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# POSITIVE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT, COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGY, READING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT: A CORRELATIONAL STUDY

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#### **Abstract**

Positive classroom environment is a good environment to make the goals of learning process can be achieved. In building a positive classroom environment, teacher are may not merely use of teachers' roles. Cooperative learning can help the teacher in classroom learning activities. In small groups, students can share and complete the goal of learning together with other students in the same class. The research is conducted on the even semester of 2018/2019 academic year in SMP Panca Jaya Surabaya. The students were given a questionnaire about Positive Classroom Environment and Cooperative Learning Strategy. Then all the students were given reading test to know the level of reading comprehension of each student. Using multiple regression analysis, it was proved at a significant level 0.004. Those variables have a medium positive correlation. Students who have a high level positive classroom environment and cooperative learning strategy have a good achievement. Thus, the alternative hypothesis was accepted. Suggestion proposed on the basis of the result is addressed to EFL teaching practitioners as well as other researchers who want to conduct positive classroom environment and cooperative learning research. The writer hopes that there will be another research discusses it.

**Keywords:** positive classroom environment, cooperative learning strategy, reading comprehension

## INTRODUCTION

Many people realize that studying English is important nowadays. English has become increasingly important as a medium through which people from a range of cultures can share their experiences and knowledge of globalization (Galuh, 2008). They want to learn it both in written and spoken. They want to learn English for work career, study or communication. Therefore English plays a vital role in human development. Especially in education, there

is an interaction between teachers and students in the classroom to learn English from basic to high level.

English is used in a global sense for international communication within multilingual societies (Mc Kay, 2002). When we communicate with other people, we cannot only use one set of words in the same way for all people, situations, and places. Thus, we need to understand with whom we communicate and where we having communication. Thus, we must be able to acquire English because many people can communicate using English. Therefore, mastering English is one of the important things in order to survive in this modern era.

In Indonesia, especially in Surabaya which has Javanese as the mother tongue, a lot of people want to learn English as a worldwide language. Therefore, mpther tongue can make one of problem when they want to communicate. Hrebova stated that language represents a significant foundation of communication (Hrebova, 2010). The students in the school get instructional in EFL (English Foreign Language) focusing on reading, writing, speaking and grammar. Therefore, communication between students and teachers should be supportive. Often, the researcher found some problems when the learning process is happens not well because there is no good communication. Other factors may be able to cause the problem such as the changing curriculum or the background of the students and teacher. This problem should have found the solution. Not only stakeholder but also the teacher looks for ways to help students learn effectively.

Considering the importance of English atIndonesia in all of the aspects, the government put English as a subject that tested in the national examination from elementary until high school level. In this new curriculum, which is known as Curriculum 2013 (K13), the teacher should deliver the learning process based on the content. It is different from the previous curriculum that applies before K13. The role of the teacher in K13 is not dominated and the role of the learner is not only like an audience. Therefore, the communication between teacher and student should work properly with each other to achieve the goal of learning.

Based on the condition above, the development of communication in the learning process can bring the effect in learning process. Teaching aids and syllabus should be remade to the new one. For the students, they should be an independent learner because they must learn more actively in the class. The impacts are significant for both teachers and students. Thus, it is needed effective communication between teacher and student.

Effective learning needs a good relationship between teacher and student. For the reason, relationships are the key to achieve success in effective learning. Fredson (2015) stated that by having a good relationship with students, teachers can offer students the chances to be motivated and feel engaged in the learning process. Thus, in an educational relationship between teacher and student is important to make the goal of study delivered well in the learning process. It is important to make good communication between teachers and students. Good teaching involves good communication between the teacher and students and also among students. The best productivity in a classroom comes from effective co-operation between the teacher and the students .... A supportive teacher is one who creates an efficiently positive classroom environment, who encourages students to behave well in the classroom and to be motivated (Fredson, 2015).

Furthermore, communication has a big contribution in building a positive classroom environment. The positive classroom environment is a warm, safe, and caring environment allows learners to influence the nature of the activities they undertake, engage seriously in their study, regulate their behavior, and know of the explicit criteria and high expectations of what they are to achieve (Mc Laughin, 2004). In building a positive classroom environment, we are may not merely use of teachers' roles anytime and anywhere in a similar way for all situations and places. There are many certainties of making a positive classroom environment in terms of the elements procedure. Either the students or teacher, those aspects will show the degree of interaction in the learning process. Based on the explanation, it is obvious that a positive classroom environment and cooperative learning strategy have a vital role to get the goal in the English learning process.

