

The Implementation of Cooperative Learning at Primary Schools

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Abstract— This study was aimed at finding out how the implementation of cooperative learning in primary schools. The design of this research was qualitative research. The study was conducted in 4 primary schools in Kedunggalar Sub-district. The subjects of this study were teachers and students of the fifth-grade class in those four schools. The data collection used observation and interview. The results showed that there are some obstacles experienced by teachers and students in the implementation of cooperative learning. The obstacles faced are the feeling of rigidity and unfamiliarity. The rigidity and unfamiliarity which are risen are due to the fact that teachers and students have not yet been accustomed to using cooperative learning. The use of cooperative learning can be the solution to overcome the feeling of rigidity and unfamiliarity. According to the teachers, cooperative learning is easy to understand, easy to implement and helps the students to be more active in learning.. In line with the students' opinions, they argue that cooperative learning is a fun lesson to do. The students feel new experience on applied learning, the students also feel happy to be able to cooperate with a group of friends in completing the task of the teacher.

Keywords—implementation, cooperative learning, obstacle, solutions

I. INTRODUCTION

Teachers play the role to motivate, encourage, and involve the students in their learning activities, so the positive behavior can be produced with the students' various skills (Suparwoto, 2011). The role becomes the teacher's primary role in relation to the students. Teachers are individuals playing a direct role in improving the students' abilities. The research conducted by Calderon in Ying Pan & Yi Wu found that the teacher's role should be transformed from the

knowledge giver to the knowledge connector. Teachers are not only as a barn of knowledge for students but also as a liaison as well as space provider for the students to explore science. Teachers should be able to place themselves as a figure who is ready to support the students in learning. The real teachers' role can be observed from their interaction with the students, Marzuki & Feriandi (2016) report that the teachers' role is the expected reflection that is obtained from various interactions especially with the students. The interaction between the teacher and the students commonly happens when the learning process takes place. The teachers' behaviors and attitudes when explaining the material and conducting the question and answer with the students as well as their expressions can be the assessments how the teachers' role in the learning. The knowledge that is obtained by the students should be meaningful. The knowledge is not merely what is obtained from the teacher in the classroom. Knowledge transfer that is only through the teacher's explanation to the students is time-saving and does not need extra preparation for the teachers. The learning process that only makes the students as the place where the knowledge and the teacher' explanation take place is not the appropriate learning. Inappropriate learning means that the learning which occurs is less enjoyable because the students will be the passive individual and they do not share ideas among their peers even from the teacher to the students. The cooperation among the students cannot be developed and the material tends to be slightly superficial. The students need the supporting learning atmosphere to learn well and attain the meaningful material. The supporting learning atmosphere can be started by implementing the learning model that can stimulate the students to actively learn. The learning model that is currently used by the teachers tends to make the students focus only on the teacher's explanation. The students are not given enough opportunities to look for other learning sources. There is almost no opportunity to interact, cooperate, and exchange ideas with their peers. The weakness of this conventional learning is only making the students focus on the teacher in the learning process. The research carried out by

Schleicher in Ellerani & Gentile (2013) results in the finding that the teacher should lead the class using the more effective and innovative learning method. The teacher should start implementing learning method that can encourage the students to be active, to interact with their classmates as well as to obtain the meaningful learning material. The teacher must be brave enough to take the new step in the learning process that is carried out. It is in line with the research conducted by Osman et al. in Nurwido et al. (2017) stating that a teacher should have the power to experience any challenges in the educational field.

Novianti (2015) reports that a good learning method is the learning that encourages the students to actively play the role in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. Novianti's research is in line with the research conducted by Winarni et al. (2017) stating that teacher-oriented learning can be one of the alternatives to make the student-centered learning and to develop cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. Cooperative learning is the learning method that can encourage the students to be active, to interact well, to attain the meaningful learning, and to make the students feel that their efforts matter due to the reward given by the teacher at the end of the learning.

According to Slavin in Allymand & Bacon (1995) regarding the cooperative learning, the students work together in a group consisting of 4 members to master the material given by the teacher. The result of the research conducted by Siegel is in line with the result of Woods & Chen (2010) stating that cooperative learning instruct the students to cooperate in order to attain the same goals. The research carried out by Kagan in Motaei (2014) results in the finding that cooperative learning is a set of learning that divide the students into groups to cooperate in achieving the same goal. Cooperative learning is the learning in which the small group of students in a group that support each other in completing the task. (Siegel in Akdemir & Arslam, 2012). Cooperative learning is the learning that instructs the students to make a group. The members of each group should help each other to complete the task given by the teacher.

In cooperative learning, the students do not only have to form the group, but also have to cooperate with other group members, to perform their best ability for their group and to have the self-confidence in order to discuss with their peers and their teacher. In the research conducted by Slavin (1985), it was found that the intelligent people living in the jungle cannot survive. So do the intelligent student in the classroom that cannot survive if they do not want to interact with or is not given the opportunity to interact and cooperate with their peers.

