

**MENGAJAR PERCAKAPAN  
MELALUI METODE DISKUSI KELOMPOK**

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**ABSTRAK**

*Penelitian ini berjudul mengajar percakapan melalui metode diskusi kelompok, bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah metode diskusi kelompok dapat memperbaiki keahlian percakapan mahasiswa secara efektif. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif di sebuah Ma'had dengan populasi 178 mahasiswa dan 16 sampel yang diambil secara purposif dan dibagi menjadi 2 kelompok yaitu 8 mahasiswa sebagai kelas kontrol dan 8 lainnya sebagai kelas eksperimen. Instrumen yang digunakan adalah tes berbicara, dan dalam menganalisa data peneliti menggunakan kalkulasi T-Tes. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa  $t_0$  (observation) adalah 0.97 dan df (degree of freedom) dengan 14 kali pertemuan menjadi 0.05 (5%) dengan tingkat perbedaan 1.76. Setelah disesuaikan dengan  $t_{t(table)}$ , maka didapati bahwa  $t_0=0.97 < t_t=1.76$ . Oleh karena itu ketika t-table lebih besar dari t-observation maka hipotesis alternatif ditolak dan hipotesis nol diterima. Berdasarkan hasil tersebut maka disimpulkan bahwa metode diskusi kelompok untuk pengajaran berbicara khususnya kelas eksperimen tersebut tidak efektif. Hal ini dikarenakan kondisi kelas yang tidak sesuai sehingga membutuhkan metode lain terhadap kondisi kelas tersebut.*

**Kata Kunci:** Pengajaran, percakapan, metode diskusi kelompok

## TEACHING SPEAKING THROUGH SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION METHOD

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### ABSTRACT

This research, entitled Teaching Speaking through Small Group Discussion Method, aims to know whether small group discussion method improves students' speaking skill effectively. This research uses a quantitative approach. The population was all students at a Ma'had in 2019/2020 academic year that consisted of 178 students. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, and the chosen classes had 16 students, where there were 8 students in the experimental class and 8 students in the controlled class. The instrument used was speaking tests. In analyzing the data, the researcher used t-test calculation. The results show that the value of  $t_{0(\text{observation})}$  was 0.97 and  $df$  (*degree of freedom*) which is 14 met the degree of significance of 5% (0.05), gave us the significance degree value that is 1.76. After consulting to the  $t_{t(\text{table})}$ , we found that  $t_0=0.97 < t_t=1.76$ . Therefore since the t-table is bigger than t-observation, the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is rejected and the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is accepted. Based on the results of the data above, it is true that small group discussion is not effective on the students' speaking skill when it was applied at the Ma'had. One of the factors that caused this method to fail was because of the class condition that was not suitable. The result is their speaking skill was not improved effectively. So, the students need other methods as well to improve their speaking skill.

**Keywords:** *teaching, speaking, small group discussion method.*

## INTRODUCTION

### Research Background

English is the most common international language that is learned in the world. As an international language, English has an important role in this world. English as a foreign language of Indonesia has been introduced to educational institutions from Junior High School up to the university level as a compulsory subject.

Harmer (2001: 3) commented that “English would remain a vital linguistic tool for many business people, academics, tourists, and citizen of the world who wish to communicate easily across nationalities for many years to come”. That is why, if you are a student at a school or university, you must learn English, too.

In the aspect of education, English has a big influence on the teaching and learning process. However, in learning English as a foreign language, learners should understand that they must learn many things related to the English language, such as the pronunciation, spelling, and the cultural background of the language.

Luoma (2003: 9) stated that speaking skill is the number one skill that must be learned by students who are learning English since this is the core thing a language student should master in order to use the language effectively. Once the students of the English language know how to speak and begin to do it immediately, they would soon understand and catch the other English skills, such as listening, reading and writing so much easily.

Nevertheless, most students who studied English at the Ma’had found that they are hard to achieve the English speaking skill. Obviously, when they try to speak English, their English has too many weaknesses. They speak with long pauses, only produce isolated words or memorized utterances, errors in grammar are frequent and may lead to misunderstanding and their pronunciations are confusing that cause some difficulty for the listener to understand the information given by them.

Based on the researcher’s teaching experience for some semesters since 2016, most of the students did not master the parts of speaking skill well yet. It could be identified during the learning process and when the researcher as one of the lecturers conducted speaking tests both in the midterm and final tests. For instance, from 15 students in the class, the results of the test showed that only 3 (20%) students got Excellent, and the other 12 (80%) students got just average or poor.

There are lots of methods could be applied in teaching speaking skills. One of them is small group discussion. Small group discussion is an effective way for

encouraging, clarifying, and guiding students' participation in classroom activities. In conducting a group discussion, a lecturer presents the students with a problem to solve or a topic to talk about.

Christine (2007: 38) stated that small group discussion could help learners develop a range of speech function and interaction management skills. These skills include using the spoken language to express points of view, negotiate ideas, explore options, express tentativeness, modify views, and agree or disagree. Small group discussion has become one of the most appropriate methods used in teaching and learning the English language, may that be in English classes or even English clubs around Banda Aceh. Some researches regarding speaking through small group discussion have been conducted by several other researchers.

Fauzi (2017: 130) entitled *Improving Students' Speaking Ability through Small-Group Discussion*, conducted small group discussion activities to 35 students to their speaking competencies. The findings of research could be explained in three cycles. Cycle 1 revealed that there were 37.2% of the students who did well; 42.8% were good although they had weaknesses in some aspects of using statements of introduction and choosing good sentences; 20% were weak and did not understand to choose appropriate sentences for introduction. Cycle II showed that 45.7% of the participants were good either in choosing appropriate sentences and pronunciation; 54.3% were considered good although they still lacked speaking communicatively with appropriate words. Cycle III was implemented after having additional classes, small guidelines of active speaking, and intensive practices. It found that 71.4% of the participants could communicate with English basic words and better structure, and 28.6% of them were still slightly below. By using the action research, the results showed that the activities conducted through small group could improve students' speaking competences in terms of their content aspect, accuracy, pronunciation, and fluency.