Furthermore, cooperative learning can help the teacher in classroom learning activities. Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). In small groups, students can share and complete the goal of learning together with other students in the same class. The teacher should make sure that the groups function effectively. Occasionally, the teacher makes a cooperative atmosphere in the learning environment. According to Nunan (2003: 34), "the work in cooperative learning teams is structured so that there is positive interdependence among the members in the group: the learner feels that they work together for mutual benefit". Therefore, they can share information and knowledge. Moreover, they also learn how to work together in the team and try to give a contribution to

the success of their team. Then, cooperative learning will promote more positive peer relationships, social support, and academic achievement.

Definitely, there is a researcher who discusses the positive classroom environment and cooperative learning strategy but it held in Cape Verde. Therefore this research needs to be conducted in Indonesia. For the reason, the educational climate Cape Verde and Indonesia are different. Then, the educational method in Cape Verde and Indonesia are also different. Moreover, the teacher and students still did not know the importance of a positive classroom environment and cooperative language strategy to achieve the goals of English learning and personal goals in class.

This research object takes junior high school students in the seventh grade of SMP Panca Jaya Surabaya. The reasons why the researcher chooses junior high school are the English curriculum in junior high school is started to focus on the English skill such as Reading. The syllabus of junior high school are almost learn about reading all of the time. Therefore, the learning teaching process in junior high school is more textual. Especially in this school, the researcher found some problem such as lack of vocabulary and reading. Whereas, those problem are basic skill that students should have it. Another problems found about the classroom environment in learning process. The learning environment also important for getting the goal of learning process. Then, other problems shown when student work in group. There are some students still didn't know their task and responsibility in group. Therefore the classroom environment and teacher strategy such as cooperative learning should be well to support the students' skills and competence.

The researcher aims to accomplish this research will bring advantages to the learners and teachers, not only for literature, bring another dimension of understanding to the data collected through teacher and student surveys. The data collection provides important data to help teachers and students based on the impact of their relationship. This research is also significant because it was conducted in a classroom of second language learners capable of giving their real perspective and opinion about the topic in the study. By this research, the researcher hopes that the result will give an influence on the learning-teaching process.

# **METHOD**

The researcher applied the correlation research design in this research. Correlational research designs are used to measure the relationship between two or more continuous variable (Latief, 2016). In this research, the researcher investigated whether or not there are significant correlations positive classroom environment and

cooperative learning strategy as well as each scale of the students' reading achievement, and whether positive classroom and cooperative learning strategy influence their student's reading achievement of the seventh-grade students of Panca Jaya Junior High School Surabaya.

The group of individuals with same common characteristic in research is called population. The population for this research is all of the seventh-grade students of Panca Jaya Junior High School Surabaya in the academic year 2018-2019. The total number of students is 44 students. The researcher used a non-random sampling method because the population is not large.

# Data Analysis Instrument Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for gathering information from respondents. The writer gives the questionnaire to the students to obtain the data which are analyzed. There are many advantages of the questionnaire are:

- a. The researcher is not necessarily present in front of the respondent.
- b. It can be shared directly too many respondents.
- c. It can be answered by the respondents as fast as their own and depended on their part-time.

In constructing the questionnaire, the writer is used a closed questionnaire. It means that the respondents answer the questions by choosing one of the answers that are given by the researcher. In this study, the writer is used as a questionnaire to get additional information about the students' reason about reading comprehension. In this questionnaire, the writer takes some statements and questions to make the analysis easier. Those instruments were followed:

- 1. Positive Classroom Environment Questionnaire
- 2. Cooperative Learning Strategy Questionnaire

# **Test**

Besides the questionnaire, a reading test uses to obtain data to and cross-validate the students' responses to the questionnaire. The test is a procedure of giving a question that involved all samples which are done by answering the question in the paper. The researcher gives the test to the students in order to know students' reading comprehension in the learning process in the class.

