Enhancing EFL Learners' Talk through Cooperative Learning-Facilitated Task-Based Learning: Process

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Article Info	Abstract

This study aimed to explain how cooperative learning facilitates task-based learning in enhancing EFL learners' talk for eighth-grade students of SMPN 1 Magelang in the academic year 2018/2019. The researcher conducted the study based on Ellis (2003) and Kagan (1994) theories for explaining the process of teaching and learning activities using Task-Based Learning (TBL) and Cooperative Learning (CL) methods for enhancing EFL learners' talk. This study used a qualitative case study methodology. The instruments used were observation sheet, interview guidelines, and document analysis. Based on the data analysis, it can be concluded that cooperative learning techniques that facilitated the task-based learning in learning activities can enhance the EFL learners' self-confidence to talk in front of the class. Besides, task-based learning facilitated with cooperative learning techniques enhances students' courage and creativity, it also makes them more active. The practice also made them more understand the materials. There are some suggestions. First, it will become a good alternative for the teacher to look up some interesting materials for the students as their guidance to enhance their speaking habits. The students are suggested to be accustomed to learning to speak using group and pair techniques because the technique can motivate them to have a speaking habit. Lastly, the next researcher needs to conduct further research related to other techniques in helping the students to improve their talk.

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INTRODUCTION

A human being is a social creature by nature. People need communication to develop their social relationships. Children are getting used to working in groups, starting from school. While teaching English to the students, teacher always tries hard to help students to improve their skills in mastery English. Teachers want their students to be able to use English as a means communication, at least in the classroom. Many language teachers face many difficulties in making students speak in the target language together with their friends. It means that communicative skill does not increase using group work.

Indonesia is currently implementing the 2013 curriculum (K-13). Student-Centered Learning is a compulsory approach to learning the 2013 curriculum that prioritizes students' interests and abilities (in learning). Student Centered Learning, which is a feature of the 2013 curriculum learning that realized through scientific approach, also involves students in the learning process and needs to follow the principles of group work or cooperative learning. Because of that, recently in Indonesia a learning method called Cooperative Learning is strengthened. Cooperative learning is a teaching arrangement that refers to small, heterogeneous groups of students working together to achieve a common goal (Kagan, 1994). Cooperative learning has become popular and often used by many teachers and lecturers.

When the teacher has formed a group on cooperative learning, the teacher must give a task. A task is an activity that requires learners to use language, with emphasis on meaning, to attain an objective defined by Bygate, Skehan, and Swain (in Ellis, 2003). Tasks hold a central place both in the second language acquisition research and in language pedagogy (Ellis, 2003). Task is an assignment given by the teacher to be done in students' cooperative learning group.

Based on my observation during having teaching practiced in junior high school, the school was already a school that uses K13. However, only a few prominent students that braved to speak in front of the class, only about 20 until 25% of the students in the class, the rest of them just listened and embarrassed to speak in front of the class. Some studies about students' talk have been conducted to overcome that problem. One of them is by using Task Based Language (Huajing, 2011; Sanchez, 2011; Ruso, 2007; Fitri, 2013; Munirah & Muhsin, 2015) and using some techniques of cooperative learning (Wang, 2017). Unfortunately, they just demonstrate the task-based language or cooperative learning in classroom. Therefore, this study attempts to address this gap in literature by exploring how cooperative learning facilitates task based learning in enhancing students' talk. I concentrate on the following research question "How does cooperative learning facilitate task-based learning work in enhancing EFL learners' talk?"

METHODS

The research method that the writer used in this final project is qualitative method. Based on Creswell (2014), qualitative research method is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. What constitutes qualitative research involves purposeful use for describing, explaining, and interpreting collected data (Williams, 2007).

This research used qualitative case study precisely. This qualitative case study is an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources. This ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

This research uses qualitative case study because this research does not only focus on description and explanation, but also explores the phenomenon of classroom activities based on the data collected from the result of observation and interview about how the cooperative learning techniques facilitated task-based learning can enhance the students' talk. I collected the data in various ways. Beside the observation and interview, I also did documentation and document analysis. It made the data more valid. Therefore, I did not just describe the result of the research, but also represented the real activities they did in the classroom.

The subjects of the study were the second year students of SMPN 1 Magelang in the academic year 2018/2019 and the teacher who teaches there. The students had studied English as a foreign language for about two years. I used one class; it is one of VIII class as the sample of the research in order to save the observation time. The eight-grades students had learnt English for one year, so they had more knowledge about English than seven-grades students. I was interested to

know about the task that was given by the teacher in cooperative learning group in Indonesia especially in SMPN 1 Magelang.

