

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, research questions, purpose of the study, scope of the study, and significance of the study.

1.1 Background of The Study

Pair and group work have been common practices in the classroom and have become topics of extensive research in general education. In language learning, pair and group work activities are regarded as a cooperative learning strategy that helps the student improve productivity and provides communication classroom opportunities (Zhang, 2010). Initially, this strategy is supported by Vygotskys' sociocultural theory (1978), which argues that a persons' language cognitive development is primarily influenced by people and their surroundings. This theory claims that interaction between people is essential for language learning to develop the cognitive aspect. In this case, pair or group work is used as a strategy for language learning. Vygotsky, in his theory, also explained that a child would get more knowledge of language when they interact with other people in the environment, particularly when they engage in interaction with adults.

In the context of second/foreign language learning, Vygotskys' sociocultural theory (1978) pointed out the potential advantages of peer interaction in a way that while participants communicate with each other, they will engage in meaning-negotiation and hypotheses-testing about the

second/foreign language. Research informed by sociocultural theory has highlighted that the student who works in pairs provides more knowledge from peers who engage in activity with a less experienced person/peer in the collaboration process. In the EFL context, students with low levels of English proficiency can also help their classmates. Even novices or students with low English language proficiency can help their peers (Kim & McDonough, 2008). In line with Ohta (2001), who indicated argues that students can help their peers because each student has different strengths and weaknesses

Although pair work has proven to be facilitative for language learning, when learners work in pairs, they might behave differently and the nature of pair work might affect the learning outcomes. Storch (2002) explained that the learners could not ignore the fact that in face-to-face interaction, the learner negotiates not only the topic but also their relation. It means that in face-to-face interaction, the learner might have different behavior during the negotiation in the pair work, which can affect their learning outcomes. A growing number of studies that examine dynamics of pair behavior in second language contexts have shown not only that there are differences in the pattern of pair behavior but, more importantly, that some patterns are more conducive to learning than others (i.e., Storch, 2002; Watanabe & Swain; 2007; Kim & McDonough, 2008).

Research has been conducted on the relationship between the pattern of interaction and language learning from different foci (Watanabe & Swain, 2007; Kim & McDonough, 2008; 2011). In their study, Watanabe and Swain (2007)

considered issues such as the relationship between patterns of interaction and post-test results. The findings of this study suggested that the patterns of pair interaction greatly influenced the frequency of LREs and post-test performance. When the learners engaged in collaborative patterns of interaction, they were more likely to achieve higher post-test scores regardless of their partners' proficiency level. It seems that proficiency differences do not necessarily affect the nature of peer assistance and L2 learning. Kim and McDonough (2008) looked at the effect of interlocutor proficiency on patterns of interaction. They found that the collaborative dialogue with advanced interlocutors contained significantly more lexical LREs and correctly resolved LREs. In terms of their patterns of interaction, the learners showed different pair dynamics when collaborating with interlocutors from different proficiency levels. In their recent study, Kim and McDonough (2011) investigated the effect of pre-task modeling on patterns of interaction. Half of the learners in this study viewed videotaped models of collaborative interaction prior to carrying out the tasks, while the other did not receive pre-task modeling. The finding of this study indicated that learners who received pre-task modeling produced more LREs and correctly resolved a more significant proportion of those LREs than learners who did not receive any models. They also demonstrated more collaborative pair dynamics than learners who did not receive models. Overall, these studies have highlighted that students who adopt a collaborative interaction pattern are more successful in language learning.

In Indonesia, two examples of researchers conducted a study related to the pattern of interaction in pairwork activity using Storchs' (2002) theory. Mufiz et al. (2017), investigated students' nature in pair interaction due to its vital role in learning. The result showed that five patterns emerged in pair interaction, i.e., collaborative pairs, dominant/dominant pairs, dominant/passive pairs, expert/novice pairs, and passive/passive pair. However, feedback provided by collaborative and expert learners contributed to the revision changes of their partners' writings so that the development of writing aspects under these two patterns was better than others. Besides, other factors that contributed to the students' writing were confounding variables such as student proficiency, writing capability, and teacher feedback. Rahayu (2020) investigated verbal interaction in collaborative writing between students from two countries with different L1 when writing an academic essay in a foreign language writing class. Eight students from Indonesia and China participated and were divided into Indonesian-Indonesian pairs and Indonesian-Chinese pairs. The findings showed that pairs who adopted a collaborative pattern denote three categories in their collaborative spoken interaction: what to write (ideas), where to write (structural organization), and how to write (language-related). However, Indonesian-Indonesian pairs discussed on how to write (language-related) more than the Indonesian-Chinese pairs.