# Data Collection Technique Questionnaire

In this research, the researcher used a ready-made questionnaire that had been made by the researcher. The first questionnaire is to test a positive classroom environment in the class. The second questionnaire is to test the work of cooperative learning in class. There are 30 items in a positive classroom environment questionnaire. Then, there are 20 items in the cooperative learning questionnaire.

# **Reading Test**

In this research, the researcher makes a test that is consist 50 multiple choice question. These questions included reading comprehension. The students must answer individually and it is allocated 90 minutes for answering. The purpose of the test is to measure the students reading achievement.

# Data Analysis Technique Questionnaire Analysis

The data from the questionnaire will analyze, the minimum score for each statement is 1 and the maximum score for each statement is 5. The lowest total score of each questionnaire is 5 and the highest total is 30 while the lowest total score of all the five score PCE is 150 and CL is 100. Then, to determine the students' positive classroom environment and cooperative learning by observing the mostly check item "strongly agree" column. The result will classify to analyzing the frequency and percentage of each perception of a positive classroom environment and cooperative learning. Furthermore, the criterion of positive classroom environment questionnaire criteria validation is taken by the theory from Wilen. Then, questionnaire criteria validation is taken by the theory from Kagan

# **Reading Comprehension Analysis**

Students reading comprehension is tested by giving a test. Then, analyze manually by using a scoring system. The reading test is consisting of 50 items in the form of multiple choices. All of the items can be answered correctly, the score is 100. But if the entire questions are answered incorrectly, the score will be 0.

### **RESULTS**

In the table 4.6, it is found that  $f_{table} = 6.532$  significance at 0.004 level. It is indicate that  $f_{table}$  is lower than  $f_{value}$  because  $f_{table}$  significance at 0,004 levels is 3.23. The result shows that a positive classroom environment and cooperative learning are significantly correlated to students' reading comprehension. Therefore, the

researcher can conclude that the students whom great positive classroom environment and cooperative learning in the English class have better achievement in reading. On the other way, the students who have no positive classroom environment and cooperative learning in the English class have the worst achievement in reading.

It is considered that having a positive classroom environment and cooperating learning in English can get the better reading achievement. The student with the high positive classroom environment and cooperative learning perform an intensively effort to learning rather than students with a low-level positive classroom environment and cooperative learning. Additionally, they feel enjoyable learning during the teaching process. It was shown by their respect to finish the task that the teacher gives and answer the teacher's question given to them. They also produce more effort than other students although there is meaning of the word that they do not understand.

Different from the students with the low-level positive classroom environment and cooperative learning are indicate unlikely to achieve the success of learning no care how good the teacher and the lesson. It indicates that positive classroom environment and cooperative learning are one of factors which may influence the students' success in learning especially in reading. For the reason, a positive classroom environment and cooperative learning are positively and significantly correlated to the students' reading comprehension. When students have a good attitude toward English lessons, they will enjoy and plan to learn English as much as possible in order to get a good achievement.

**Table 1 Multiple Correlation Analysis Result** 

Model Summary											
Model	R	R	Adjusted R	Std. Error of the	Change Statistics						
		Square	Square	Estimate	R Square	F	df1	df2	Sig. F		
					Change	Change			Change		
1	.511 <sup>a</sup>	.261	.221	1.41596	.261	6.532	2	37	.004		

a. Predictors: (Constant), CL, PCE

# **Illustrations**

By analyzing table 4.6, the researcher found that a positive classroom environment and cooperative learning are simultaneously correlated to the students' reading comprehension. The X1 and X2 are correlated at 0.511 to Y variables at a significance level of 0.004. They are not negatively correlated which

means that those variables have a medium positive correlation. It is supported by an interpretation table of r on Sugiyono (2007:231) is indicated a medium level of correlation. Ratner (2009) and Latief (2016:117) state that if the r of the two variables are between 0, 41 - 0, 60 means they have a medium correlation. Medium level of correlation between positive classroom environment and cooperative learning to students' reading comprehension also exposed that there are other factors which may strongly affect students' reading comprehension beside positive classroom environment and cooperative learning. Michael and Geraldine (2018) found that the factors which affect in reading comprehension of the students are languages, teacher, student, school head, home, school, and community factors.

