

PEER ASSESSMENTS IN COOPRATIVE LEARNING TEAMWORKS OF PROBLEM-BASED CROSS-CULTURAL TRANSLATION CLASSROOMS

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ABSTRACT

Cooperative Learning (CL) strategy can be the alternative way for leading the students to have the capacity in solving the problems in learning grammar. It is because CL gives the access for the students to have mutual or cooperative working within the groups or team works formed. The students' mutual or cooperative working can be measured by peer assessments given. The study was aimed at revealing how the students in the groups or team works performed their contributions in solving the problems related to understanding grammar through cross-cultural translation. The study used a quantitative approach within a survey design. There were 50 participants in this study. The research instrument used a questionnaire containing about 16 closed questions distributed via Google form. The result showed that most of the students were initiated to have mutual and cooperative working by being consistent to contribute, feeling a complete sensitivity to others, encouraging others, and having high social attention and care in solving the problems on learning cross-cultural grammar translation. It is recommended that the teachers apply the CL strategy which also gives the access for the students to improve their learning motivations and self confidence through mutual and cooperative working done.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most effective teaching methods applied by the foreign language teachers is Cooperative Learning (CL). It is because CL may lead the foreign language teachers to bring students into the learning situations of which they can build communication and interpersonal skills through acquiring information and enhancing the thinking process behind the groups or team works formed (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). Each individual in the groups or team works is

also expected to give their contributions in doing various kinds of tasks or projects and solving the problems.

One commonly problem faced by the language learners is concerned with understanding about grammar. Learning and understanding grammar is essential for the language learners. It is because mastery of grammar will be able to direct students to perform various language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Cam & Tran, 2017; Mart, 2013; Türkmen & Aydin, 2016). Thus, learning grammar is a necessity that cannot be ruled out to achieve good English competence (Ibrahim, 2016).

The thing to note is that learning a foreign language cannot be separated from the cultural understanding possessed by the foreign language. Culture is also considered an important component in learning a foreign language (Bachman, 1990; Byram, 2014). In this case, mastery of foreign language material by students is not enough to understand a foreign language well and successfully, but efforts are needed to understand the way of life of users or speakers of foreign languages who live in a place that is depicted through culture (Hinojosa, 2000).

Learning English as a foreign language indicates that these English learners do not come from native English-speaking countries, but they learn English from their respective countries of origin or hometown (Krieger, 2005). This causes sometimes they have limited access and ability to know and understand cross-cultural communication (Alptekin, 2002). Thus, students' understanding of grammar will be better and avoid mistakes in communication or interaction. One strategy in learning grammar is through translation activities. The concept of this strategy is known as the 'Grammar Translation Method' (GTM).

What is important in the use or application of this GTM strategy is that in foreign language learning, each student will make an effort to reflect the foreign language they are learning on the existence of their mother tongue (Harmer, 2007). In addition, understanding foreign languages is generally related to efforts to understand the differences and similarities in meaning through the translation of sentences produced in mother and foreign languages (Brown & Lee, 2015).

Furthermore, the effort to be able to do cross-cultural translation is not easy. There will be many problems or cases that arise related to cultural differences between existing foreign and mother languages. Thus, learning activities with this strategy also bring students to implement a case or problem-based learning system (Problem-based Learning - PBL) that leads to collaborative and constructive activities to solve problems related to conceptual learning materials (Ribeiro, 2011). To support the implementation of PBL, CL strategy needs to be applied to bridge the procurement of collaboration carried out by students (Keyser, 2000).

However, the implementation of CL will not work well without solid cooperation in a team or group. The solidity of the team or group that is formed will depend on the role of each individual in solving problems together. For this reason, an assessment is needed that can measure the involvement of each individual in the collaboration that is formed. Peer assessments may contribute to provide the data around the individuals' support or inclusions as their delineation of the reality of coming to the agreeable demeanors as contradicted to the competitive learning (Lejk & Wyvill, 2001; Orsmond et al., 1996). In relation to the explanation above, this study aims to reveal how the contribution of each individual in the teamwork formed to solve problems related to understanding grammar through cross-cultural translation.

Cooperative Learning (CL) strategy has been well known by many foreign language teachers. In this case, lots of the foreign language teachers assume that CL gives the effective access for them to lead the students to have some performances in building communications and interactions through working together within the small groups or team works formed

(Gillies & Boyle, 2011). The students will also increase their self-motivations and self confidence in learning through cooperative and mutual working and positive social relationships done during their efforts for showing their contributions in doing various kinds of tasks or projects and solving the problems faced (Slavin Robert, 1995).