Even though much research on language pedagogy indicated the advantages of the use of pair work in the second language classroom, students sometimes seem reluctant to work in pairs, mainly when doing grammar-focused tasks (Storch, 2007). The students prefer to work individually rather than work

collaboratively in pairs. Storch (1999), in her study, found that students who worked in pairs did the task more accurately than those who worked individually. Storch (2007) found that transcribed pair talk showed that most pairs engaged actively in deliberations over language and tended to reach correct resolutions. Many studies these days, however, put more attention in speaking-focused tasks rather than grammar-focused tasks in using pair work (see, for examples, Oktaviani & Roza, 2015; Jatmiko, 2017; Yulitrinisya & Don, 2018; Assubaidi, 2019). Therefore, it is crucial to do the analysis through grammar-focused tasks in pair work. In this study, the grammar-focused task used is the text editing task.

Carless (2008), in his study, mentioned that one of the concerns teachers might have about the use of pair work, particularly in foreign language classes where learners share an L1, is that learners might use their L1 rather than L2 in their pair work. Supporting the interaction sometimes learners use L1 in learning the L2, mainly students with low proficiency in L2. Septeria (2015), in her study, claimed that although using more L2 in the classroom during the L2 learning class would make the student get familiar with the target language, the student with low proficiency in L2 would not understand what the teacher explained to them. This condition might cause the student to get confused and not communicate in the classroom.

Actually, using L1 in pair work might be a normal psychological process that allows learners to initiate and maintain verbal interactions (Storch & Wigglesworth, 2012). Zulfikar (2018), in his study, explained that in EFL or ESL

learners' interaction, they usually have conversations in their L1 discussing the tasks' important elements, such as an appropriate word choice and register, before performing the task. In addition, L1 can be a valuable tool for collecting ideas that can help the learner in learning L2 and promote interaction among the learners in the L2 environment. In addition, Storch and Aldosari (2010) also identified the function of L1 in the L2 learning classes during the interaction. L1 can serve functions for task management, discussing and generating ideas, grammar deliberation, vocabulary deliberation, and mechanics deliberation.

It worth noted that the studies outlined above treat participants in group or pair work format based on students' language proficiency. The current study is set in an authentic context in which grouping is conducted without considering students' language proficiency, as studies have shown that both weak and strong students can give contributions in the group/pair work (Storch, 2002; Watanabe & Swain; 2007; Kim & McDonough, 2008). Following this claim, the present study aims to validate whether or not students' proficiency will hinder their participation and collaboration in pair work activities in passage text editing task.

1.2 Research Question

This study aims to find out the patterns of dyadic interaction engaged while completing the editing task and how the learners use their first language in the interaction conducted in one of the EFL senior high schools in Pringsewu, Lampung. Therefore, three research questions were set out for this study:

1. How much was first language (L1) used by dyads in their interaction?

2. What functions did the first language (L1) serve in the interaction?
3. What patterns of dyadic interaction can be found in an EFL senior high school level?

1.3 Purpose of The Study

Based on the formulation of the problem described above, the purposes of this study are:

1. To find out the amount of the first language (L1) used by the dyads in their interaction.
2. To find out the function of the first language (L1) served in the interaction.
3. To find out the patterns of dyadic interaction in an EFL senior high school level during editing the task.

1.4 The Scope of The Study

The study is built from classroom interaction research by focusing on the L1 use in the pair work and the patterns of dyadic interaction students performed during the editing task.

1.5 Significance of The Study

The results of this study are expected to give contributions to shedding a better understanding of how students approach the task through the

analysis of patterns of dyadic interactions and whether or not students use the L1 in the L2 learning and for what purposes.



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Memartabatkan Bangsa*