**Table 2 Interpretation ppppppppp** 

Interval	Interpretation			
0,00 - 0,199	Very Low			
0,20 - 0,399	Low			
0,40 - 0,599	Medium			
0,60 - 0,799	High			
0,80 - 1,000	Very High			

# **Illustrations**

By looking at the previous table 4.6 and 4.7, it is considered that there is a positive medium level correlation between positive classroom environment and cooperative learning to students' reading comprehension. Amir and Fatemeh (2013) Cooperative Learning activities offer the opportunity to develop language usage such as reading. In addition, Wilen (2004) stated by having positive classroom environment students comfort and enjoying the class. Thus, students reading comprehension can be improved. Moreover, having a positive classroom environment and cooperative learning strategy are helping the students who have difficulties especially in reading. The students will interact with each other to get the sole comfort in the classroom. Students also can ask the teacher about the material they do not understand. Therefore, the students are eager and happy to learn.

Reid (2013) argued that a positive classroom environment makes teachers' instructions more effective, while the student got learning to enjoy fully. Fosnot and Perry (2005) indicated that English reading materials could be learned through social interaction by undergoing re-definition and re-conceptualization of the materials to become internalized. Zoghi, Mustapa, Mashum (2010) define reading

skills are enhanced in a learning environment where learners interact and use language for socially constructing meaning. When a student cooperative in learning and have built a positive classroom environment, it helps them in learning reading comprehension effectively. Thus benefits also gain successful to the students to learn reading.

### **DISCUSSION**

Reminding the main purpose of this study, this aims to investigate the effect of a positive classroom environment and cooperative learning on students' reading comprehension. The result of the analysis in the previous chapter shows that a positive classroom environment and cooperative learning are positively correlated to students' reading comprehension. It means the alternative hypothesis (Ha) stated "Positive Classroom Environment and Cooperative Learning are significantly correlated to students' reading comprehension" is accepted. By looking at the previous hypothesis, the researcher predicts that students who have a high positive classroom environment and cooperative learning especially in reading have better reading achievement rather than those who are not.

This result support theory from several experts such as Wilen (2014) who said that a positive classroom environment is a supportive climate for learning. He also stated that a positive classroom environment makes the learner feel comfortable in the learning process. Another expert, Mc Laughin (2004) argued that positive classroom environment purpose to guide students to be respectful and responsible for their actions and works. Moreover, the student's behavior also needs to integrate between student's achievement and relation with the teacher. In order to improve students' learning in reading, there are other factors may complete that indicate students have positive classroom environment. There are six indicators for measure qualities of positive classroom environment.

First is respectfulness. Being a student is not only come to the class but also they must respect the teacher and their friends. These respects in class or outside make the student or the teacher have a crucial role. Teachers also can show their respect to their students. They also create the school as a learning habitat enjoys for learning. The respect between student-student and student –teacher or teacher-student should be kept in well.

The second is organizations and punctually. The students recognize that mastering English is very important. They implicate their feel by prepared their homework and arrive on time in English class. It is one of the students respect their English teacher. The teacher is also ready with a lesson plan which is arranged before learning English. Therefore, the time to learn English did not waste because the students not prepared well.

Third is constructive feedback. Build a positive classroom environment is not as easy than saying. They also often face difficulties. They are feeling afraid or nervous to offer opinions or answer to the teacher question or statements. It can make the students did not improve their knowledge. Improving the knowledge needs other support from others especially the teacher. The support also can from the discussion in the classroom. It is important for the students to focus on the classroom discussion to increase their knowledge. Furthermore, it is important for the teacher to construct good feedback.

Fourth indicator is creativity. The students always get difficulties. Nevertheless, they try finding a way to handle their difficulties. The students' difficulties often appear in the material. This is also can make the students hinder their creativity. It is one of the duties of the students because it can encourage their creativity to study English. It is good for keeping the students' interest to study English.

Fifth indicator is Enthusiasm. Enthusiasm in learning process is needed. It makes the students' always want to learn a new thing from the lesson. This enthusiasm also needed for teacher in order to make teacher improve their creativity in teaching the material. Thus, it will make the students' interest to study. Even, they also want to have a good achievement.