The findings are also supported by Antoni (2014: 55) entitled *Teaching Speaking Skill through Small Group Discussion Technique at The Accounting Study Program*. He conducted an action research using small group activities. This research was done in two cycles that each cycle consisted of 5 meetings with the

test included. In the cycle 1, it was found that the students speaking skill got progress in two aspects only such as Vocabulary and grammar, while the other aspects are not well improved yet. That's why the researcher did the cycle 2 as to improve the three aspects could not get better yet. When the second cycle was completed, it was found that the students' pronunciation, fluency and comprehension got progress. It could be seen from the speaking score achieved from the test given. After conducting the research, there was a great improvement in the average score of five speaking components: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

Based on all of the explanation above, the researcher would like to conduct a similar research entitled "Teaching Speaking through Small Group Discussion Method."

### **Research Question**

The research question in this research is does small group discussion method improve students' speaking skill effectively?

### **Research Objective**

The research objective is to know whether small group discussion method improves students' speaking skill effectively.

### **Research Hypothesis**

The hypothesis could be formed as stated below:

H<sub>a</sub>: Teaching speaking through small group discussion method improves students' speaking skill effectively.

H<sub>0</sub>: Teaching speaking through small group discussion method does not improve students' speaking skill effectively.

### **Research Scope**

The research scope was limited on whether small group discussion method improves students' speaking skill effectively at a Ma'had in the academic year of 2019/2020. The researcher's focus when conducting the treatment was on enhancing the students' speaking skill, which included the fluency & coherence, lexical resource/vocabulary, grammatical range & accuracy, and pronunciation.

### **Research Benefits**

It is hoped that the result of this research would be able to contribute some benefits for students, lecturers and other researchers theoretically and practically.

#### 1. For Students

By implementing one of the teaching methods to teach speaking, the students involved could feel the benefits of learning English by using this method. This method could also be applied in other classes to teach speaking skill so that many other students would also experience the method in improving their speaking skill in the best manner.

#### 2. For Lecturers

By comprehending the result of this research, we hope that the English lecturers could sharpen their insights in dealing with their students when teaching English, specifically the speaking skill and choosing the most suitable teaching methods for their students. Hopefully, the small group discussion method could be implemented effectively in their classes as well.

#### 2. For Other Researchers

We expect that the result of this research is able to give some contributions for other researchers as references to conduct their researches in the speaking field. It is also hoped that the result of this research would open up and change their mindset related to the application of the method.

### **Operational Definitions**

In order to prevent any misunderstanding, the researcher provides the definition of some key terms used in the research.

#### 1. Speaking Skill

Speaking skill is the production skill of language through mouth. It is very important for students to master this skill as this is the core skill of the English language.

Cameron (2001: 40) said that speaking is the active use of language to express meanings so that other people could understand them. Moreover, it is recognized as an interactive, social and contextualized communicative event. Speaking

requires that learners not only know how to produce specific points of language such as grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary (linguistic competence), but also that they understand when, why, and in what ways to produce language (sociolinguistic competence).

## 2. Small Group Discussion

Small group discussion is defined as two or more people interacting with each other in such a manner that each person influences one another. It could be highly rewarding to group members to increase their speaking skill. Sharan (1976) in Fauzi (2017: 132) stated that small group discussion is a method of classroom organization, encompassing a wide variety of teaching methods, for structuring the relationships of students and lecturers.

## **THEORETICAL FOUNDATION**

### **Speaking Skill**

In this section of speaking skill, the researcher would like to clarify the definition of speaking skill, the features of speaking, classroom speaking activities, types of speaking performances, and teaching speaking skills.

### **Definition of Speaking Skill**

Hughes (2002: 7) stated that speaking means to negotiate one's speech that is intended to convey meanings and to give effect to the listeners' states. It could be said that speaking is a skill, which is used to communicate the speech sound for expressing and conveying messages or ideas. Therefore, speaking is not a simple skill. Its complete mastery requires some experience and practice.

Richards (2008: 19) stated that the mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for many second language or foreign language learners. Consequently, learners often evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English course based on how much they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency. Speaking skill is what every English learner wants to master above all the other English skills such as listening, reading and writing.

Luoma (2003: 10) argued that speaking is a very difficult skill that needs much time to be improved. Well, that is because English is not our mother tongue and we do not use it to communicate daily. In order to prevent it from happening, we must focus more on our English learning moreover on the speaking skill by studying and practicing it more often.

Nunan (2003: 48) stated that speaking is a productive oral skill that consists of producing systematic verbal expression to transfer meaning. Speaking is a way to utter the feeling and mind by using language. Based on Harmer (2001: 45), speaking skill viewed from the communicative way, has two different aspects. First, accuracy, including the correct use of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation practiced through controlled and guided activities. Second, fluency, it is the skill to make the speaker speak without thinking for a long time before producing a word or sentences.

Hedge (2000: 261) defined speaking as the ability in which the people are judged at the first impressions. It means that speaking is an important skill which deserves more attention in both first and second language because it reflects people's thoughts and personalities.

In conclusion, it could be said that speaking is the most important skill that any English learner should master in order to be able to use the language appropriately.