Foreign language learning cannot be separated from efforts to instill grammatical understanding in students. This is because grammar is a means for students to be able to practice their language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In other words, all learning activities or language skills are closely related to the existence and function of grammar. The facts show that the contribution of grammar mastery for students is very important in sustaining language skills competence (Cam & Tran, 2017; Türkmen & Aydin, 2016), making it easier for them to participate in language skills learning activities fluently (Mart, 2013), achieving English competence better (Ibrahim, 2016).

Grammar Translation Method (GTM) is an approach to learning grammar by translating from a foreign language into the mother tongue and preferably (Celce-Murcia & McIntosh, 1991). GTM is considered the oldest traditional approach. Nonetheless, GTM is still considered a great way of learning grammar. This is because by using GTM, students will have access to find out the structural differences between English and Indonesian.

What is important in the use or application of this GTM strategy is that in foreign language learning, each student will make an effort to reflect the foreign language they are learning on the existence of their mother tongue (Harmer, 2007). This causes that there is a need for mastery in knowing the difference between what is in the mother tongue and in a foreign language. In addition, understanding foreign languages is generally related to efforts to understand the differences and similarities in meaning through sentences produced in mother and foreign languages (Brown & Lee, 2015).

The method or approach to learning 'Problem-Based Learning' emerged in the 1960s in Canada. This method or approach uses the problem as a reference in the learning activities held. The most important thing in this method or approach is that the implementation of this method or approach is collaborative, constructive, and conceptual (Ribeiro, 2011). What is the target or hope for the teacher to the students is the emergence of a critical mindset or high order thinking (Boud & Feletti, 1997; Tan, 2021; Woods et al., 2000). Each problem studied will make students think critically and sharply in an effort to solve the problem. The existing problems can arise without a plan or deliberately planned by the teacher.

Language and culture are like two sides of a coin that are interrelated. Language is one of the cultural elements that exist in an area or country. The close relationship between culture and language causes the language learning process to be inseparable from the role of culture itself. What happens in the language learning process also presents a process of transmission and acculturation between the mother and foreign languages learned by students. Thus, the communication and interaction created through understanding the differences between the two languages will be transmitted through the coding and shaping of the experiences that occur (Peterson & Coltrane, 2003).

Experts also state that language learning is also an activity to understand not only the concept of a foreign language being studied, but also an understanding of the cultural existence of the foreign language (Janzen, 2008; Tanaka, 2006). In this regard, teachers are expected to be able to direct language learning through a cross-cultural understanding approach (Cross-Cultural Understanding) as an effort to build competence and cultural awareness in the use of foreign languages through communication and interaction (Harumi, 2002).

METHOD

This study used a quantitative approach with a survey design to reveal the contribution of each individual in team work to solve problems related to grammatical understanding through cross-cultural translation (Creswell, 2012). There were 50 participants in this study. They were 5th semester students majoring in English literature at Dr. University. Soetomo Surabaya. They carried out learning activities using the 'Cooperative Learning' strategy by applying 'Problem-based Learning' through grammar learning activities with cross-cultural translation methods. Concretely, they were divided into several groups to solve various problems in the cross-cultural translation activity.

The research instrument used a questionnaire which was distributed to the participants. The questionnaire consisted of 16 closed questions related to the role and contribution of each individual in the team work that was built. The questionnaire will be distributed via Google form. The questionnaire was taken from the CL rubric developed by the International Reading Association and National Council of Teachers of English (2003). The data of the closed-ended questionnaire were automatically analysed by Google Form in the form of percentage. In addition to that, the researchers conducted manual calculations on Microsoft Excel to confirm the results from the Google Form. The rubric represents the five principles of CL (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). The closed-ended questionnaire is described in Table 1.

Table 1
Closed-ended questionnaire items

	1	2	3	4
Contribution to group goals	Works toward group goals only when prompted	Works toward group goals with occasional prompting	Works toward group goals without occasional prompting; accepts and fulfills individual role within group	Consistently and actively works toward group goals; willingly accepts and fulfills individual role within group
Consideration of others	Needs occasional reminders to be sensitive to the feelings of others	Shows sensitivity to the feelings of others	Shows and expresses sensitivity to the feelings of others; encourages the participation of other	Shows sensitivity to the feelings and learning needs of others; values the knowledge, opinion, and skills of all group members and encourages their contribution
Contribution of knowledge	Contributes information to the group only when prompted	Contributes information to the group with occasional prompting or reminding	Contributes knowledge, opinions, and skills without prompting or reminding	Consistently and actively contributes knowledge, opinions, and skills without prompting or reminding
Working and sharing with others	Participates in needed changes when prompted and encouraged; always or often relies on others to do the work	Participates in needed changes with occasional prompting; often needs reminding to do the assigned work	Willingly participates in needed changes; usually does the assigned work and rarely needs reminding	Helps the group identify necessary changes and encourages group action for change; always does the assigned work without having to be reminded