In the cooperative learning, the teacher plays the role of the planner, executor, and success determinant. Regarding to their role as the planner, the teacher should do the following stages: (1) Choosing the topic. (2) Planning the cooperation. (3) Starting the learning. (4) Analyzing and Synthesizing. (5) Presenting the information obtained in the front of the classroom. (6) Assessing (Sonmez in Erdem, 2009). In choosing the topic, the teacher should choose the topic that can make the students to cooperate, and to be active in question and answer session with the teacher as well as with the classmates. The material of the topic must be absorbed well by

the students. After the topic was chosen, the teacher can start planning how the learning process occurs.

Cooperative learning is not the learning model that is difficult to be implemented. If it is supported by the strong commitment of the teacher and the students, the learning becomes easy to be implemented. Well-organized planning done by the teacher will be useless if the teacher does not apply the prepared stages in the learning process and the students do not have the strong commitment to participate in the learning. Giving the comprehension to the students about the learning process that will be conducted can be the good option for the teacher. The teacher can convey the goal, stages, and the situation that may occur in the upcoming learning. The comprehension that is delivered must be supported by the teacher's positive view on the cooperative learning. The present research was aimed at finding out the implementation of cooperative learning in the elementary schools in which further there will be the obstacles faced by the teacher and the students as well as the solutions that can be applied.

II. METHOD

The design of the research was qualitative study that used observation and interview. The research was conducted in 4 primary schools in Keduggalar Sub-district, Ngawi Regency. The first stage in this research was preparing the instrument of the interview questions. During the cooperative learning process, the researcher observed the teacher and the students. After the learning process, the teacher and the students were interviewed by the researcher. The next activity was the students that were required to answer the provided questions. The subjects of this research were the teachers and the students in the fifth-grade in four elementary schools. The observation was conducted to find out the learning atmosphere, the students' responses, and the teachers' behaviors during the implementation of cooperative learning. The interview was conducted after the social science learning process. The interview was carried out to the teachers and the students in each school to find out the opinions, obstacles, and benefits after implementing cooperative learning model. The interview was conducted in person of each teacher and student in the fifth-grade in each school. The in-depth interview was done by the researcher. The teachers and the students can freely answer the questions without any intimidations. They answered the questions using Indonesian language.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the observations conducted by the researcher, the teachers and the students experienced the obstacles in implementing the cooperative learning. Based on the observation result, the researcher attempted to find the causes through the interview with the teachers and the students after the learning process. The interview with the teachers revealed that the experienced obstacles were the feeling of rigidity when starting the cooperative learning. The rigidity faced by the teachers is because the teacher has not yet applied cooperative learning in their classrooms. In the main stage of learning process, the teachers have not yet implemented maximally the method. When they were asked the cause, they stated that the cause was the preparation that was not

optimally done. The preparation was done around 1 week before cooperative learning was conducted. The preparation time was quite enough, whereas the teacher's duties in preparing the learning and class administration made the preparation become inadequate. The teachers' inadequate preparation affected how the learning process took place. The materials were not completely delivered, so the students found it difficult to answer the given quizzes. In addition to the inadequate preparation, the teachers' difficulties were also triggered by the fear experienced by the teachers before starting the learning. The teachers assumed that they have no sufficient ability to apply cooperative learning. The assumption has risen because the teachers have not yet applied the cooperative learning since they commonly used lecturing method. In the first place, the teachers assumed that lecturing is the best and suitable method of delivering the learning material. Those teachers' assumption is in line with the research conducted by Harman & Nguyen in Gull & Shehzad (2015) stating that the method that is commonly accepted and used is lecturing. Through lecturing, the wide range of learning material can be thoroughly delivered as a whole. However, the teacher has realized that lecturing makes the students passive and find it difficult to have qualified interaction with their classmates.

Naturally, cooperative learning is defined similarly to the group work. The teachers stated that there were no strange issues in cooperative learning since they have been accustomed to implementing the cooperative learning in the form of group work although not all of the group works were categorized as cooperative learning. Cooperative learning is not the same as group work. There is an element in the cooperative learning which differs from group learning which was done randomly. The implementation of the main basic principle in cooperative learning which is done correctly will make the teachers manage the classroom more effectively. In the cooperative learning process, the students should not only learn from the teacher, but they can learn from other members of the group or their classmates. The students can exchange the knowledge with their peers.

Based on Majid's research (2014), cooperative learning has the following characteristics:

- The students work in a group
- The group is divided from the students with heterogeneous abilities
- If it is possible, the group members are from different ethnicities, religions, races, and genders
- Reward awarded to the group
- In line with the research conducted by Carin and Priyono (2017), it was also revealed that the characteristics of cooperative learning are as follows:
- Each member has the role
- There is direct interaction among the students
- Each group member is responsible for the learning
- Teacher helps to develop the abilities of each group member

