



THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING GROUP DISCUSSION ON STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILL: AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY AT THE SECOND GRADE STUDENTS OF SMPN 1 MASBAGIK

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Abstract: The title of this thesis is "Assessing the Efficacy of Utilizing Group Discussion to Enhance Students' Speaking Skill." The study was conducted among second-grade students at SMPN 1 Masbagik and falls under the category of Experimental Research. The data collection process involved a pre-test, treatment, and post-test. The target population consisted of second-grade students at SMPN 1 Masbagik, all of whom exhibited a similar proficiency level in speaking skills. To determine the sample, a purposive random sampling technique was employed. The sample comprised two groups: the experimental group (XD) and the control group (XC). The Inquiry Technique was used to teach the experimental group, while the control group received instruction through the Grammar Translation Method. Each group consisted of 30 students. Notably, the experimental group demonstrated a higher post-test score compared to the pre-test score. Specifically, 15 students scored higher than the mean score of 38.7 in the pre-test. Following treatment involving the utilization of the Group Discussion technique, the experimental group exhibited improved performance, with 28 students achieving scores higher than the mean score in the post-test (46.73). Subsequently, the data was subjected to t-test calculations, yielding a value of 3.19. This t-test value exceeded the critical t-values at the 0.05 confidence level (2.021) and the 0.01 confidence level (2.704) with a degree of freedom of 58. Consequently, the null hypothesis stating that the "Group Discussion technique does not increase students' speaking skill" was rejected, while the alternate hypothesis proposing that the "Group Discussion technique increases students' speaking skill" was accepted.

Keywords: effectiveness, group discussion, speaking skill.

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INTRODUCTION

Speaking plays a crucial role as it allows individuals to express their ideas and engage in communication with others in various aspects of their lives. According to Amrullah (2016), mastering the skill of speaking is essential as it serves as a significant indicator of students' success in language learning. Teaching English should prioritize the development of speaking skills alongside the other language competencies.

Brown (2015) defines speaking as an interactive process that involves generating, receiving, and processing information to construct meaning. Effective communication requires individuals to convey messages and exchange information, thereby achieving their communicative goals. Successful speaking involves expressing opinions and ideas clearly, incorporating elements such as pronunciation, intonation, fluency, and accuracy.

Amrullah (2021) identifies two factors that influence students' speaking performance in English: linguistic factors such as vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar, as well as non-linguistic factors like self-confidence, anxiety, and topic mastery. Nawawi, Thohir, and Sahuddin emphasize the importance of tasks prepared by teachers in enhancing students' English-speaking skills. Since speaking is a primary means of communication, it can be learned through various methods. However, speaking proficiency is not simply acquired, as it requires mastery of elements such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and content. Without adequate speaking abilities, communication interactions may encounter



obstacles. Thus, teachers bear the responsibility of developing effective teaching and learning processes, fostering a conducive atmosphere, and attending to the essential elements of speaking to make English lessons more engaging.

Sri Bagus (2019) suggests that one function of speaking is to directly express thoughts. English holds significant importance for Indonesian people due to its influence on education, careers, and the economy. In the context of the current research conducted at SMPN 1 Masbagik, pre-observation revealed that the learning of speaking skills was not progressing as expected. Several difficulties hindered students from actively participating in class discussions. These challenges included a lack of self-confidence, motivation, and prior knowledge of the English language. Some students may desire to express their ideas in English spontaneously, but they face obstacles due to limited vocabulary, resorting to body language and frequent pauses. Additionally, fear of making mistakes or being ridiculed by peers further deterred students from engaging in speaking activities.

Considering the Indonesian education system, English instruction for junior high school students primarily focuses on communication and functional aspects (Sujana, 2010: 8). English teachers are expected to employ appropriate techniques that cater to the learners' communication needs. In this regard, the implementation of group discussion techniques appears promising as it facilitates students' speaking ability development. Group discussions involve collaborative decision-making, idea generation, problem-solving, and sharing opinions to reach a common agreement or goal on a given topic. Killen (1996) emphasizes that group discussions enhance students' analytical skills, promote verbal expression, and improve their critical thinking and communication abilities.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research aims to describe the effectiveness of using Group Discussion on students' speaking skill at second grade students of SMPN 1 Masbagik. This study was categorized as Experimental study. Experimental is an empirical interventional study used to estimate the causal impact of an intervention on target population without random assignment. It means that experimental study is the research whose orientation is to observe the possibility of causal-effect by giving treatment to one or more experimental groups within it on or more condition of treatment trying to compare result of samples. This study tried to investigate the effect of using Group Discussion on Students' Speaking Skill.