Table 1 describes four items that the students need to assess their peers in their group. Item 1 asks the students' contribution to group goals; 1 shows the least contribution and 4 shows the biggest contribution. Item 1 explores three CL principles: positive interdependence, individual accountability, and group processing. Item 2 asks the students to assess their peers' consideration of others; 1 shows the least considerate and 4 shows the most considerate. Item 2 examines promotive interactions and appropriate use of social skills principles. Item 3 asks the students' contribution of knowledge with 1 shows the least contribution and 4 shows the most contribution of knowledge to the group. Item 3 explores individual accountability CL principle. Item 4 asks the students to assess their group mates whether they work and share with others. Item 4 examines positive interdependence, appropriate use of social skills, and group processing CL principles

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

What was found in the research was taken from the close-ended questionnaires given to the students for assessing their team based on their contribution to the group goals, consideration of others, contribution of knowledge, and working and sharing with others. The first was about the students' contributions to the group goals.

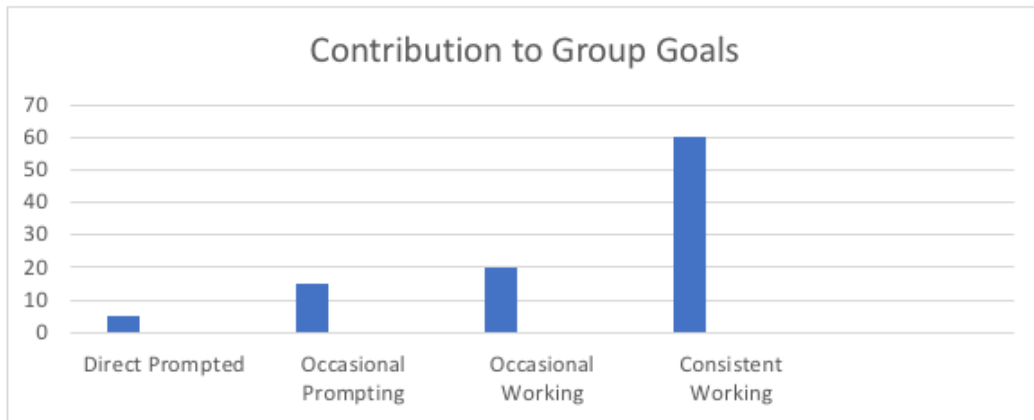


Figure 1. Students' Contribution to Group Goals

The result showed that almost 65% of the students were consistent in being active and working toward group goals and accept or fulfil individual roles within the group, 20 % of the students were occasionally working toward group goals and accept or fulfil individual roles within the group, 15 % of the students worked to achieve group goals with occasional prompting. And 5 % of the students contributed to the group goals when they are asked.

What can be noted here is that the students had a strong initiation for implementing 2 CL principles - positive interdependence and individual accountability (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). In this case, the students' encouragement for helping each other may boost their achievement (Spencer, 2015). Individual accountability may happen in the groups by assisting its members to be a strong member (Casey & Dyson, 2012). The second was about students' consideration of others. The result could be seen from the diagram below.



Figure 2. Students' Consideration of Others

The result showed that almost 55 % of the students had a complete sensitivity to others to contribute in working as a team member in solving the problems, 20 % of the students committed to encourage others to contribute in working as a team member in solving the problems, 15 % of the students committed to show sensitivity to the feelings of others. 10 % of the students needed occasional reminders to be sensitive to the feelings of others.

What can be taken into the consideration is that there exists a great potential for facing the confrontation within the group members in sharing their ideas. To avoid this, the students are claimed to have a complete sensitivity to others which can prevent something worse to happen. This is also beneficial for making the students have a good control when sharing or finding different opinions by respecting others. The third was about how the team contributed knowledge. This could be seen in the following diagram.

