

## **Self-Reflective Project in the EFL Online Class for Increasing Student Talk Time Using Cooperative Learning Method**

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### **Abstract**

*The pandemic of Covid19 causes teaching learning activities to be carried out online. This makes the teacher and students' interactions limited on the screen. Through self-reflection project, it has been found that students' engagement in class needs to be improved. Cooperative learning method was used to increase student talk time during the class. The data were four videos of the online class and the form of self-reflective project. Each video contained one lesson with its aim. The results showed that there was an increase in student talk time. Students became more active and engaged when participating in online classroom discussion. The teacher also produced less language production since the students played a role as the leader of the discussion who could make up particular rules during the discussion to create fun atmosphere. Students also became more creative and confident when sharing their ideas.*

***Keywords: self-reflective; cooperative learning; student talk time***

### **1. Introduction**

A teacher plays important roles in managing how the lesson runs in a class. This affects the success of a lesson. The main role of a teacher is to deliver knowledge to students. Students come to the class to learn something new every day. Then, a teacher is also the one who becomes the role model in class. This is what a teacher is usually unaware of. Students see their teacher as a reference especially in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) class. A teacher produces intonations, stresses, expressions and other language aspects in the class. Then, a teacher is also the one who must be able to create particular classroom environment. An appropriate environment supports students to achieve the aims of the lesson. For instance, a friendly environment makes students feel more confident when discussing in class. When students feel confident and comfortable, they produce more language target. This makes the student talk time (STT) increase. During the pandemic of Covid19, schools and courses are done online. English First (EF) MT Haryono Semarang is one of English courses that runs the lessons online. Teaching studying process is done through gadgets such as personal computers, tablets or mobile phones in a platform

which is called Tencent Classroom. Since the lessons are done on the screen, there are fewer interactions compared to the lessons that are done in a classroom. However, there are useful features available in this platform to make the lessons more engaging and interactive such as interactive whiteboard, mini whiteboard, desktop sharing, turntable, spinner, responder etc. This platform also allows the teacher to mute, unmute, show and disable the videos of the students. These features are useful especially to do classroom management. Teachers can also reward the students by giving them a trophy to increase students' engagement and participation. Another useful feature is that the teacher can move the students' videos and put them on the white board to form a seating arrangement. It also allows the teacher to enlarge the videos. When the teacher wants students to pay attention on one student in the class, they will be more focus on the biggest video, for example when they are listening to someone who is performing a speech. Hence, it is very likely to apply cooperative learning in the online class.

Understanding what has been done in class and what needs to be improved is a way to find which areas teachers need to focus on. Therefore, teachers need to be aware of what happens in class and how their students perceive it. Self-reflective project allows teachers to learn from their experience through a series of steps. Tencent Classroom automatically saves the process of the course, so the teachers can download the videos one the lessons have been done. The videos are the main instrument for conducting self-reflective project since teachers can self-reflect themselves by watching the process of lesson. Another important instrument is the form of self-reflective project which is provided by EF. Teachers regularly do self-reflective project and peer observation to be submitted to the central as the record of teacher development.

## **2. Literature Reviews**

Self-reflective teaching does not only mean that teachers investigate what they do in teachers and students (Renard: 2019). Audios or videos as instruments are tools that are used to facilitate the process of self-reflective project. This type of technology records what happens in the online class and they can be saved to watch anytime. (Richard and Lockhart, 1996:11).

Mercado and Baecher (2016) elaborated how videos could be used as a component of self-observation for teaching development. The research involved hundreds of teachers of Instituto Cultural Peruano Norteamericano (ICPNA), Peru. They listed particular conducive behaviors to increase STT and TTT in teaching. There was one area of problem that eighty-nine per cent of the teachers successfully recognize. The problem was they answered their own questions when asking students in class. Using the video-based self-observation, the participants achieved their goals in the area of developing effective instructions. This had an impact in the increase of STT in class.

English is one of the most studied languages in Indonesia. There are many schools in Indonesia that make English as a subject. Besides, many learners go to English courses for their own purposes. Brown (2007: 8) indicated the concept of learning. It is defined as the continued process of getting information or skill that requires storage systems, memory and cognitive organization. It includes focus and practices and

it makes behavior of the learners change. Moreover, Brown stated that teaching allows learning to facilitate the actions and to create the meaningful environment. Most teaching learning processes in English First are done using communicative language teaching. Students are expected to be able to use the language for meaningful interactions (Richards, 2006: 3). Each lesson has specific purpose for students to use the target language authentically. The topic that was used in this research is about immigration. This topic might be useful for students when they have to deal with migration or when they need to go abroad.

