly the Schools of Linguistics talks about the history in which the discussion seems monotonous. Even though, the class was conducted by having seminar. The students are divided into several groups based on the number of the topics for one semester. Each group then presents their paper based on the topics. The discussion is done after the presentation in order that every student may take part in discussion.

Unfortunately, this method does not successfully help the students to gain full understanding towards the topic. Most of students totally depend on the information from their friends. They come to class in absent-minded. As the discussion comes up, only ??? or actively participate. Given question to the students, they could not answer well. When they are asked to give questions or comments, they could not response. Silence becomes their only choice.

The above description forces the lecturers from Schools of Linguistics to be more creative in designing the class method. In this semester, cooperative learning becomes the choice to be

implemented in the class. It is expected that the students can be motivated and stimulated in learning Schools of Linguistics.

2 METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

The research is conducted in Schools of Linguistics Class B, English Department of Andalas University. There are about 34 students taking this course in Class B. Class B is selected as the place to run the research for the consideration of applying class action research. The data is taken by giving questionnaire and interviewing those 34 students. Furthermore, focus group discussion is also used to enrich the data. The analysis is done by using the concept proposed by Wahab (2009) and Jack and Richards (2002). The process of implementing the cooperative learning method is explained chronologically. At the end, the effectiveness of the method is identified after the final exam. The result of summative assessment comes into the indicator. Finally, the result of analysis is descriptively presented.

3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Cooperative learning is a kind of teaching and learning method for students to become the center (Jack and Richards, 2002) when the process of teaching and learning is conducted. In teaching and learning method, students are encouraged to be more active. They do not only get the information from the lecturer but they seek for the course materials by themselves (Budiawan, 2008).

In applying the cooperative learning, the students can interact with the others to gain and practice the elements of material in the course so that the learning objective can be achieved (Unand, 2014). Such kind of method is called Students Centered Learning (SCL).

Andalas University, as a public university in Indonesia has applied this SCL which is already set forth as the regulation of Rector number 3 in year 2016. Every lecturer at Andalas University has been obliged to implement this SCL, including those belong to English Department.

Schools of Linguistics as one course offered in English Department has applied SCL in teaching learning process. However, it was not fully done yet. Some topics still need teacher centered learning (TCL) to be used in the class. This is due to that the Schools of Linguistics is mostly deal with the history

and development of Linguistics. Thus, the explanation from the lecturers are still in need.

The use of TCL did not build the positive atmosphere since most of the students totally depend on the lecturer. They did not prepare well before coming to class. Consequently, as the question given to feed back the understanding, the students only keep in silence. This method seemed un-effective.

Cooperative learning is then tried to apply in Schools of Linguistics. This method is selected for the cause of motivation and stimulation for the students. The students are expected to be more active in the class.

Some sub-methods of cooperative learning in Schools of Linguistics is then applied (Unand, 2014).

3.1 Think-pair-share

The students are given certain topics or cases related to the phenomena of actual use of language. After being given around 1-2 minutes, the quick response from the students is asked. This response is then discussed in their group. Each group then discussed the result of their discussion with other groups. Two until three groups sit together re-discussing what they have concluded before.

3.2 Three-step-interview

Three step-interview is used as the *ice-breaking* in order to build up the chemistry. This is due to the course *Schools of Linguistics* comprises various students from different grade levels. In the sense of there is still a gap among them. To overcome this gap, the three-step-interview is conducted. Thus, the students are familiar with each other.

The students would sit in pair and give answer to question. Then they could change the partner and give the similar question. Finally, those who have given the questioners could gather into one group to discuss the result of digging question.

3.3 Numbered Heads Together

Students are divided into several groups comprising 3-4 members. These students are given case/factual question and they sit in their group discussing the answer. This is created to make deep understanding of each students and they can find the answer of the question by themselves.

The discussion is continued by delivering question and randomly point at certain student to answer the given question. The students are expected

to get involved actively in the discussion among their group.

3.4 Three-minute Review

Students are given 3-5 minutes to discuss and review what they have discussed. Then they are given to report orally or in written the result of discussion.

3.5 Partners

The class is divided into two big groups which then is re-divided into small number of groups comprising 3-4 students. These two big groups are given two different sub-topics. The member of these big groups spread over and find partner from other big group to share their understanding. They then go back to sit within their group and discuss what they have got.

In implementing the cooperative learning at Schools of Linguistics Class, the process of gathering information from the students' point of view is also done. The students in their small groups are requested to make a kind of review or summary towards the material given, process of learning, as well as the possible improvement for teaching and learning process. This information can be done as part of evaluation (Widiyawati, 2008; Arifin, 2012) or checking to do another action in the next year class of Schools of Linguistics.