### **The Features of Speaking**

Harmer (2001: 269) proposes four language features that are necessary for spoken production, these are:

1. Connected speech, which is the ability that is needed from the speakers of English to produce more connected sounds not only separated phonemes. These sounds may be modified, omitted, added or weakened in the connected speech. Our "red eye" is an example of this. To articulate "red eye", we must take a very short pause before the /d/ sound.
2. Expressive devices that English native speakers use effectively. Such as the phonological rules which refer to the pitch, stress, volume, speed and the use

of nonverbal means. These devices help them to convey their intended meaning. Students need to have this ability of employing such devices if they want to be effective communicators. Dynamics also describe featured changes, such as a gradual increase or decrease in loudness, contrasting volumes and emphasis on particular sounds.

3. Lexis and grammar, that is when the learners produce some language functions, they often use the same lexical structures. The lecturers' role then, is to provide them with different phrases which carry different functions so that they could use them in the different stages of communication with others.
4. Negotiation language is a tool any English learner need for communicating. They often ask for clarification when they are listening to others conveying their ideas. So, the lecturers have to provide them with the necessary expressions they need when they ask for clarification from other speakers.

As mentioned above, there are four language features that are necessary for spoken production that should be mastered by English learners. So, the sooner they start to learn them, the faster they will get the English speaking skill. In addition, Harmer (2001: 271) also said that other elements of speaking that are necessary to be mastered by a successful speaker are mental/social and the rapid processing skill that involves language processing, interaction, and information processing.

### **Classroom Speaking Activities**

Teaching speaking should be taught in attractive and communicative activities. There are many types of classroom speaking activities. Harmer (2001: 348) states six classroom speaking activities. They are acting from script, communication games, discussion, prepared talks, questionnaires, simulation, and role play.

#### **a. Acting from script**

Playing scripts and acting out the dialogues are two kinds of acting scripts that should be considered by the lecturer in the teaching and learning process. In the playing scripts, it is important for the students to teach it as real acting. The role of the lecturer in this activity is as theatre directors, drawing attention to appropriate stress, intonation, and speed. This means that the lines they speak will have real meaning.

By giving students practice in these things before they give their final performances, the lecturer ensures that acting out is both a learning and language producing activity. In acting the dialogue, the students will be very helped if they are given time to rehearse their dialogues before the performance. The students will gain much more from the whole experience in the process.

#### **b. Communication games**

Communication skills don't come naturally to most students, but, they could be trained. But, like most learned skills, practice makes perfect. Games are designed to provoke communication among students. The games are made based on the principle of the information gap so that one student has to talk to a partner in order to solve a puzzle, draw a picture, put a thing in the right order, or find similarities and differences between pictures. Television and radio games, imported into the classroom, often provide good fluency activities.

c. Discussion

Discussion is probably the most commonly used activity in the oral skills class. Here, the students are allowed to express their real opinions. According to Harmer (2001: 272) discussion range is divided into several stages from highly formal, whole-group staged events to informal small-group interactions.

The first is the buzz groups that could be used for a whole range of discussion. For example, students are expected to predict the content of a reading text, or talk about their reactions after reading the text. The second is instant comments which could train students to respond fluently and simply insert many other activities into lessons. This involves showing them photographs or introducing topics at any stage of a lesson and nominating students to say the first thing that comes into their head.

The last is formal debates. Students prepare arguments in favor or against various propositions. The debate will be started when those who are appointed as ‘panel speaker’ produce well-rehearsed ‘writing like’ arguments whereas others, the audience, pitch in as the debate progresses with their own thoughts on the subject.

d. Prepared talks

Students make a presentation on a topic of their own choice. Such talks are not designed for informal spontaneous conversations because they are prepared and more ‘writing like’. However, if possible students should speak from notes rather than from a script. Once students have prepared themselves, they need to stand in front of their other friends and talk, so enough preparation should be made up before talking.

e. Questionnaires

Questionnaires are very useful because they ensure that both questioner and respondent have something to say to each other. Students could design questionnaires on any topic that is appropriate. As they do so the lecturer could act as a resource, helping them in the design process. The results obtained from questionnaires could form the basis for discussions, or talks.

f. Simulation and Role play

Simulation and role play could be used to encourage general oral fluency, or to train students for specific situations. Students could act out simulation as them or take on the role of completely different character and express thoughts and feelings as they doing in the real world.

Those activities could be used by lecturers to teach speaking. Lecturers could choose an activity that related to the topic and objective of the lesson. Besides, they must consider the situation, condition of the students and materials that will be taught. For example, they use simulation and role play activities when they teach expressions.

Lecturers could ask them to write some dialogues and after that they have to act them out in front of the class. It may be used by the lecturers in using acting from script. In discussion, lecturers could use some pictures or maybe videos in a certain situation. These activities could be used as the way to measure how far students could speak, say and express their feeling in English.

### **Types of Speaking Performances**

Brown (2004: 271) describes six categories of speaking skill area. Those six categories are as follows:

a. Imitative

This category includes the ability in practicing an intonation and focusing on some particular elements of language form. That is just imitating a word, phrase or sentence. The important thing here is focusing on pronunciation. The lecturer uses drilling in the teaching learning process. The reason is by using drilling, students get opportunity to listen and to orally repeat some words. Somehow, the students are able to imitate any sounds that are produced by the speakers directly.

b. Intensive

This is the students' speaking performance that is practicing some phonological and grammatical aspects of language. It usually places students doing the task in pairs (group work), for example, reading aloud that includes reading paragraph, reading dialogue with partner in turn, reading information from chart, etc.

c. Responsive

Responsive performance includes interaction and text comprehension but at the somewhat limited level of very short conversation, standard greeting and small talk, simple request and comments. This is a kind of short replies to lecturer or student-initiated questions or comments, giving instructions and directions. Those replies are usually sufficient and meaningful.

Giving response towards the text materials in a positive way that could interact the students' attention towards the clues given.

d. Transactional (dialogue)

It is carried out for the purpose of conveying or exchanging specific information. For example, here is a conversation which is done on a telephone.