The last point of indicator is enforced rule. The students' enthusiasm is supported with an understanding of the importance the classroom rule. The students also aware when they are breaking the rule, the teacher will enforce them. Most of the students said the rule of English class has a good impact on them. The students also did not mind if the teacher makes the rule. They also are ready to be punished if they break the English class rule.

Those six indicators mentioned above cannot be separately applied to the teaching-learning process. For the reason, one indicator support and contributes to other indicators. If the indicator is not work well, it might make other indicators are not work well too. Teacher and students must give attention to make the indicator work well. Therefore, it means all indicators should be simultaneously applied at the same time.

There are numerous studies shown the effectiveness of cooperative learning with any level students. Cooperative learning with English reading instruction creates student opportunities to interact with peers, increase peer communication and support, encourage is another cooperative learning indicator that supports reading-comprehension development and lower anxiety (Gillies & Ashman, 2000). While, cooperative learning is one of strategy by the teacher that helps students achieve better and make positive relations among the students (Kagan, 1994). He also stated cooperative learning to help facilitate active learning, team building, and group skill.

There are five instruments in cooperative learning, they are positive interdependence, individual and group accountability, promotive interaction, teaching the students required interpersonal and small group skill and group processing.

First is positive interdependence. In teaching learning process the task is always done by the students. When they know what the task in group is, they will not confuse about the goal. Every student in a group will give the effort to gain success the task and goal of group. It will make easier to other members of the groups to finish the task. Additionally, the member has a positive contribution to the group.

The second instrument is individually and group accountability. In a group, students must know about their job. Even though, the task or the goal of learning is too difficult for them. This teamwork will support other groups' member to get the goals in learning process. Teacher should asses the work individually and make sure the group gives the appropriate result. But students need to consider that they know the process and the result of the task.

Third instrument is promotive interaction. Promotive interaction is the way of the students to sharing the resource. A lot of resources they share each other, it makes them easier learning in group. The resource is not only a book but also dictionary or journal. If the resource of the students is enough, the goals of the task can be done appropriately. Additionally, it can make the knowledge of the students increase.

Fourth instrument is teaching students required interpersonal and small group skill. Interpersonal and small group skill is a basic teamwork skill. The students must have the skill even though the resource is limited. It helps them to communicate and make decision in a group. The teacher can help the students to arrange the member of the group. In order to prevent member of group who does not have the basic skill of teamwork. For the reason, the students can manage the conflict in group and make them focus on the task.

The last instrument is group processing. Group processing is a process in group to set up the goal of group. Thus, the students should aware the process to maintaining effective works. In the group processing is need to open discussion each other to evaluate the work. The discussion can be impacted to the students in class or outside. The key is the communication while the group processing is work. In order to ensure the work is good or not to get better achievement.

Based on the findings, this research has a medium significant between positive classroom environment and cooperative learning toward reading comprehension. There are another factor may influence the significant. Based on Koda (2007) said that there are various variables that impact students' reading comprehension such as: vocabulary knowledge, prior knowledge, meta-cognitive information and reading

strategies. This factor is influenced by the readers' strength and fluency in language and their comprehending of its applications and different meanings.

From the calculation, the significance of correlation between positive classroom environment and cooperative learning to reading comprehension is medium. It is because there is another factor that influences reading comprehension. Motivation is one of the factors in reading comprehension. This factor can be make the students want to study harder or not. Anxiety is also one of factor that can make students successfully to get good score in reading comprehension. It is possible that mastering vocabulary as a factor in reading comprehension. For the reason, when the students reading a text they always get difficulty in get the meaning.

# **CONCLUSION**

The result of the analysis on the previous chapter reveals that positive classroom environment and cooperative learning are positively correlated to students' reading comprehension. it is found that  $f_{table} = 6.532$  significance at 0.004 level. It is indicate that  $f_{table}$  is lower than  $f_{value}$  because  $f_{table}$  significance at 0,004 levels is 3.23. Meanwhile, there several important instruments which affect positive classroom environment such as respectfulness, organization and punctually, constructive feedback, creativity, enthusiasm and enforced rules Then, the three main sources that raise cooperative learning such as positive interdependence, individual and group accountability, promotive interaction, teaching students required interpersonal and small group skill and group processing. All of the sources should be understood in order to gain good achievement in reading.

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