The researcher selected two classes as the sample; one class is experimental group and the other class is control group. Class VIII-5 is experimental group and class VIII-6 is the control group. Pre-test and post-test should be given to both classes.

This study provided pre-test, treatments and post-test as the main activities. In the experimental group, they were taught using group discussion, while in the control group were taught using conventional technique or without using group discussion. The test was used to implement this study. Firstly, both groups were given Pre-test which is used to identify students' current ability of their speaking. After that, a treatment was given to the students. After giving treatment, post-test was given to identify the effect of group discussion in their speaking skill. The result of the test is the data. Finally, the data which obtained were compared.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This study was carried out at SMPN 1 Masbagik, it involved the grade VIII students. In gathered the data, the writer spent three weeks to do all the process of data collection. The process included pre-test, treatment and post-test. The treatment was conducted in three meetings and two meetings for the test (pre-test & post-test). In other words, each class

consisted of five meetings. Furthermore, the data was analyzed and discussed in order to answer the research question that had been formulated earlier in chapter one.

At the first day, this study was conducted the pre-test. After knowing the result of pre-test, the data were collected. Then, the treatment was given to both groups. The experimental group was taught using group discussion and the control group was taught using the conventional way or lecturing ways.

Three meetings were spent for the treatment. There were 6 groups, which consisted of 5 students each group. The topic used is a folktale with the title "The Boy Who Cried the Wolf". After giving the treatment, post-test was given. This study calculated the data by using the assessment rubric.

Data Distribution

Pre-test was running on August, 5th 2022. Meanwhile post-test was conducted on August, 12th 2022. From the pre-test, it can be pictured that both groups' namely Experimental Group and Control Group did not show similar result in pre-test. However, both groups show the different result in post-test as shown in the following table.

From the pre-test and post-test that had been conducted, the scores gained by the students who belong to Control group and to Experimental group can be pictured. In pre-test, both groups gained the mean score in which pre-test for Control group has been higher than the Experimental group; the mean score for Experimental group was 38.7 while control group was 40.33. In the Experimental group, the highest score was achieved 53.

In the post test, both groups show different result in which the mean score of Experimental group was 46.73 and Control group was 46.1. In the Experimental group, the highest score was achieved 70. From the mean score and the range of score attained by both groups, it can be pictured that the increasing score of Experimental group was bigger than the Control group.

Based on the table above, the student achievement can be classified based on the level achievement as described in the following.

Table 1. The Classification of students' level achievement on the Pre-test

Score Rank	Frequency	Percentage
38-53	15	50%
31-37	8	26,7%
20-30	7	23,3%

The Table 1 above showed students' achievement in pre-test, refers to mean score 38,7 in pre-test, thus it's concluded that only 15 students passed in pre-test.

Table 2. The Classification of students' level achievement on the Post-test

Score Rank	Frequency	Percentage
38-53	28	93,3%
31-37	2	6,7%
20-30	-	-

After giving treatment there was different result before and after giving treatment showed the post-test result calculated 28 students had achieved higher than 46,73 as mean score.

Discussion

Based on the statistical analysis presented earlier, it is evident that the mean deviation score of the experimental group (8.03) was higher than that of the control group (5.76). This indicates that teaching speaking through Group Discussion had a positive impact on improving students' speaking skills.

The pre-test was administered to both classes, where each student had to speak in front of the class for 3 minutes after reading a folktale text. This test took place once on August 5, 2022. The purpose of the post-test was to measure students' abilities after receiving treatment, assess their knowledge, determine their final scores, and compare their competence before and after the treatment. The post-test lasted approximately 90 minutes, during which students had the opportunity to speak in front of the class using the technique provided by the teacher. The control group underwent the post-test once, while the experimental group underwent it twice. This was due to only half of the experimental group participating in the post-test, which was conducted on August 12, 2022. The second post-test for the remaining students took place on August 13, 2022. Prior to the post-test, the students received treatment, which involved the teacher implementing a speaking technique. This ensured that any improvement in speaking skills observed in the students could be attributed to the treatment. The treatment was conducted in a single session on August 10, 2022. The research involved two assessors: the researcher and a pre-service teacher majoring in English Education who was conducting teaching practice at SMPN 1 Masbagik.