A: Hello, is this the ABC Residency?

B: Yes, I am Badrul. How may I help you?

A: I would like to book a room for tomorrow.

B: For how many people?

A: Just me.

B: Okay madam. What is your complete name, please?

A: Nur Afni. What is the total cost?

B: That would be Rp. 120.000 per night.

A: No problem. Book the room for one night, please

B: Sure. How would you like to pay?

A: I can pay in cash.

B: Okay, I will call you back in about 10 minutes to confirm your booking.

A: Thank you very much.

B: You are welcome.

e. Interpersonal (dialogue)

It is carried out more for the purpose of maintaining social relationships than for the transmission of facts and information. The forms of interpersonal speaking performance are interview, role play, discussions, conversations and games. However, interpersonal dialogue is frequently used in daily life for getting a job, negotiating, and bargaining in traditional markets, and it is also involved in debate, and political issues talks.

f. Extensive (monologue)

Lecturer gives students extended monologues in the form of oral reports, summaries, and short speeches. Based on the theory above, it could be concluded that there are some points that should be considered in assessing speaking. The students need to know at least the pronunciation, vocabularies, and language functions that they are going to use. When the students have been ready and prepared for the activity, they could use the language appropriately. It could also interact students' enthusiasm in learning such materials in improving their basic English skill.

## 5. Teaching Speaking Skills

According to Nunan (2003: 48), there are two reasons why speaking is more difficult than listening, reading and writing. Firstly, speaking happens in the

real time, people speak spontaneously and the listeners will be waiting for them to speak right then. It is impossible for the listeners to wait for a long time. That is why the speakers have to think as fast as possible. Secondly, when people speak, they could not revise and edit the conversation as people do in writing. Speech is the foundation of how a language really works.

Hughes (2002: 6 ) stated that when the focus in the classroom activity is the spoken language, there should be other aims of the lecturer's for assisting students to reach the goal, such as to practice linguistic knowledge aspects (a grammatical rule, application of phonemic regularity) or to improve production skill (rhythm, intonation, and so on). The thing that is mostly expected from teaching the English language is the ability to speak pragmatically.

Language teaching begins with the spoken language, and speech is the foundation of reading and writing, since we say to ourselves before we read or write the words, phrases and sentences. In the university, most students usually prefer to just listen to their lecturer for whatever the lecturer says and they do not have any efforts to speak English in the class.

### **Small Group Discussion**

Small group discussion method makes students learn best when they are actively involved in the teaching-learning process. Barbara (2009: 190) stated that students in small groups tend to learn more of what is taught and retain it longer than when the same content is presented in other instructional formats in a classroom.

### **The Definition of Small Group Discussion**

According to Kidsvatter as quoted by Argawati (2014: 3), small group discussion is dividing the large classroom into small groups of students to achieve specific objectives that permits students to assume more responsibility for their own learning, develop social and leadership skills and become involved in an alternative instructional approach.

Small group discussion method could improve the students' speaking skill effectively. We used small group discussion method in improving speaking skill

because of three main reasons. First, discussion is used to increase both students' and lecturer's interaction in the classroom. Second, discussion also promotes meaningful personal and social interaction while learning. Third, it is used to help students to be more responsible and independent.

Refer to Bany and Johnson as quoted by Ivada (2016: 17), a group may be said to exist when two or more persons have as one quality of their relationship some interdependence and possess some recognizable unity. Group discussion refers to one or more meetings of all small groups of people who thereby communicate, face-to-face, in order to fulfill a common purpose and achieve a group goal. The key concept in the definition of group discussion is communication. The practice of group discussion requires, therefore, an understanding of communication theory and an ability to communicate.

Hence, we could define group discussion as a method to achieve a good communication skill done in a classroom or any other learning environment to improve the learners' English speaking skill.

### **How It Is Applied in the Classroom**

Antoni (2014: 56) quoted from Dobson (1981) explained that the method used in small group discussion is outlined as follows:

1. Divide the class into small groups of three to six students each. Tell the groups a discussion topic that will necessitate them to outline several important points. Have one student in each group to write down these points as they emerge from discussion by group members.
2. Allow the groups to discuss their respective topic for at least 10 minutes. When the group members have finished their discussion, they should elect a spokesman who will report on the group collective thoughts to the entire class.
3. Call on the representative of one of the groups. After he gives a short presentation (two minutes or so), class members should question him or anyone else in the group about the viewpoints expressed. We could help them

to generalize the discussion along by addressing our own questions to members of the group.

Follow the same procedure with the remaining groups until all groups have given their presentation.

### **The Advantages of Small Group Discussion**

Brown (2000: 178), Involving collaboration and self-initiated in group work that assign two or more students to do a task, that is why we should consider the importance of the interaction in the language classroom, this issues has formed several advantages of group discussion in English language classroom:

#### a) Group work generates interactive language

A large-number of students in class will reduce the opportunity of speaking. Moreover, traditionally, lecturer takes the class' control by lecturing, explaining and drilling students. It makes the students likely to have less time of interacting and discussing by using the target language. Group work provides the students time to speak up more in the large-number of class.

However, the students have more focus on the group members in finding out the topic discussed that also increase their confidence in delivering the content of the topic, since they have enough time to prepare it well.

#### b) Group work promotes learner responsibility and autonomy

Some students need to be encouraged and being part of a group work will force them to at least contribute discussing in groups. It will build the students' responsibility of taking part in groups.

#### c) Group work is a step toward individualizing instruction

Every student has different capability in the English skill. Some of them may be prominent in reading, or listening, or speaking, or writing. That is the opportunity for the lecturer to scan and combine the students with different skill altogether and adjust the assignment for each group. It also gives students fair attention from the lecturer while the teaching-learning process is conducted.