In this research, I chose SMPN 1 Magelang because this school is a favourite school. This school uses K-13. The goal of using K-13 is to make the students more active and the teacher is just a facilitator. Because of using K-13, some teachers use cooperative learning technique in their teaching learning process. When the teachers apply a cooperative learning technique, they will give a task to be done by the students in their group.

In this study, the unit of analysis was the learning activities done by the teacher and the students in the classroom. The focus of this research was the teaching learning process in the classroom.

To generate findings in a systematic way, the researcher needs some instruments in this research. The instruments used to collect the data from the research were observation sheet, interview guidelines, and document analysis guidelines.

The observation was needed for monitoring class performance of the students. It was used to identify students' activity in the classroom during the learning process using cooperative learning technique that facilitates task based learning. According to Mills (2000:50) the research observed as a normal component of the teaching, monitoring and adjusting instruction based on the verbal and nonverbal interactions in the classroom. Therefore, I used direct observation as one of data collection strategies because of the not overly time-consuming. I used field notes in doing observation.

Here are some instruments that I used.

Number	Aspects	Notes
1.	Teacher explains the material be discussed today.	
2.	Students are required to do something.	
3.	Students groupings are appropriate.	
4.	Teacher is explaining the task has to be done in 3 phases; pre-task, task cycle, and post-task	
5.	The groups are doing a task.	
6.	Teacher is doing the pre-task phase.	
7.	Teacher is doing the task cycle phase.	
8.	Teacher is doing the post-task phase.	
9.	Students are doing the pre-task phase.	
10.	Students are doing the task cycle phase.	
11.	Students are doing the post-task phase.	
12.	Students talk each other in their groups.	
13.	Students are doing discussion in completing the task.	
14.	Each group presents their discussion's results.	
15.	Each group responds to the group presenting the results of the discussion in front of the class.	
16.	Teacher gives comment and feedback.	

Figure 1

In this study, I used structured interview. In structured interview, questions are planned and created in advance, which means that all candidates are asked the same questions in the same order. I used Indonesian in the interview because the participants were students. It made them easier to understand her questions.

I asked some questions to her participants below. There were two kinds of participants in this research. They were teacher and students.

In this study, I analysed the lesson plan from the teacher. Lesson plan is the guide of the teaching learning process had been done in the classroom. Every teacher has to make it before he/she teach in the classroom. In the lesson plan, has been set all aspects of the learning from basic competence up on the instruments of assessment.

These are some guidelines in doing document analysis.

(1) Learning method (Metode Pembelajaran)

The learning method that used in the classroom must be suitable with the learning method that written in lesson plan. The method used by the teacher should be cooperative learning and task-based learning. The cooperative learning technique facilitates task-based learning.

(2) Learning activities (Langkah-langkah Pembelajaran)

This part is the most important part to be analysed. It is because the researcher can see whether the teacher doing the learning activities appropriate with lesson plan or not. The activities have to represent the aspect of CL and TBL. The learning activities must show that CL technique has to facilitate TBL.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

On July 27th – August 10th, 2018, I did some class observations to know the technique used in English teaching and learning process of class VIII A of SMP Negeri 1 Magelang. I observed five meetings.

Meeting	TBL's Phases	CL Technique
1 Friday, July 27, 2018 08.00 a.m. - 09.20 a.m.	Pre-task	-
2 Saturday, July 28, 2018 07.15 a.m. - 08.40 a.m.	Pre-task	-
3 Friday, August 3, 2018 07.15a.m. - 09.20 a.m.	Task cycle (during task) Drama	Story Theater
4 Saturday, August 4, 2018 07.15 a.m. - 08.40 a.m.	Post task (language focus)	NHT
5 Friday, August 10, 2018 09.40 a.m. - 11.00 a.m.	Task cycle (during task) Post task (language focus) Mini Talk Show	Story Theater

Figure 2

From the table above, it can be seen that every meeting consists of TBL's phases with its activity. The students pass the TBL's phases gradually. Because of the pre-task is just the explanation, so there is no CL technique used to support the activity. However, when doing main activity, like task cycle, CL technique used to facilitate the phase to make the students easier in understanding the material. CL technique that is used must be suitable with the phase that is past.