From the questionnaires given to the students, around 77% feel that there is an enhancement of their motivation because they are forced to participate actively in class teaching and learning process. 17% respond that this is very difficult and the rest have no idea. This can be seen in the following chart 1.

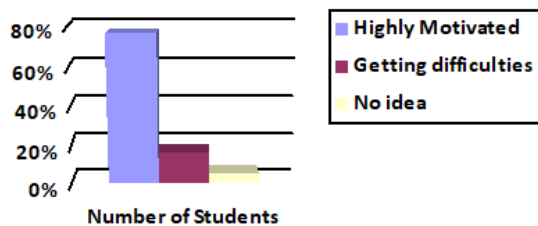


Figure 1. Motivation of Students with Cooperative Learning Method

The motivation gets bigger around 77% students, because they are fully involved (Pelton, 2010) in the process of solving problem. It is not the lecturers who find the answer for them. Besides, getting involved in seeking the answer of the questions gives deep impact to the way of memorizing information (Jin, 2009; Wetzler, 2001). Students are struggling to dig

information related to the topic discussed per week/meeting. Thus, the syllabus is also helpful [10] as a guidance for students in one semester. They know what to do during their studying in Schools of Linguistics.

The 17% students who get difficulties in following the method of cooperative learning are due to several factors. The answer of the questionnaires indicates that their English competence and the schedule regarded infertile is because the class of Schools of Linguistics is conducted on Friday, 2 p.m. The weekend class is sometimes avoided by some students because they mostly go to home town. This lack of competence in English also reduces the students' motivation. The schedule at noon on Friday is judged of interrupting the time they go back to their village, especially at the beginning of every month. It can be seen in the below chart 2.

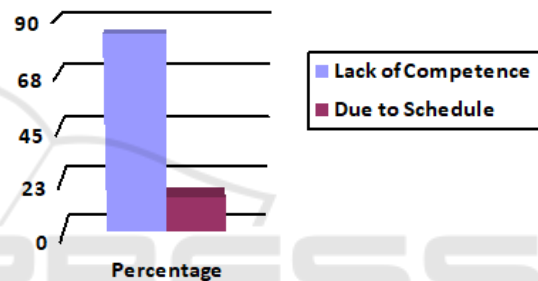


Figure 2: Causes of Difficulties of Students in Stimulating the Motivation

84 percent of the students find difficulties in following the cooperative learning which are caused by their lack competence of English. They get hard to understand the information and deliver as well as to give the ideas in discussion. Thus, silence becomes their choice. 16 percent is due to the schedule. This problem would not overcome since the lecturer tries to remind students that they should go to Andalas University to study but not going back and forth to home town. Having personal persuasion is the way applied to raise their awareness about studying.

Those who have no idea towards the method is caused by no inner motivation to get knowledge. These students are those who take Schools of Linguistics for the second and third time. They were failed at the first time of taking the course or got small mark. They then retake for mark revision. The orientation for mark only brings about they do not know what to do in class. They just come, sit and sometimes listen without any understanding.

The description of such above students is displayed in the following chart 3.

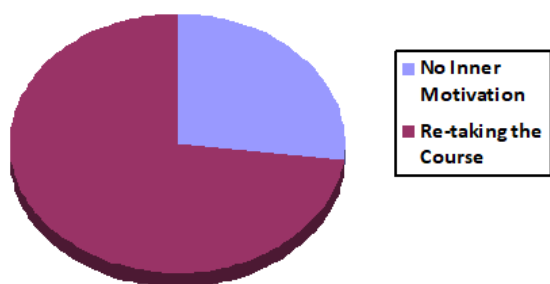


Figure 3: Reasons of No Idea toward Cooperative Learning Method

No inner motivation and retaking students in Schools of Linguistics are two things that cannot be avoided. There are small number of students who have no willingness to choose English Department to study. The external factor like the urge of their parents or wrong choice of the department are the common reasons of these less-inner motivated students. Commonly, the role of their academic supervisors is very important. By cooperating with their parents and friends, such students can keep in being motivated to enjoy studying at English Department.

Meanwhile, the re-taking students at Schools of Linguistics are mostly because they get failed (70%) and want to revise their mark (30%). These re-taking students are being more senior than the others, tend to keep their image in front of junior. Thus, in silence or less active is also becoming their choice.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The institution of Educational Development and Quality Assurance, thanks for funding the class action research for Schools of Linguistics course. The students of English Department of Andalas University who took Schools of Linguistics, Class B in 2018, thank you for the participation and responds.

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