Harmer (2001: 117) also added some advantages of grouping:

#### 1) It strongly improves students' speaking opportunity individually.

- 2) Students' opinions could be varied and it will enhance students' contributions.
- 3) The students learn more about skills of association and deliberation.
- 4) It increases independence of students to decide their choice in group without interference from the lecturer.
- 5) Lecturer tried to avoid a completely passive student in a group work. However, the students could take their portion of contribution in groups.

From the explanation above, it could be concluded that small group discussion method has a lot of benefits to make students more understand about a topic in a discussion and create their own opinion to express to other people in their group. This situation will lead the students to study harder before and after the class, too, because they have seen good and bad speaking examples from their friends and want to show their other friends that they could do better in the next presentation.

### **The Disadvantages of Small Group Discussion**

Besides having a lot of advantages, small group discussion method also has some disadvantages or weaknesses that could make the teaching and learning process become quite complicated sometimes if the situation and condition of the classroom could not be controlled well.

Harmer (2001: 117) stated some weaknesses of this method, they are:

“First, it is likely to be noisy. Some lecturers feel that it is hard to control the whole class when the class is split into smaller entities. Second, some students enjoy it since they would prefer to be the focus of lecturer's attention rather than working with their peers. Third, individual may fall into group roles that become fossilized, so that some are passive whereas others may dominate. Last, groups could take longer to organize and could take time and it is chaotic.”

Jones (2007: 11) also suggested two disadvantages of small group discussion as follows:

- a. The situation of classroom is noisy when the students make groups.

They talk to each other when they look for their group friends. They are also busy with their new teams and where they want to sit. This condition made the class

situation noisy and could interrupt the other classes next to it.

b. The students speak in their native language.

When the students are divided into several small groups, not all of the students in the groups would get full attention from the lecturer, so they will speak their mother tongue more than English as it is easier but without a good impact.

In addition, the timing is not effective since the students take more time to prepare themselves in the group and the teaching-learning process is not as effective as the planned-target. Besides that, the students could play freely while the lecturer is busy with other group members.

In conclusion, students' grouping has benefits and weaknesses. This implies that students' grouping is effective for teaching speaking in the large classes, which could motivate students communicatively and psychologically.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter deals with research methodology and procedures that includes research methodology, research design, research place, population and sample, research instrument, procedure of data collection, and data analysis.

### **Research Methodology**

This research used experimental research method. Sugiyono (2013: 107) stated that the experimental research method could be interpreted as the research method that is used to find a specific treatment effect on controlled conditions.

In this research, the researcher employed a quantitative method of gathering and evaluating the data. John (2009: 23) said that a quantitative method is a means for testing the objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. These variables could be measured typically from the instruments, so that the numbers and other data could be analyzed by using statistical procedures.

### **Research Design**

Experimental teaching was used as the design of the research. The focus was to know whether small group discussion method improves students' speaking skill effectively or not. In this research there were two classes that were used, one as the experimental class and another one as the controlled class.

First of all, the researcher came into the classroom to introduce himself to the students and tell them about the research that he was conducting. Then, he kindly asked the students to help him with the research process, from the pre-test, treatments, until the post-test. As soon as the research explanation finished, a pre-test was administered in both classes to know the ability of the students. Finally, it was continued by applying the treatment for three meetings in the experimental class.

In the treatment process, the researcher got into the classroom. He firstly informed the students about the topic. Secondly, he showed the students an example of descriptive story telling according to the topic of the day. Thirdly, he divided the students into several small groups and asked the students to prepare their own story to tell. In the groups, they could share ideas and help each other. After that, in each group, each student in turn told their own descriptive story to their small group members. Then, each small group had to send a representative to share the conclusion of their small group discussion. Right after each small group representatives delivered their group conclusion to the whole class, the researcher could ask the students whether they got some new vocabularies when they prepared their story today or had some grammar stuff to talk about, etc. Finally, the class was dismissed by the researcher.

The same method was applied for three meetings of the treatment. In the first meeting, the students were still a bit confused of what and how to learn by using small group discussion method. However, they really enjoyed learning to speak English by using the method. Then, gradually, the students increased their vocabulary, grammar understanding and confidence to speak in front of other people.

Meanwhile, in the controlled class, small group discussion method was not applied to deliver the material. Instead, they have other methods of learning used by their lecturer in their classroom.

As the treatment in the experimental class was over, a post-test was administered in both classes. Finally, the post-test results were compared to see whether there were any improvements in their speaking scores after the treatment was given to the experimental class students.

### **Population and Sample**

#### **1. Population**

According to Sugiyono (2013: 117), population is generalization area consisting of objects or subjects that have certain qualities and characteristics defined by the researchers to be studied and then drawn conclusions.

The population in this research was all of the students at the Ma'had in the academic year of 2019/2020 that consisted of 178 students.

#### **2. Sample**

Based on Arikunto (2010: 174), sample is a part of population that will be observed. Sample was done by taking the subject/sample which is not based on strata, random, or area but it is based on the consideration of a certain purpose. In this research, the researcher used random sampling in choosing the sample. Sukardi (2010: 58) stated that random sampling is one of the techniques that all individual of a population may have the same opportunity to be chosen as the sample.

The sampling technique used is **purposive sampling**, and the chosen classes had 16 students, where there were 8 students in the experimental class and 8 students in the controlled class.

### **Research Instrument**

According to Purwanto (2010: 123), instruments are measuring equipment used to determine a research data collection. So, research instrument is the procedure used by a researcher to get the data needed from the research. It could be in the form of tests, questionnaires, or interviews.

In this research, the researcher used tests as the research instrument. The researcher used this form of the research instrument because it is very suitable for answering the research question. There were several steps done by the researcher to collect the data. In obtaining the data needed to be put in the research result, the researcher used pre-test, treatment and post-test.

