CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review brings concepts of the term of students' collaboration, proficiency pairing, and patterns of dyadic interactions

2.1 Leading Theories Which Support Pair Collaboration

2.1.1 Psychological Perspective

Leading theories on Second Language Acquisition (SLA) support the use of small group and pairs in the classroom because interaction between learners will promote L2 learning. From a psycholinguistic theoretical perspective, second language acquisition is facilitated by negotiations for meaning which make the linguistic input comprehensible and encourage them to modify their output to be more target-like.

2.1.2 Studies Based on Psychological Perspective

Research informed by psycholinguistic perspective has investigated the impact of various variables such as task type, context on the quantity and quality of negotiations and modified output, and L2 proficiency (Long and Porter, 1985; Swain and Lapkin, 1998; Pica, 2002).

Long and Porter (1985) reviewed five pedagogical arguments for the use of group work in second language (SL) learning. First is the potential of group work for increasing the quantity of language practice opportunities. Students so not have enough time to practice the new language in EFL classroom; most of the time is used by teacher for explaining or doing some administration things. Group work helps to increase students' talk in classroom because they should communicate each other. Second, the potential group work for improving the quality of student talk. Besides the quantity of students' talk, group work also helps students to increase the quality. The interaction between teacher and students with L2 used usually a prompting question or to correcting students' grammar. Pair work with clear instruction will create natural communication between students and help them to solve their problem in using L2. Third is for individualizing instruction. The language ability may different from one student to others which can come from cognitive or developmental stages, attitudes, motivation, cultural background, personality, prior experiences, target language needs, etc. Group work obviously cannot handle the differences but it still can help. Each group can work in different set of materials suited to their needs. Forth is for creating a positive affective climate in the classroom. Small group of peers will create intimate setting and more supportive environment rather than public atmosphere of lockstep instruction. And last one is for increasing student motivation. Group work help students to increase their quality of

L2 and riches the variety of language practice. Students will involve in lesson at a more personal level and it will motivate learners.

On the other hand, Swain and Lapkin (1998) study provide support for a theoretical orientation toward viewing dialogue as both a means of communication and a cognitive tool. They analyzed four grade 8 French immersion classes with different treatment. The students were to work out the story together and then write it out. Prior to doing the task, the class was given a short mini-lesson on French reflexive verbs. The data gathered from the task was analyzed using Language Related Episodes. While doing the task, students had various problems and they use L1 and L2 to communicate and solve the problems. This study found that variation in how other pairs of students in the class perform the task supports existing evidence that the same task does not provide similar occasions for L2 learning to all student dyads.

Pica (2002) study is also based on the psycholinguistic perspective. The study focused on the role of subject-matter content in second language (L2) learning. The study was identify ways in which teachers modified classroom interaction about subject-matter content in order to assist the input, feedback, and production needs of L2 learners, and to promote their attention to developmentally difficult relationships of L2 form and meaning that they had not fully acquired. The data came from 6 pre-academic English L2 classes; each class was composed of 10-15 high intermediate English L2 students. The results of the study was reveal

numerous contexts in which the discussion interaction might have been modified for the kinds of input, feedback, or production that could draw students' attention to developmentally difficult form-meaning relationships. The teachers and students tended to exchange multi utterance texts, the comprehensibility of which provided little basis for modified interaction and attention to form and meaning.

Another study by Foster and Otha (2005) investigated the value of language classroom negotiation of meaning from both cognitive and sociocultural perspectives. The study discussed the measures typically used to identify negotiated interaction and proposes that more rigorous definitions need to be employed to separate signals of communication problems from signals of interest and encouragement. The study found that learners actively assisting each other to transact the task through co-construction and prompting. Learners expressed interest and encouragement while seeking and providing assistance and initiating self-repair of their own utterances. Negotiation is one of a range of conversational processes that facilitate SLA as learners work to understand and express meaning in the L2.

