

BREAKING CLASSROOM SILENCE: CAN SPIDER WEB HELP NOVICE TEACHER?

Lilia Indriani
Tidar University
Indonesia
indriani@untidar.ac.id

Abstract

Teaching Non-Native English Speakers (NNES) the four basic skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) is really a big challenge for novice teachers in Asia context that see English as a foreign language. Meanwhile, an effective Foreign Language Learning Classroom (FLLC) depends upon active participation and involvement by the learners. As the novice teachers who deal with so many styles of classroom participation, creativity and innovation in fostering TEFL is really needed especially for breaking classroom silence. This study is about implementing new teaching strategy to break the classroom silence in teaching English in a foreign language class. In line with the shift of paradigm from teacher-centered to learner-centered, Spider Web teaching strategy could create a supportive and positive classroom climate. Climate refers to the atmosphere of the classroom, and results from the nature of the relationships between the students and the teacher, and also the kinds of communication that take place between them. This study is about teaching strategy that is used by novice teacher to break the classroom silence in teaching English as a foreign language in Asia context. Moreover, he also combines it with energizers so the learning process would be fun and exciting. After all, novice teachers, like teachers everywhere, they do have responsibilities beyond classroom.

Keywords: teaching strategy, spider web, novice teacher, classroom silence

Introduction

Since English is widely used around the world for communication across national boundaries and in a wide range of professions, it makes English becomes more than important. In Asia context that see English as a foreign language, it really makes a big challenge for novice teachers. Foreign Language Learning Classroom (FLLC) in Asia really needs appropriate strategy that can help not only the teacher to deliver the material but also the students to understand it. It is also affected by the kinds of learners. Wright (2005, p. 156) differentiates learners that give influence to the styles of classroom participation into relaxed or anxious, risk-taking or risk avoiding, playful or serious, fuzzy focused or black and white, and confident or insecure. An early, but still relevant, about six different types of students was given by Good and Powel (1976) (cited in Richards and Lockhart, 1994) are task-oriented,

social, dependent, phantom, isolated, and alienated students.

Effective teaching acknowledges that successful language learning depends upon active participation and involvement by learners in the classroom (Richards, 2015). Classroom silence impedes student learning, teacher effectiveness and classmate benefits from learning from silent students' insights, observations, and experiences. Among the most frustrating classroom phenomena is that of students who will not or cannot actively participate in classroom discussions. Student reticence, withdrawal, or fear of interacting not only deprives that student from sharing what they know, it deprives the teacher and classmates from benefiting by what a given student has to offer. Student silence in class is not exclusively a problem for students who refuse to or are unable to respond to direct questions. The need for students to ask questions of clarification, exemplification, classification, validation, and curiosity; to be able and willing to

provide examples that demonstrate that student's understanding and that will aid others in seeing examples not thought of by others; and to be able and willing to civilly challenge others' ideas and claims are paramount for optimum education to transpire in the classroom. Everyone in the classroom is responsible for pulling their own weight; all need to participate by discussing and by listening to others (Petres, 2001).

Meanwhile, a novice teacher is a teacher education program graduate entering teaching (Storm, 1989). He or she should be a facilitator of learning for all students. A facilitator is one who can either provide appropriate learning experiences and resources or find someone else to provide them. Because students have their variety of learning styles, prior experiences, cultural backgrounds, capabilities, etc. the novice teacher must recognize the students' need, assess their learning ability and use authentic resources.

The strategy to break the classroom silent is spider web. It is a student-centered teaching strategy that can be used on a particular topic, question, or text. (<https://modelsbydesign.wordpress.com/>)

The teacher is largely silent. While students are the ones active, the teacher is as facilitator, the referee and master of knowledge, offering up the right question at the right moment, redirecting the answer, correcting misunderstandings, and ensuring that students are being civil to one another.

The name Spider Web is stand for: **Synergetic** – it's team-oriented, balanced, and group graded (the whole class gets a single grade for each discussion). **Practiced** – it's ongoing, practiced and debriefed. It's not a one-time activity but a process, much like writing. **Independent** – the teacher "interferes" as little as possible; students run the discussion and self-assess. **Developed** – the discussion gets deep, builds on itself, goes "somewhere." **Exploration** – this is the main goal; more than discussion, it is a discussion-based exploration (of a text, essential question, or topic). **Rubric** – this is

the cornerstone to the whole process: to have a clear, concise rubric against which students can easily self-assess. **Web** part of the name comes from the web-like graph that one of the students or the students graph to map the discussion while it's happening and then use to debrief later.

The advantages of using Spider Web Strategy in FLLC are: (1) balanced discussion and ethical behavior are front and center, right alongside providing support for ideas/argument and having deep, critical, interesting explorations; (2) there is a group grade; (3) there is individual and group feedback; and (4) it accommodates many kinds of the students' learning styles.