1. Pre-test

To know whether small group discussion method improves students' speaking skill effectively, the researcher gave an oral test to each student at the beginning of the class (pre-test).

2. Treatment

After the pretest was conducted, the researcher applied the small group discussion method to improve the students speaking skill in the next three meetings of the regular class sessions.

3. Post-test

In the post-test, the researcher designed some items for the speaking tests and asked the students to perform the speaking tests one by one as they had learned in the treatment meetings through small group discussion method.

As that was an oral test, the researcher divided the scores into four criteria, which are the scores of fluency & coherence, lexical resource/vocabulary, grammatical range & accuracy, and pronunciation.

### **Data Analysis Technique**

The data from the tests was obtained to find out the results of the students' speaking skill by using small group discussion method which was applied in the experimental class. In analyzing the data of the pre-test and post-test, the researcher used the statistical calculation of t-test. It is one of the statistical test that is used to compare the t-score and t-table that has the significant differences. If the t-score is smaller than t-table, it means that the experiment is denied. On contrary, if the t-score is bigger than t-table, it means that the experiment is accepted.

The data was analyzed by using the t-test formula, Sudjana (2006: 149).

Note:

- T*** = the significant difference between two means
- X<sub>e</sub>*** = the mean score of the experimental class
- X<sub>c</sub>*** = the mean score of the controlled class
- SD*** = Standard deviation
- N*** = the number of the students of the experimental class and controlled class

Furthermore, after comparing the means of the experimental class and the controlled class, the researcher proved the hypothesis. Then, the researcher gave the interpretation by using the critical value of t-test and determined the degree of freedom (df) first. After that, the researcher used the 5% level of significance. If the t-score is the same as/higher than the critical value of t, the null hypothesis will be rejected and the alternative hypothesis will be accepted. If the t-score is lower than critical value of t, the null hypothesis will be accepted and the alternative hypothesis will be rejected

To analyze the result, the researcher used statistical technique, such as mean, standard deviation and t-test. The average score of the students (mean) which is symbolized by *X* could be obtained by using the formula below:

1. Mean

$$X = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Explanation:

- X*** = mean
- $\sum X$**  = frequency multiplied by deviation
- N*** = the number of students

2. Standard Deviation

The standard deviation is symbolized by *SD* and calculated by using the following formula:

$$SD_e = \sqrt{\frac{\sum X^2}{n} - \left(\frac{\sum X}{n}\right)^2}$$

In which:

- SD*** = standard deviation

$n$  = number of students

$\frac{\sum X^2}{n}$  = each score was squared, summed and then divided by  $n$

$\left(\frac{\sum X}{n}\right)^2$  = all scores were summed, divided by  $n$  and then squared

### 3. T-score

$$t = \frac{X_e - X_c}{\sqrt{\frac{SD_e^2}{n} + \frac{SD_c^2}{n}}}$$

Where:

$t$  = the significant differences between the two means

$X_e$  = the mean of the experimental class

$X_c$  = the mean of the controlled class

$SD_e$  = standard deviation of the experimental class

$SD_c$  = standard deviation of the controlled class

$n$  = the number of the students of the experimental class and controlled class

### 4. T-table

T-table is determined to be in the significance level of 5% (0.05).

$$df = (N1 + N2) - 2$$

Note:

$df$  = Degree of freedom

$N1$  = Number of the students (controlled class)

$N2$  = Number of the students (experimental class)

After calculating the  $t_0$ , the researcher compared  $t_{0(\text{observation})}$  with  $t_{t(\text{table})}$ .

The hypothesis testing used criteria with the significance degree of 0.05. The calculation of statistical measurement is as follows:

If  $t_0 > t_t$ , the  $H_a$  is accepted.

If  $t_0 < t_t$ , the  $H_a$  is rejected or  $H_0$  is accepted.

$H_a$ : Teaching speaking through small group discussion method improves students' speaking skill effectively.

$H_0$ : Teaching speaking through small group discussion method does not improve students' speaking skill effectively.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Findings

The data of the students' achievement was collected from the students' scores of pre-test and post-test which was applied in two classes, namely the experimental class and the controlled class. The type of score used to assess the students' speaking skill was nominal score.

#### 1. The Data of the Experimental Class

Table 4.1. The Pre-test and Post-test Scores of the Experimental Class

| No.          | Pre-test score | Post-test Score | Gained Score |
|--------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 1.           | 75             | 79              | 4            |
| 2.           | 82             | 87              | 5            |
| 3.           | 65             | 69              | 4            |
| 4.           | 69             | 74              | 5            |
| 5.           | 76             | 80              | 4            |
| 6.           | 81             | 85              | 4            |
| 7.           | 57             | 61              | 4            |
| 8.           | 75             | 81              | 6            |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>580</b>     | <b>616</b>      | <b>36</b>    |
| <b>Mean</b>  | <b>73</b>      | <b>77</b>       | <b>5</b>     |

From the Table 4.1., it could be clarified that the highest score on pre-test of experimental class was 82 and the lowest score was 57. The mean score of pre-test was 73, while the mean score of post-test was 77. The total gained score in this class was 36. It could be known that there was a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test.

#### 2. The Data of the Controlled Class

Table 4.2. The Pre-test and Post-test Scores of the Controlled Class

| No.          | Pre-test score | Post-test Score | Gained Score |
|--------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 1.           | 66             | 67              | 1            |
| 2.           | 77             | 79              | 2            |
| 3.           | 59             | 60              | 1            |
| 4.           | 77             | 78              | 1            |
| 5.           | 63             | 65              | 2            |
| 6.           | 85             | 86              | 1            |
| 7.           | 71             | 73              | 2            |
| 8.           | 76             | 77              | 1            |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>574</b>     | <b>585</b>      | <b>11</b>    |
| <b>Mean</b>  | <b>72</b>      | <b>73</b>       | <b>1</b>     |

From the Table 4.2., it showed that the highest score on the pre-test of the controlled class was 85 and the lowest score was 59. The mean score of the pre-test was 72, while the mean score of the post-test was 73. The total gained score in this class was 11.

