

## **IS IT NECESSARY TO REBUILD GROUP WORK IN LEARNING?**

**Ummi Rasyidah**

University of Pasir Pengaraian

ummirasyidah@yahoo.com

### **ABSTRACT**

The use of cooperative learning in classroom activities is not a new thing. The current study investigates the strength and weaknesses of dynamic and static group formation. 33 students of English Study Program participated in the study. The study mainly focused on students' perception regarding the group formation during classroom activities. By applying open-ended interview, students' perception were recorded about possible benefit and disadvantages related to group formation. Overall, this study provides evidence both dynamic and static group formation can facilitate learning.

*Key Words: Rebuild, Group Work, Dynamics, Static*

### **BACKGROUND**

The current shortcoming ideas in teaching are provided cooperative learning strategies in classroom activities. The success and the widespread of using cooperative learning are largely found in many researches. One reason of implementing cooperative learning is a welcome group work. Many activities can engage students effectively in group work rather than individual work.

The confusion of group formation (dynamic and statics) emerged from different classical reasons. I regularly found these reasons comes from the students (1) they worked comfortably in the group, (2) it was difficult to find new group members to work cooperatively, (3) they lived and hanged out in the same environment,

and from educators (1) reforming group took time, (2) the students confused when group formation was changed since in other subjects with different lecturers they already grouped.

The design and structures for learning possible synthesized with a basic understanding from educators and students. The aim, of course is to help the students learn much from each others. The educators can label accurately each student's characteristics then find other strategies to make an improvement. In other words, cooperative group works have been used in educational setting to support knowledge instruction and communication among students. It can be taken into account by proposing group work in classroom activities.

## REVIEW OF RELATED THEORIES

There are a number of activities which Educator can adopt in his/her classroom. Indonesian as one of the EFL context, educator has a great opportunities to modify strategies or techniques so the temptation to use mother tongue can be reduced. The used of group work is no longer questionably benefit to students' learning process. The two types of group formation are best known in the beginning; dynamic and statics group work.

Explicit instruction is necessary to develop students' competencies. When the goal of teaching is to communicate successfully in English, both classroom management and language instruction should create opportunities for students to use, review and experience the English Language in communicative contexts. More important, ICT have widely integrated in learning activities. However, the technology was not adequately changed teaching structure of the course, individual and group learning activities still exist.

Essentially, working in groups means students not only working in groups but also working as groups (Dunne and Bennet 2005: 4). In dynamic group, students need to adapt well the members to work together. Johnson et al (2007) provided support that when group dynamics take place; it can accomplish effective collaboration and positive interdependent to achieve the goals.

Early as promoted by Slavin (2013: 6) a group must be composed by four to six members who maintained heterogeneous students in term of academic achievement level, sex and ethnicity.

Findings from other studies have validated cooperative base group. Those ways are widely used by the teachers around the world.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

It is known that for Indonesian Students, English is a foreign language. Various ways can affect the process and the product of foreign language learning in educational setting. An interview was used for data collection in the research. It was expected that the open-ended questions covered students' perception toward learning in group. The interview also obtained additional comments

about specific thing as well as suggestions for improvement. The interview was carried about the beginning of 2015-2.

Participation in the interview was a must dealt with students and educators in University of Pasir Pengaraian. The interviewees represented 4th semester students.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

Based on the conceptual indicators, the 7 questions were measured students' perspective towards dynamic and static group work activities.

Table 1. List of Questions

No	Questions
1.	How do you think about dynamic group work activities?
2.	How do you think about static group work activities?
3.	How do you work in dynamic group?
4.	How do you work in static group?
5.	Which one do you prefer, dynamic group or statics group?
6.	How do you feel about lecturers' approach in these types of group?
7.	Do you have other comments about group work formation?

The first questions were employed the interviewee to react towards dynamic group work activities. Significant different answers were found among the students' respond.

*MTN : I think if we make dynamic group work, we can more near with all friend in the class because we not just have correlation with some person.*

*NuI : I think this is a process to learn something, so although in study we need refreshing not always look and read book. So we need a dynamic group to share science in other people and the habit can we get from the group is we will hard to boring.*

*FS : I think about dynamic group work activities make me feel confuse for remember my group*

*Su : I think about dynamic group this is difficult because every material must change group but dynamic group is very good for students because with group that difference we can be exchange idea with friends.*

Surprisingly, most students responded

positively towards dynamic group formation. Even their answer varied, get close to other students, have new classroom atmospheres, get bored with the same group member and share new ideas and expediencies are their common reason. While five students reacted with two reasons; it is hard to recognize new group members and it is difficult to work with new group members.