2.1.3   Sociological Perspective

The use of group work, including pair work, in the second language classroom is also informed by sociocultural theories. From a sociocultural lens, learning is a socially situated activity. Learners,

novices, construct knowledge in social interaction with more capable individuals, *experts* (Vygotsky, 1978). The novice will reach their potential level of development if there is an appropriate level of assistance from the expert member. Such assistance is now commonly referred to in the literature as scaffolding.

However, number of researches (e.g. Donato, 1994, Storch, 2002, Otha, 2001) show that scaffolding can also occur between peers when working in group or pair work. When two learners who have different strengthnesses and weaknesses working together, they can provide scaffolded assistance to each other and achieve a level of performance beyond their individual level.

2.1.4 Studies Based on Sociological Perspective

From this theoretical perspective, language, whether in L1 or L2, is perceived as psychological tool that enables learners to deliberate and solve cognitively challenging problems. When working with peers, these deliberations and the pooling of linguistic resources result in language learning. There are some studies which based on this perspective; Donato, 2005; Storch, 2005; Watanabe, 2008.

Donato (2005) study was to illustrate how students co-construct language learning experiences in the classroom setting. The study also was to uncover how L2 development is brought about in social plane. The participants of the study were third semester students of French at an

America University. The three of them has been worked together before the study and they seemed to enjoy working collaboratively. The result of his study indicated that scaffolding occurs routinely as students work together on language learning task. The study also suggested that the changes in linguistic systems are brought about in ways that go beyond mere input crunching by individual learner.

Another example from Storch (2005) who investigated the nature of collaboration when students jointly writing. The participants were adult ESL students completing degree courses. The study found that pairs produced shorter but better texts in terms of task fulfillment, grammatical accuracy, and complexity. The study also suggested that collaboration afforded students the opportunity to pool ideas and provide each other with feedback. Most students in the study were positive about the experience, although some did express some reservations about collaborative writing.

Watanabe (2008) also drawn on sociocultural theory to explore how adult ESL learners interact with either a higher or a lower proficiency peer during pair problem solving, and how they each perceive the interactions with their partners. The participants of the study were three ESL learners engaged in a three-stage task: pair writing; pair noticing; and individual writing with two learners, one with a higher and one with a lower L2 proficiency level than their own. Data showed that the higher- and the lower proficiency peers could both provide opportunities for

learning when they worked collaboratively. Moreover, all three learners preferred to work with a partner who shared many ideas, regardless of their proficiency level. These findings suggested that proficiency differences are not the decisive factor affecting the nature of peer assistance.

Recent studies on pair work have shown the benefit of pair work in the classroom (e.g. Kowal and Swain, 1994; Swain and Lapkin, 2000; Storch, 2005; Truong and Storch, 2007; Dobao, 2012; Stoch and Aldosari, 2012; Lasito and Storch, 2013). Pair work promotes L2 learning because students have more opportunities to practice their L2 with their peers. Students can improve their quantity and quality of L2 practice more than in teacher-led classroom. They will have natural conversation with their peers and it will encourage them to increase their L2. Pair work also offer low anxiety to students to use L2 because they have known their peers.

2.2   Language Proficiency

Leeser (2004) define the term proficiency as a learner's general language ability in speaking, listening, reading and/or writing based on some kind of criteria or measure. Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is a standardized test to measure the English language ability of non-native speakers. From TOEFL website, the TOEFL test is the most widely respected English-language test in the world, recognized by more than 10,000 colleges, universities

and agencies in more than 130 countries, including Australia, Canada, the U.K. and the United States. TOEFL is developed by Educational Testing Service (ETS). This test is used to measures the participants' ability to use and understand English at the university level. And it also evaluates how well the participants combine their reading, listening, speaking and writing skills to perform academic tasks. There are four scaled section scores and a total score in TOEFL; reading, listening, speaking and writing section with the scale score of 0–30 for each section. The TOEFL scores are valid for 2 years.