From the two tables presented earlier, the researcher could explain that the experimental class has higher scores than the controlled class.

Table 4.3. The Pre-test Scores of the Experimental and Controlled Classes

| No.          | Experimental Class |                | Controlled Class |                |
|--------------|--------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
|              | X                  | X <sup>2</sup> | X                | X <sup>2</sup> |
| 1.           | 75                 | 5625           | 66               | 4356           |
| 2.           | 82                 | 6724           | 77               | 5929           |
| 3.           | 65                 | 4225           | 59               | 3481           |
| 4.           | 69                 | 4761           | 77               | 5929           |
| 5.           | 76                 | 5776           | 63               | 3969           |
| 6.           | 81                 | 6561           | 85               | 7225           |
| 7.           | 57                 | 3249           | 71               | 5041           |
| 8.           | 75                 | 5625           | 76               | 5776           |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>580</b>         | <b>42546</b>   | <b>574</b>       | <b>41706</b>   |

1. Mean

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{EC Pre-test} \\
 X_e &= \frac{\sum X}{n} \\
 &= \frac{580}{8} \\
 &= 72.5
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{CC Pre-test} \\
 X_e &= \frac{\sum X}{n} \\
 &= \frac{574}{8} \\
 &= 71.75
 \end{aligned}$$

After the mean scores of the pre-test of the experimental class and the controlled class are known, the researcher could count the standard deviation of each group.

2. Standard Deviation

$$\begin{aligned}
 SD_e &= \sqrt{\frac{\sum X^2}{n} - \left(\frac{\sum X}{n}\right)^2} \\
 &= \sqrt{\frac{42546}{8} - \left(\frac{580}{8}\right)^2} \\
 &= \sqrt{5318.25 - (72.5)^2} \\
 &= \sqrt{5318.25 - 5256.25} \\
 &= \sqrt{62} \\
 &= 7.87
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 SD_e &= \sqrt{\frac{\sum X^2}{n} - \left(\frac{\sum X}{n}\right)^2} && = \sqrt{5213.25 - 5148.06} \\
 & && = \sqrt{65.19} \\
 & && = 8.07 \\
 &= \sqrt{\frac{41706}{8} - \left(\frac{574}{8}\right)^2} \\
 &= \sqrt{5213.25 - (71,75)^2}
 \end{aligned}$$

The score of  $SD_e$  and  $SD_c$  showed the result of experimental class and controlled class pre-tests, so the researcher could count the t-score.

3. T-score

$$\begin{aligned}
 t &= \frac{X_e - X_c}{\sqrt{\frac{SD_e^2}{n} + \frac{SD_c^2}{n}}} \\
 &= \frac{72.5 - 71.75}{\sqrt{\frac{7.87^2}{8} + \frac{8.07^2}{8}}} \\
 &= \frac{0.75}{\sqrt{\frac{61.94}{8} + \frac{65.12}{8}}} \\
 &= \frac{0.75}{\sqrt{7.74 + 8.14}} \\
 &= \frac{0.75}{\sqrt{15.88}} \\
 &= \frac{0.75}{3.98} \\
 &= 0.19
 \end{aligned}$$

Based on the statistical analysis, it is found that the pre-test score of both classes is 0.19. So it is proper to take them for comparison in this research.

Table 4.4. The Post-test Scores of the Experimental and Controlled Classes

| No.          | Experimental Class |                | Controlled Class |                |
|--------------|--------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
|              | X                  | X <sup>2</sup> | X                | X <sup>2</sup> |
| 1.           | 79                 | 6241           | 67               | 4489           |
| 2.           | 87                 | 7569           | 79               | 6241           |
| 3.           | 69                 | 4761           | 60               | 3600           |
| 4.           | 74                 | 5476           | 78               | 6084           |
| 5.           | 80                 | 6400           | 65               | 4225           |
| 6.           | 85                 | 7225           | 86               | 7396           |
| 7.           | 61                 | 3721           | 73               | 5329           |
| 8.           | 81                 | 6561           | 77               | 5929           |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>616</b>         | <b>47954</b>   | <b>585</b>       | <b>43293</b>   |

1. Mean

*EC Post-test*

$$\begin{aligned} X_e &= \frac{\sum X}{n} \\ &= \frac{616}{8} \\ &= 77 \end{aligned}$$

*CC Post-test*

$$\begin{aligned} X_e &= \frac{\sum X}{n} \\ &= \frac{585}{8} \\ &= 73.13 \end{aligned}$$

After the mean scores of the pre-test of the experimental class and the controlled class are known, the researcher could count the standard deviation of each group.

2. Standard Deviation

$$\begin{aligned} SD_e &= \sqrt{\frac{\sum X^2}{n} - \left(\frac{\sum X}{n}\right)^2} \\ &= \sqrt{\frac{47954}{8} - \left(\frac{616}{8}\right)^2} \\ &= \sqrt{5,994.25 - (77)^2} \\ &= \sqrt{5,994.25 - 5,929} \\ &= \sqrt{65.25} \\ &= 8.10 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} SD_c &= \sqrt{\frac{\sum X^2}{n} - \left(\frac{\sum X}{n}\right)^2} \\ &= \sqrt{\frac{43293}{8} - \left(\frac{585}{8}\right)^2} \\ &= \sqrt{5,411.63 - (73.13)^2} \\ &= \sqrt{5,411.63 - 5,348} \\ &= \sqrt{63.63} \\ &= 7.98 \end{aligned}$$

The score of  $SD_e$  and  $SD_c$  showed the result of experimental class and controlled class pre-tests, so the researcher could count the t-score.