Positive Responses from the Students about the Teaching Technique

Mrs. Ayu as the English teacher of VIII A gave the students a quiz in every meeting to remind the materials that had been discussed before. That technique got a positive response from the most of the students. They were enthusiastic in answering the question because they will get the additional score from Mrs. Ayu. Most of them were interested with the learning activities because she gave them time to discussion in answering the question. It made them more interactive and easy to understand the materials.

Use of CL and TBL in Classroom for Enhancing EFL Learners' Talk

Cooperative learning is an educational approach which aims to organize classroom activities into academic and social learning experiences. Students must work in groups to complete tasks collectively toward academic goals. In this research, the students did some cooperative learning techniques like NHT and dramas. The teacher planned it in the lesson plan. Those techniques were combined with TBL. That combination makes the students more active and creative. They enjoyed the lesson. The group work task made them easier in understanding the material and more confident in speaking English.

In this research, I used informal assessment using a self-evaluation format. The self-assessment form will provide students' feedback and attitudes towards the given task. This evaluation was done individually, even if students worked in pairs or groups. However, in this research, I assessed it by myself by using observation sheet in every meeting. Therefore, the assessment in this research is without score. I knew the enhancement of the students' talk by observing their activities, analyzing the students' explanation in their answers of interview, and analyzing the answers of the teacher too.

Discussion

Cooperative learning enhances social interaction, which is essential to meet the needs of at-risk students (Johnson, 1998; Slavin, Karweit, & Madden, 1989). Based on the findings, cooperative learning techniques used by the teacher make them easier in understanding the material and minimize the pronunciation error. This finding is in line with research findings of Ilmi (2012) which showed that the students' speaking skills improved using cooperative learning. The students made a good improvement in some aspects of speaking skills such as pronunciation, fluency, and interactive communication. They were more confident to speak English. They had more chances to speak up. They easily learnt the materials with a group. The group work activities applied improved the students' understanding towards the materials and the teacher's classroom management.

All of the tasks given were containing those expressions. When the students had to make a dialog, they had to use the expressions. It made the students more creative. In addition, those CL techniques that used to facilitate TBL method with three phases of it could enhance their self-confidence to speak English. Those findings are consistent with the research findings of Sanchez (2016), which showed that the use of task-based learning was interrelated with the enhancement of speaking performance and with participation because children executed tasks for learning English as means of communication. That study used action research. He asked the students to do some speaking tests, describe pictures and transcribe video recordings. Then he analyzed the result of their performance. Those findings are strengthened by the research findings of Marsakawati (2016) that demonstrated that TBL can influence the students' speaking achievement and increase their self-confidence.

The results of the interview were appropriate with the results of the observation. The activities that I observed reflected the information given by the interviewees. Then, the result of document analysis shows that the learning activities in the classroom are in line with the lesson plan. It was a real condition. Therefore, it can be concluded that cooperative learning techniques that facilitated the task-based learning in learning activities can enhance the students' talk, confidence, courage, and creativity; it also can make them more active.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the research on the speaking techniques used by English teacher of class VIII A of SMPN 1 Magelang, the conclusions can be drawn as follows. As stated before, the research aimed at explaining how the cooperative learning facilitates task-based learning in improving EFL learners' talk to students of Grade VIII A of SMPN 1 Magelang. Hence, the findings of the research involved the process of learning that had been done in classroom reached that goal. In meeting 1 and meeting 2, the teacher still used traditional method. It means that the learning is teacher-centered methods focused on rote learning and memorization. The teacher just explained the material in two meetings first because those two meetings still discussed the introduction of it. Then in meeting 3 until meeting 5, she asked the students to practice the expression. In those three meetings, she used CL and TBL in teaching learning process.

The implementation of cooperative learning and task-based learning was successful to enhance students' talk ability and involvement. Those two methods gave students situation that could make them active in the process of teaching and learning of speaking. They were trained to perform mutual interaction with the students and the teacher in discussion of doing a task. They were given opportunities to share ideas and knowledge about the materials to the other students. They also had to share their discussion result in front of the class in drama form. Besides, the use of interesting activities also supported the success of meeting 3 and 4. However, some students still less active in the teaching learning process. Therefore, she tried to solve it so that in meeting 5 the students' talk ability could be enhanced successfully. Giving reward to the best group in form of dictionary improved the students' motivation to speak English and participation during the teaching and learning process.

From the three methods of collecting the data (observation, interview, and document analysis), it can be concluded that cooperative learning techniques that facilitated the task-based learning in learning activities can enhance the students' talk, confidence, courage, and creativity of the students, also can make them more active. Practice also made them more understand the material.

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