The differing change scores between the two groups were due to the experimental group receiving intensive treatment through Group Discussion, while the control group did not receive treatment using Group Discussion. The technique employed in the experimental group was suitable considering the students' level in junior high school, as they tend to be more conscious. Conversely, the control group was taught using conventional methods like grammar translation, which often leads to monotony in the teaching and learning process, ultimately resulting in student boredom. However, the increase in students' scores was not significant due to various factors. For instance, the students had numerous subjects to focus on, which divided their attention. Additionally, the lack of breakfast in the morning affected their motivation to study in class. English classes were held only twice a week, whereas effective English learning should ideally take place three times a week, contributing to the students' tendency to quickly forget the lessons.

Following the discussion of the teaching processes in the experimental and control groups, the researcher proceeded to interpret and discuss the results. The computation of the pre-test and post-test scores for both groups revealed that the mean score for the experimental group was 8.03, with a square deviation of 311. In comparison, the control group had a mean score of 5.76, with a square deviation of 111.4.

Then, the degree of freedom (df) had interpreted beneath to compare two critical values namely; t-test and t-table. The degree of freedom was obtained by using the formula $(N_x + N_y) - 2$, $(30 + 30 - 2) = 58$ but in t-table the (df) 58 had not been found, so the researcher used (df) 40 as the nearest of (df) 58 was 2.021 for the confident level of 0.05 (95%) and 2.704 for confident level of 0.01 (99%).

Table 3. The comparison between the t-test and t-table

t-test	t-table		
	Df	0.01	0.05
3.19	58	2.704	2.021

Based on the comparison table provided, it is evident that the t-test value exceeded the t-table value. This indicates that the difference observed in the t-test was greater than the



critical t-value at both the 95% confidence level and the 99% confidence level. Consequently, the researcher can conclude that the research findings support the relationship between the use of Group Discussion and students' speaking skills.

Based on the aforementioned analysis, it is apparent that the null hypothesis (H_0) has been rejected. The null hypothesis stated that there would be no significant difference between the t-test and the t-table at the 95% and 99% confidence levels. On the contrary, the alternative hypothesis can be accepted as the t-test value surpasses the t-table value.

In light of the analysis and data interpretation presented above, the researcher can conclusively affirm that the implementation of Group Discussion effectively enhances students' speaking skills in English instruction for second-grade students at SMPN 1 Masbagik during the specified period. This assertion is supported by the higher mean score and square deviations observed in the experimental group compared to the control group. The obtained results provide a definitive answer to the research question: "Does group discussion significantly impact students' speaking skills among second-grade students at SMPN 1 Masbagik?"

CONCLUSION

The study demonstrated a significant level of success in enhancing students' speaking skills through the effective implementation of Group Discussion, as evidenced by the computed results of the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test, as well as the test of significance.

Prior to administering the treatments to the experimental group, the pre-test results indicated a low level of knowledge among the students. Specifically, the mean score of the pre-test was 38.7, with only 15 students scoring higher than the mean. In contrast, the post-test results showed a higher average score of 46.73, reflecting an improvement after the treatment was provided to the experimental group. In fact, 28 students achieved scores higher than the mean. Consequently, the utilization of Group Discussion as a teaching technique in English reading has been identified as an effective method for enhancing students' speaking skills.

Furthermore, another supporting outcome further attests to the success of employing Group Discussion in improving students' speaking skills. The t-test yielded a statistically significant value of 3.19. This value exceeded the critical t-value at the 0.05 confidence level (2.021) and the 0.01 confidence level (2.704), with a degree of freedom of 58 ($30+30=60-2$). Thus, the alternative hypothesis, stating that the Group Discussion technique enhances students' speaking skills, was accepted, while the null hypothesis, suggesting that Group Discussion does not improve students' speaking skills, was rejected.

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