### 3. T-score

$$\begin{aligned}
 t &= \frac{X_e - X_c}{\sqrt{\frac{SD_e^2}{n} + \frac{SD_c^2}{n}}} \\
 &= \frac{77 - 73.13}{\sqrt{\frac{8.10^2}{8} + \frac{7.98^2}{8}}} \\
 &= \frac{3.87}{\sqrt{\frac{65.61}{8} + \frac{63.70}{8}}} \\
 &= \frac{3.87}{\sqrt{8.20 + 7.96}} \\
 &= \frac{3.87}{\sqrt{16.16}} \\
 &= \frac{3.87}{4.02} \\
 &= 0.97
 \end{aligned}$$

From the data calculation by using the t-score formula, it is found that the t-score of the pre-test is 0.19, and after giving the treatment, the t-score of the post-test is 0.97.

To prove the hypothesis, the data obtained from the experimental class and the controlled class was calculated by using the t-test formula with the assumption as follows:

$t_0 > t_t$  : The alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected. It means that teaching speaking through small group discussion method improves students' speaking skill effectively.

$t_0 < t_t$  : The alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is rejected and the null hypothesis is accepted. It means that teaching speaking through small group discussion method does not improve students' speaking skill effectively.

By comparing the values of  $t_0 = 0.97$  and  $t_t = 1.76$ , the data calculated by statistics showed that  $t_0$  is smaller than  $t_t$ . So, the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is rejected and the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is accepted. Statistically, it means that teaching speaking through small group discussion method does not improve students' speaking skill effectively at the Ma'had.

## DISCUSSION

From the result of the statistical calculation, it indicates that the value of  $t_0$  (t-observation) was 0.97 and the researcher used degree of freedom ( $df$ ) 14 which was got from the research and the degree of significance of 5% (0.05). In the table of significance, it is known that the  $df$  which is 14 and the degree of significance 5% (0.05), the value of degree significance is 1.76. After consulting to  $t_t$ , the researcher obtained a score that was bigger than  $t_0$  in the degree of significance of 5% (0.05), that is  $t_0=0.97 < t_t=1.76$ . It means that t-table was bigger than t-observation. Since the t-table is bigger than t-observation obtained from the calculation, the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is rejected and the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is accepted.

Based on the results of the data above, it is true that small group discussion method is not effective on the students' speaking skill. It could be seen from the post-test result that is coefficient is only 0.97. Which means it does not prove that the small group discussion method was effective in teaching the speaking skill at that university. So, it is really clear that teaching speaking through small group discussion method does not improve students' speaking skill effectively at the Ma'had.

There were several factors that made this method failed when it was applied at the Ma'had, such as:

1. The reluctance of each student to get involved in the discussion process while they were in their small groups.
2. The students preferred to discuss in their native language such as Indonesian, etc.
3. Most students did not want to contribute and add their points of view to be delivered by their group representative in English orally.

It was because the method did not suit all the students' ability, the class condition, and the class atmosphere, so it was hard for the lecturer to control all of the small groups simultaneously. The result is their speaking skill was not improved effectively by using this method. On contrary, the students need other methods as well to improve their speaking skill.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In this chapter, the researcher presents the conclusion and suggestion following the research findings and discussion in the previous chapter. The first section is the conclusion of the research and the second one is the suggestion dealing with the objectives of teaching and learning process.

### Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussion that have been presented in the previous chapter, the value of the  $t_0=0.97 < t_t=1.76$ , so  $H_a$  was rejected and  $H_0$  was accepted. It means that teaching speaking through small group discussion method does not improve students' speaking skill effectively at the Ma'had in Banda Aceh.

So, it could be concluded that there is no significant differences in the learning outcomes of the students who learned speaking through small group discussion method compared with the students who learned without using small group discussion method at the Ma'had in Banda Aceh.

There were several factors that caused this method to fail. One of the factors was because the method did not suit all of the students' ability and the class condition, so it was hard for the lecturer to control all of the small groups simultaneously. The result is their speaking skill was not improved effectively by using this method of teaching the speaking skill. On contrary, the students need other methods as well to improve their speaking skill.

### Suggestion

Some suggestions which might be useful for the lecturers, students, and other researchers who are interested in this research are as follows:

#### 1. For the lecturers

In conducting speaking activities, lecturers should have several references of the teaching method. Small group discussion is one of the methods. This method is one of the alternative ways of promoting speaking activity to avoid the students' boredom of learning. The lecturers should encourage students to speak without fears. They also should give motivation to the passive students because cooperative learning required active participation from the students by giving the procedure of learning in a fun way.

## 2. For the students

The students, particularly beginners who learn English should learn how to use the language in the real life, be brave to speak in front of people, and do not ever feel shy to speak. One of the many ways to easily practice it is to experience small group discussion method and also try to use other methods and tools, e.g. chatting with foreigners online or using Google translator for additional helps. The point is practice makes perfect. So, do not feel shy or afraid of making mistakes. Students must practice inside and even outside of the classroom to increase their English speaking skill. Discussing their problems and finding out the solution with their friends.

## 3. For other researchers

The researcher realizes that this research only gives a little additional knowledge to other researchers, so further researches are required. In this research, the researcher only dealt with the students in the researcher's class unit and a neighbor lecturer's class unit for the comparison class of the research that was conducted at the Ma'had with certain characteristics. Whereas, there were other units of students at the institution with some other characteristics which were not analyzed and included in this research. Hopefully, this research could stimulate other researchers to conduct other researches related to this field.

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