Lack of support from the principle and the work peers also become the reason why the teacher should implement cooperative learning. The principle does not give enough advice to the teachers to try the alternative learning method. The principle assumed that the teachers are capable to arrange the teaching administration without thinking about the learning method that is used. Meanwhile, the work peers assumed that the good learning occurs when the students are silent enough and all of the materials can be well-delivered. Actually, the principle and the work peers have the important roles for the fifth-grade teachers to implement the alternative learning method. Their supports will encourage the fifth-grade teachers to eagerly change the learning atmosphere from passive to active and encourage the students to understand the meaningful material. The obstacles experienced by the teachers can be overcome by starting the cooperative learning in daily learning basis. The teachers must be brave enough to get out from the comfort zone. Using the learning model that is considered as the new method is not the hard thing to do for the teachers. The alternative learning model is designed to be suitable to the teachers' abilities. The teachers are simply not yet accustomed to using the alternative learning model. Moreover, it will be wiser if the principle also gives support and facilitate the teachers to implement the alternative learning method freely especially cooperative learning. Working peers also can become the role model for the fifth-grade teachers to conduct the better learning. It will have the more positive impact if the working peers have previously implemented alternative learning method especially cooperative learning. As the working peers have been previously conducted cooperative learning, the fifth-grade teachers will be more encouraged to exchange ideas and experiences regarding cooperative learning. The interviews that have been conducted were not merely to find out the obstacles experienced by the teachers when implementing cooperative learning, but also to find out the teacher's opinions about the implementation of cooperative learning. Based on the analysis of the interviews, all of the teachers assumed that cooperative learning is the suitable learning model to be implemented in the classroom. Moreover, cooperative learning is not the difficult learning model to be implemented. The following teachers' answers below become the benchmark:

"At first I was afraid to implement cooperative learning because I always use lecturing method in the learning process. However, it is not as difficult as I thought when I implemented it in the classroom."

"I was not confident when I was asked to apply cooperative learning. I felt that I am lack of learning, but I thought it was quite enjoyable when I implemented it."

"The students in my classroom were usually passive, but when I teach using cooperative learning, they turned to be the active persons."

"The class that I thought now has the more enjoyable atmosphere, the students become enthusiastic in the learning."

When the teachers were asked whether or not they will implement cooperative learning, they answered yes. They

looked so enthusiastic and could not wait any longer to implement cooperative learning.

The result shows that cooperative learning is actually easy to comprehend and implement. The teachers who were previously pessimistic to implement cooperative learning can implement it well. The teachers also state that the students in their classrooms become more active that make them find it easy to follow the learning and understand the meaningful materials. The view is in line with the research result found by Spikell in Yanuarto (2016, p. 237) stating that the students learn better when they become the active learner rather than the passive ones. The observation result shows the obstacles that they experienced when implementing cooperative learning. The students remain to find it hard to follow the cooperative learning. When it was asked by the researcher, almost all of the students stated that they have not yet known the learning implemented by the teacher. The students were unfamiliar with cooperative learning because they frequently used lecturing in the learning process. The students are accustomed to getting the knowledge from their teachers' explanations. The students are not given the opportunities to look for the knowledge from other sources. The interaction with their classmates remain low; therefore, the students felt unfamiliar when they were asked to make a group and they have to cooperate with their group members when the learning process took place.

The cooperative learning also leads the students to be active during the learning process. In the learning process before cooperative learning is implemented, there were several students that were active in the learning. For the students who are active in the learning, they found no difficulties when they have to implement cooperative learning. Meanwhile, for the passive students, it became the challenge that they have to experience. The passive students will be more left behind when there is no solution from the teachers to reduce the students' passive behavior.

The above-mentioned obstacles experienced by the students should immediately be overcome. The feeling of rigidity commonly occurs for the students. The teachers can attempt to give the understanding to the students about how cooperative learning is done. It will be better if the teachers give the guideline about the stages of cooperative learning for the students, so they can understand the cooperative learning process. In addition to the understanding about the cooperative learning stages, the teachers have to be accustomed to using cooperative learning in their classrooms. It will give the positive impact on the students' acceptance of the cooperative learning. The students will be familiar with the method and enjoy the cooperative learning that is implemented. Regarding the students' opinions on cooperative learning, the majority of students argue that cooperative learning is a fun lesson to follow. The students feel the new experience in the learning that is implemented and they also feel happy to be able to cooperate with the group members in completing the task given by the teacher. According to the students, doing the tasks given by the teachers in groups will make it easier for them to solve it. In addition, the students also feel the different learning atmosphere, the class becomes crowded yet in a positive way. The students become active in learning and are

not afraid to express their opinions. The students also want cooperative learning to continually be applied in further meetings.

IV. CONCLUSION

At the end of this study, it was found that there are some obstacles experienced by teachers and students in the implementation of cooperative learning. The obstacles which are faced are the rigidity and the unfamiliarity in implementing cooperative learning. This feeling of rigidity and unfamiliarity are due to the fact that teachers and students are not yet accustomed to using cooperative learning. The use of cooperative learning can be a solution to overcome such rigidity and unfamiliarity. The teachers' opinions on cooperative learning are all positive. According to the teachers, cooperative learning is easy to understand, easy to implement as well as helps the students to be more active in learning. Teachers become convinced to use cooperative learning as an alternative learning model in the next learning process. So do the students' opinions, they argue that cooperative learning is a fun lesson to follow. The students feel the new experience in the learning which is implemented and they also feel happy to be able to cooperate with the group members in completing the task given by the teacher. The students also feel the more enjoyable learning atmosphere.

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