In a language class such as EFL class, students are directed to produce as many target languages as possible. This requires specific actions in class to achieve it. One way to achieve it is by using cooperative learning method. Cooperative learning method works when students collaboratively do the tasks and they contribute equally to increase their quality of work (Jolliffe, 2007:39). In an online class where the teacher and students have limited access to interact, this method will be useful to engage students' participation in producing more target language. It is necessary for teachers to have the competence of creating appropriate conditions in class. However, this also needs students' team work to achieve the goal of cooperative learning. This is in accordance with Jollife's statement about the cooperative learning development in class (2007:39).

### **3. Materials and Methods**

This research focuses on how cooperative learning is applied in an online class using self-reflective project as the guide to achieve the goals. Qualitative case study was used to elaborate the process of the self-reflective project. This research is limited to the area of teaching EFL in an online class during the pandemic of Covi19. It took four lessons in two weeks to reflect, to execute the action plans and to see the results. This reseacrh has transferable results, so that with similar situations and characteristics they can be implemented. There were two major ways in collecting the data. The first one is that the teacher did a direct observation in class to investigate what happens in the class. Then the teacher took note and recorded the process of the lessons in the online classroom as video files.

The data of this research are four videos of the online lessons and the self-reflective project form. The first video is used as the medium to see what happened in the class and what needs to be improved. The second and third videos show how the action plans are implemented. The fourth video represents the achievements and results. The duration of each video is 60 minutes. There are four students in the class. They are from Fronrunner 15, which is equal to level C1.2 Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

Online learning or virtual learning has been done for years. A study conducted by Kupczynski *et al* (2012) involved 56 graduate students of an online class. The researchers compared two online classes with different methods of learning. Using mixed method approach, it answered two research questions. First, the researchers wanted to find out if there was a difference in the success of an online class done by cooperative learning method and an online class done by traditional discussion strategies. Next, they also wanted to find out students' perception of the effectiveness when interacting with their peers. Quantitatively, it showed that there were no significant differences in the two research questions. The

researchers analyzed that the reason might have been probably because the participants focused more on their success in getting high scores instead of the strategy being used in class. The qualitative data showed students in the online class with cooperative learning method got more learning advantages than those in the online class with traditional group.

#### **4. Results**

It does not matter how long a teacher has been teaching. Teachers always have rooms to get better at particular areas. Self-reflective project allows teachers to understand themselves better when teaching and to know which areas they need to improve. By following certain steps, teachers are guided to conduct the project to achieve the goals.

It took four lessons to conduct this research. Each lesson had different section aims. However, these lessons referred to the same topic, immigration. The writer used cooperative learning method to increase student talk time during the online class. Since there were only four students in this class, they worked together in a group. It was found that each student produced the same portion of speaking and there was not a student who dominated the discussion. Each student played different role when discussing and they also took turn. Teacher talk time (TTT) was reduced during the lessons and as a result, student talk time (STT) was increased. The writer will describe how each lesson was conducted referring to each video and the note in the self-reflective project form.

##### **4.1. Lesson 1**

In this lesson, the teacher started a new unit. The aim of this lesson is students will be able to use vocabulary related to immigration. In the beginning of the lesson, the teacher introduced common words related to immigration such as asylum, assimilate, naturalize, remittance, marginalize, refugee etc. The teacher asked the students if they were familiar with the words. Each student described words that they already knew and shared it with the class. Then the students were asked to do the bookwork which is matching the target words to their definitions. Then the teacher checked the answers as a class. Next, the teacher asked them what reasons a person might choose to move to another country. There were only two students who actively participated in sharing the ideas. When the teacher asked the quieter students, they produced fewer words. After conducting the first lesson, the teacher started to write down the action plans on the form. There were three things that the teacher felt she did well in class. They were the ability to develop relationship with students, applying particular routines and using authentic materials. On the other hand, there were three things that need to be improved after reflecting to the first video. They were increasing student talk time (STT) and the pacing strategy. The teacher chose one area that needs improvements, which was increasing STT by applying cooperative learning method. The informal cooperative learning type were chosen since the students would get the mutual goal in the discussion in a short term (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec: 1998)

There were four specific steps to be applied in the next lessons. First, the teacher models an example. Second, the teacher grouped them and arrange their videos in a circle and uses arrows to show the direction

of who speaks after whom. Then the teacher asks the students to take turn acting as the leader of discussion. In this stage, the teacher gives the leader opportunity to use his/her authority to make particular rules for class. These actions plans were written as the guide for what to do on the next lessons.