Methodology

The design for this study is qualitative classroom research. The subject of research is the fourth semester students in English Department, Faculty of Education and Teachers Training, Tidar University. The data collection procedures are preparing lesson plan, observation, and documentation. The observation indicator is taken from Jefferson (in Richard, 2015).

The indicators are:

1. Genuine communicative interaction took place
2. The teacher encouraged the students to use the target language all the time
3. Student participation was encouraged through questions, examples, definitions, explanations, comments and peer correction.
4. Student talk was maximized and teacher's was minimized, when possible.
5. The teacher fostered collaborative learning by means of effective group work activities.

The students must answer by F (Fully); M (Most of the time); P (Partially); No (Not-often); NA (Non-applicable). Then the data is analyzed descriptively.



Findings and Discussion

This study is discussed about how to break classroom silence by using spider web strategy in the classroom. Based on the first indicator, there is no genuine communicative interaction between novice teachers and students in FLLC (No=100%). Many students say that the novice teachers encourage the students to use the target language all the time (F=80%). Some students say that it is most of the time the novice teachers encourage them (M=20%). For the third indicator about student participation was encourage through questions, examples, definitions, explanations, comments and peer correction (F=40%; M=40%; P=20%). So, it means that actually the students are aware that the novice teachers actually have encouraged them to be active and motivated in FLLC. Furthermore, the novice teacher speaks all the time in a class about the subject matter and the students just keep silence (No=100%). The novice teachers have not fostered collaborative learning by means of effective group work activities. The novice teachers have tried to use energizers to break the classroom silence, but it does not work. Besides that, they also used authentic materials in the form of audio visual and role play to make the class active. But, it still does not work. (No=75%; NA= 25%). The data are shown in Table1.

Table 1. Lesson-observation Form (Learning)

No	I	F	M	P	No	NA
1	I1	-	-	-	100%	-
2	I2	80%	20%	-	-	-
3	I3	40%	40%	20%	-	-
4	I4	-	-	-	100%	-
5	I5	-	-	-	75%	25%

I=Indicator; F=Fully; M=Most of the time; P=Partially; No= Not-often; NA= Non-applicable

After the novice teachers use the spider web strategy in FLLC, the classroom atmosphere is improved not only the task-oriented students but also the alienated students are active and well-motivated in the

teaching-learning process. There is a genuine communicative interaction between novice teachers and students in FLLC though based on the observation the range is vary (F=40%; M=40%; P=20%). Many students say that the novice teachers encourage the students to use the target language all the time (F=80%). Some students say that it is most of the time the novice teachers encourage them (M=20%).The result is the same with the first observation. For the third indicator about student participation was encourage through questions, examples, definitions, explanations, comments and peer correction are reached (F=60%; M=40%). So, it means that actually the students are more aware that the novice teachers actually have encouraged them to be active and motivated in FLLC. Furthermore, the novice teachers that use spider web strategy, does not speak all the time in a class about the subject matter but the students are being active and motivated to speak about the subject matter (F=50%; M=20%; P=20%; No=10%). The novice teachers have fostered collaborative learning by means of effective group work activities used the spider web strategy in FLLC (F=50%; M=20%; P=20%; No=10%). The data are shown in table2.

Table 2. Lesson-observation Form (Learning)

No	I	F	M	P	No	NA
1	I1	40%	40%	20%	-	-
2	I2	80%	20%	-	-	-
3	I3	60%	40%	-	-	-
4	I4	50%	20%	20%	10%	-
5	I5	50%	20%	20%	10%	-

I= Indicator; F=Fully; M=most of the time; P=Partially; No= Not-often; NA= Non-applicable

It is so amazing to see how students are active and join the discussion. Not only social students who are active in the learning process but also phantom students are active. They do not dominate the conversation shifts in the classroom dynamic. The leaders of the group usually are phantom students who are not really active in the class. The social students who are always active in the

class do not dominate the classroom atmosphere. They have to accept that being loud and dominating is not helpful to a group discussion. To make the group discussion alive, all the member of the group must be active. The grading is done as the group not as individual, and it is used as a tool and not a weapon. Feedback from the novice teacher to students and students to students are warm activities in the class. There is no anxiety in the class and everybody is welcome heartedly in the class. While, the novice teacher feels that he or she is comfortable with the students and mostly with the teaching learning process. Spider web has made him or her totally think about being a teacher, as facilitator.

Conclusions

Spider Web teaching strategy could create a supportive and positive classroom climate in the relationships between the students and the teacher, and also the kinds of communication that take place between them. The novice teacher could break the classroom silence in teaching English as a foreign language in Asia context. After all, novice teachers, like teachers everywhere, they do have responsibilities beyond classroom.

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