Static group perspectives were asked after the students explained the answer towards dynamic group formation. A consistent respond were found, for example:

*RA : Statics group work activities is more good than other way to understanding a subject. The static group is available student to take focus and easy to make friendly between one person to another person.*

*SS : I think static group work activities do not make me difficult but only one group in every material and make more near to friend of group.*

*Ru : I think statics group can make me bored, and I do not like statics group, less exciting*

*because of the group we do not exchanged and less information.*

*Nu2 : I think not good. With static group we cannot add information, idea.*

Then, I continued ask the participant to confirm what they did when they grouped in to dynamic formation.

*Nu1 : I am enthusiast and more active to share ideas with the other members*

*RY : As long as not smartest student in my group, I feel do more better forward and I can improve way to learn and active to work together.*

*MS : I accept it and I will work what I can to do what we have divide the part of assignment.*

*Si : I do the best because many friends for change think and will many idea*

Only four students felt difficulty in delivering their idea. This is because they were not comfortable to work with new people. Characters are the major problem but all agree to work with others. Those participants were asked their responsibility toward working in statics group. Below the responds:

*SW : Low active because boring with friends groups. Because I already knew how they worked.*

*HG : I felt free to reply when discuss and conversation.*

*MS : It is more easy because we have to know the members before. So we can to do work more easy. Lazy student will give a little portion of work and leader should handle it. So we can doing the task and answer the task together.*

*RY : I feel stupid when I worked*

*with the same lazy person every time. I cannot improve the way to learn.*

Emotional feeling occurred when the researcher tried to find students' habit when they work in statics group. However, they still took part in group work activities. They also tried to distribute the task/assignment with the members' ability. Tolerance is high in this type of group work.

Related to previous questions, the consistency of students' respond exists. Five students preferred to work in statics group while others choose dynamic group formation. Next, the students had to pay attention to lecturer approach in both types of groups. All students thought that no different approach that a lecturer used when she/he taught in dynamic and statics groups.

When the last question was asked, below the students' respond:

*HG : for group in subject, I want a lecturer chooses group leader to arrange people in the group. Because friends do not work individual without no group chosen*

*Si : I think mix two groups to discuss not always classroom discussion*

*AS : nothing miss, cause those ways so helpfully in learn. Actually, those ways make us to able to work in team. Did not work alone in subject.*

*Nu2 : little comments that the lecturer must give one question for one person in each group to check the students understanding or not about the subject then get on the group*

The purpose of the research is to see whether necessary for the educator to rebuild group work formation or not. The empirical data showed that most students have positive attitudes towards dynamics group formation. Thus, it is logical that students need a larger social community especially for University students where they have to interact and communicate with wider society.

The data also provide a sense in which the students react in particular group activities. Shimazoe and Aldrich (2010)

confronted with resistance and hostility from students who believe they are being held back by slower teammates. Of course, the tolerance of less motivated and less responsive students should be evaluated by students and educators.

Although the participant can be categorized into adult learners, they still need the lecturer guidance in selecting the leader for each type of group learning.

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Today, we have some conclusions: the benefits of dynamic groups are talking about sosial and psychological factors while the benefit of statics groups formations are about the comfortable and emotional feeling among the group members.

There are still several open questions: how should we implement our group formation in relation with students' learning styles? How to explore that dynamic or statics group suitable for every student or only some of them? The further studies need to be tested.

### REFERENCES

- Dunne, Elizabeth and Neville Bennet. 2005. *Talking and Learning in Groups* Routledge: New York.
- Johnson, D.W., Johnson, R.T., and Smith, K. The State of Cooperative Learning in Post Secondary and Professional Setting. *Educational Psychology Review*, 19, 15-29.
- Shimazoe, J., and, Spencer Kagan, Rachel Hertz Lazarowits, Clark Webb and Richard SchmuckAldrich, H. (2010). Group Work Can Be Gratifying; Understanding and Overcoming resistance to Cooperative Learning. *College Teaching*, 58, 52-57.
- Slavin, Robert E. 2013. *Learning to Cooperative, Cooperative to Learn*. Eds. Robert. Slavin, Sholomo Sharan. Springer Science+Business Media LLC: New York.