#### **4.2. Lesson 2**

The aim of this lesson is students will be able to use global awareness to discuss the effects of immigration. Students were listening to an excerpt from a current affairs radio program. The program topic was immigration. Then the students wrote down the benefits and the drawbacks of living in push and pull countries according to the radio program on their workbook. These stages gave them the illustrations of what they were going to do next in the group while applying informal cooperative learning method. Students have had brief description of conditions in push and pull countries.

Referring to the specific steps on the self-reflective form, the teacher carried out focusing on the area of increasing TTT. The teacher asked the students to discuss more benefits and drawbacks in a group. In this stage, the type of informal cooperative learning began to be applied. Students were given time to think of some benefits and drawbacks of living in push and pull countries. Referring to the specific steps of action plans, the teacher formed the students' videos in a circle. The teacher drew an arrow between two videos to create a clockwise direction, so they know when they have to speak. Before assigning a student to be the leader of the discussion, the teacher had modeled how to lead the discussion and how to keep the discussion going. A student volunteered to be the first leader in the discussion. She opened the discussion by asking her peers one by one to share their ideas. The others took turn to be the leader. Once a student had a difficulty in giving an example of a push country, another one helped him by mentioning Indonesia. The one who helped then encouraged him to think of what has happened in Indonesia and why that country. By doing this, each student had the same portion of speaking in class. This lesson has ended and students achieved their mutual goal; reaching the aim of the lesson.

Compared to the first video, the second video showed that there were fewer pauses that the students made during the discussion. They became more engaged in sharing ideas. Those who could not explain particular words were helped by the higher achievers. The teacher helped the students when nobody could continue the flow of discussion by giving them some clues in a phrase.

#### **4.3. Lesson 3**

Looking back at the second video, the teacher found that the lesson could have been more fun. The teacher asked for her peers and senior teachers on how to create lively atmosphere. It was found that students are more engaged when they feel their learning process is similar with when they meet their friends at park. The teacher added some notes on the form what students usually do when they meet their friends; joking. Moving on the third lesson, the aim is students will be able to think critically to analyze data on human migration patterns. In this section, students were given a map of migration pattern and asked to interpret which countries have the highest and lowest immigration and emigration. Using the same form video seating arrangement, the students were asked to make a question to each person related to immigration. This time, the leader was given an opportunity to create a specific rule during the discussion. This requires

their creativity to create fun and lively atmosphere in class. The rules were for examples, the student had to add a word “chu” after each word, or the student had to answer the question with their eyes closed. The teacher monitored the students both individually and in group. When a student could not answer a question, another one helped him or her. Then the one who was helped had to say it again. This process gave benefits for both the helper and the one who needed help. For the helper, she or he felt satisfied for being useful to the others, and for the one who needed help got new knowledge and she or he could still produce words like the others (Johnson & Johnson: 2017: 8).

#### **4.4. Lesson 4**

The aim of lesson four is students will be able to use participle clauses related to immigration topic. After explaining the grammar rule of participle clauses, the teacher asked each student to explain again how to form a relative clause with their own example. Then students did the written tasks on their workbook.

After that, the students were asked to find a photo on internet and show it to the others. In a group, they had to tell the others what was happening in the photo with their own version using participle clauses. The listeners were note taking and they had to find the participle clauses that the presenter shared. They discussed how the presenter used the participle clauses and correct the mistakes that the presenter made if any. The mutual goal in this section was student became more aware of the structure of participle clauses and they applied the structures authentically.

Since this was the last lesson for the research, the teacher asked the students what things went differently in the last four weeks. They said that they became more active and independent in class. They also felt happier to work together for a mutual goal. Once a student found a difficulty, the others would help. They also realized that they produced more words and heard fewer words from the teacher.

The self-reflective project helped the teacher to be more focus on areas that need to be improved. In this project, the teacher focused on one area which was increasing STT. The teacher watched the video in depth after each video. Then the teacher noted down on the form what could have been done better in class, so the specific steps for action plans were made. The note would guide the teacher to execute the plans during the lessons. In creating the action plans, the teacher needed some references such as other teachers or senior teachers in the course. Some articles and books were also helpful especially in understanding some concepts and theories.

## **5. Conclusion**

Self-reflective project helps teachers understand which areas they do well and which areas they need to improve. This project showed that the teacher needed to increase students’ engagement and the STT by applying cooperative learning method in the online class. The first video showed how the class ran as usual. Then the teacher made a list of specific steps to be applied in the next lessons which were shown in the next three videos. Students became more active and engaged and they produced more words than usual.

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