Another test is The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) which is managed by the British Council, IDP: IELTS Australia and Cambridge English Language Assessment and established in 1989. From its website, IELTS is the high-stakes English test for study, migration or work. There are two types of the IELTS test: IELTS Academic and IELTS General Training. IELTS Academic test is for people applying for higher education or professional registration in an English speaking environment. Whereas, IELTS General Training test is for those who are going to English speaking countries for secondary education, work experience or training programs. It is also a requirement for migration to Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the UK. The test focuses on basic survival skills in broad social and workplace context. IELTS results are reported as band scores on a scale from 1 (the lowest) to 9 (the higher) for each test component (listening, reading, writing, and speaking) and then averaged and rounded to produce an overall band score. Similar with TOEFL, the IELTS results valid for 2 years.

There is another test which developed by Education Testing Service, Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). From its website, TOEIC is used by organizations around the world to hire, place and promote employees. There are two different forms of the exam; first, The TOEIC Listening and Reading Test consists of two equally graded tests of comprehension assessment activities totaling a possible 990 score. Second, the newer TOEIC Speaking and Writing Test comprises tests of pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, overall coherence and structure totaling a possible 400 score.

Another English proficiency test which is common in university context in Indonesia is Test of English Proficiency (TOEP). TOEP is TOEFL-like test which held by *Pusat Layanan Tes Indonesia* (PLTI) and guaranteed by The Association for The Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Indonesia (TEFLIN). TOEP is used to gather the overview of students' English proficiency in university. In the university where this study was conducted, every student in first semester should take TOEP test at the first month of learning activities. This test is used as diagnostic test for English Department students.

2.3   Studies on Proficiency Pairing in Language Learning

Yule and Macdonald (1990) used two levels of proficiency in their study, high and low proficiencies. Their study investigated interaction and negotiation of meaning between mixed proficiency pair during a specific task and they used Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores as a proficiency measure. Yule and Macdonald suggested that when higher proficiency learner played dominant

role to give input, little negotiation occurred because if the lower proficiency learner played a passive role, the higher one seemed to avoid the partner's contribution. However, when the lower proficiency learner was responsible, there were more negotiation, turn taking and a successful resolution for referential conflicts.

In other hand, Watanabe (2008) placed participants of her study into three proficiency groups (lower, intermediate and higher) based on their scores from the short version of a model TOEFL. Watanabe found that when more-proficient and less-proficient learners work together to solve linguistic problems, one could figure that their patterns of interaction may represent either the expert/novice or dominant/ passive patterns of interaction, due to their proficiency differences. Watanabe also suggested that proficiency differences do not seem to be the factor in affecting the nature of peer assistance but the pattern of interaction may have greater impact.

Storch and Aldosari (2012) also investigated the nature of pair work in English as Foreign Language class and they investigated both mixed proficiency pair and same proficiency pair. There are three types of pairs; pairs consist of two high proficiency learners (H-H), pairs consist of a high and a low proficiency learner (H-L), and pairs consist of two low proficiency learners (L-L). Their study suggested that there were a greater focus on language use within H-H pairs than in H-L and L-L pairs. The L-L pairs seemed more likely to completing the task than on deliberations about language use. The H-L pairs produced more Language

Related Episodes (LREs) when they formed a collaborative or expert/novice pattern of interaction.

2.4 Patterns of dyadic interaction

Patterns of dyadic interaction focused on the role of relationship in pair work. Storch (2002, 2009) distinguished four patterns of dyadic interaction: collaborative, expert-novice, dominant-dominant and dominant-passive. The patterns are based on equality (level of contribution and control over task) and mutuality (level of engagement with each other's contributions.

Pairs coded as collaborative if they show high levels of equality and mutuality. This means, both learners in pair contribute in task and engage with each other's suggestions. In expert-novice pattern, one learner seems to take more leading role in the task, but this dominant learner encourages the other learner to contribute. In dominant-dominant pairs, both learners contribute to the task, but they have a low level of mutuality with each other's contribution. In dominant-passive pairs, on learner takes control of the task and other learner gives little contribution, and there is low level of mutuality between each other's contribution (Storch and Aldosari, 2012).