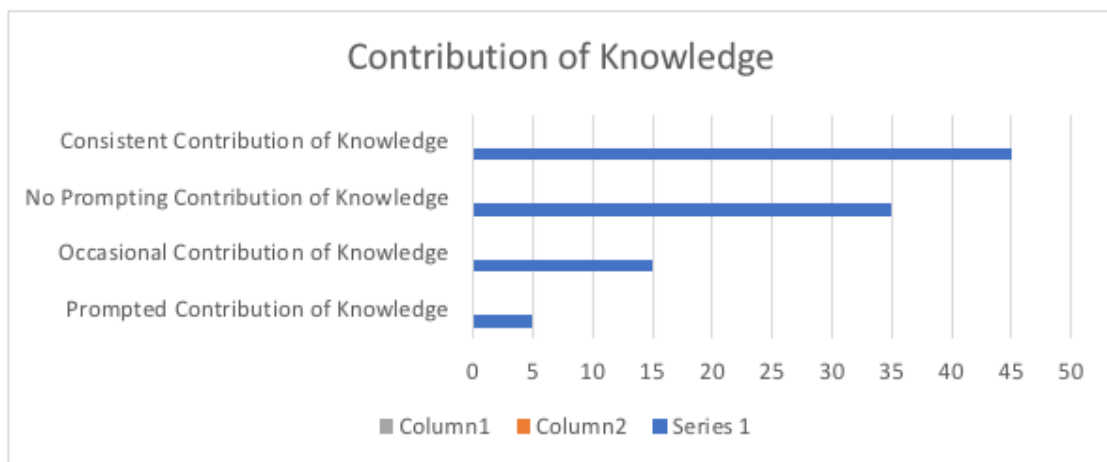


Figure 3. Students' Contribution of Knowledge

The result showed that 45% of the students had a good consistency to contribute knowledge, opinions, and skills without prompting and reminding. 35 % of the students had no prompting contribution in contributing knowledge, opinions, and skills, 15 % of the students got occasional contribution of knowledge, opinions, and skills, and 5 % of the students committed to contribute information to the group only when prompted.

What can be realized that each individual contribution can be the key success of solving the problems faced within the groups built. However, entailing the contribution from each individual is not an easy matter. It needs the consistency coming from their own initiation. So that, CL activities may get a big success if each group member has a good realization for showing their own contribution in the group. The last was about how the team worked and shared with others.

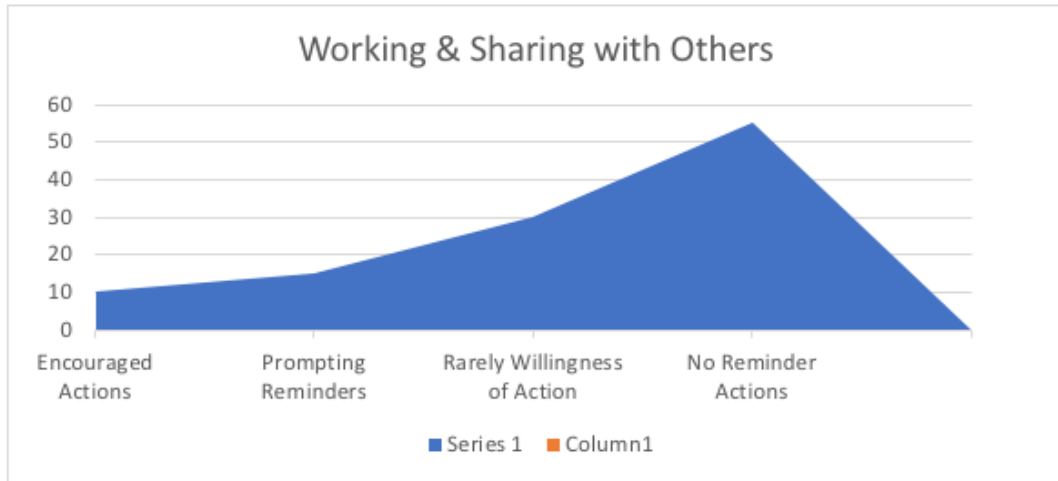


Figure 4. Students' Working and Sharing with Others

The result showed that 55 % of the students had no reminders to work and share with others by identifying necessary changes and encouraging others for having some actions of getting the changes, 30 % of the students were rarely willing to work and share with others by identifying necessary changes and encouraging others for having some actions of getting the changes, 15% of the students got prompting reminders to work and share with others by identifying necessary changes and encouraging others for having some actions of getting the changes, and 10 % of the students had encouraged actions to work and share with others by identifying necessary changes and encouraging others for having some actions of getting the changes.

What can be seen is that high social attention and care from each member can be important to build the coordination and cooperation among the students or members. In this case, each member has to be able to ascertain that coordination and cooperation among the individuals in the group may work well.

CONCLUSION

Problems in understanding grammar cannot be separated from interfering with differences between the culture of the mother tongue and a foreign language (English). The implementation of learning strategies using 'Cooperative Learning' with a 'Problem-based Learning' learning system through cross-cultural translation activities is able to lead students to understand English grammar better. This is because students are directed to have mutual and cooperative working in thinking and solving existing problems. As a result, various problems in understanding grammar through cross-cultural translation are able to be resolved properly.

Another benefit that can be taken is the awareness for each individual to show their role and contribution in solving existing problems. What they display also triggers a very effective interaction and communication. This provides access for teachers to achieve the real goal of

English learning activities, which is to direct students to be able to use English as a means of communication and interaction. Thus, learning grammar that is carried out is not only to understand grammatical concepts well, but also has the potential to apply these grammatical concepts in student communication and interaction.

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