

# THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING DISCUSSION TASK IN TEACHING SPEAKING OF ANALYTICAL EXPOSITION TEXT

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## **Abstract**

*Generally in teaching and learning process, the students will mostly get the information from the teacher. They are not given much opportunity to share their thoughts especially which enables them to tell the information orally. The purpose of this research was to find out whether discussion task in teaching speaking of analytical exposition text is effective or not to the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 3 Pontianak in academic year 2014/2015. It was also designed to find out how significant the effectiveness of using discussion task in teaching speaking of analytical exposition text. The sample of this research was 21 students of XI MIA 2. This research was conducted through pre-experimental research. Data analysis showed that discussion task is effective to be used in teaching speaking of analytical exposition text. The result showed that the *t*-test result (17.98) was higher than the *t*-table  $\alpha$  with degree of freedom of 20 (2.086). The effect size result also showed a moderate effect (0.84) based on Cohen's classification (0.51-ES-1.00). In conclusion, the use of discussion task is moderately effective in teaching speaking of analytical exposition text to the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 3 Pontianak in academic year 2014/2015.*

**Keywords:** *Discussion Task, Analytical Exposition Text, Speaking*

Speaking is a crucial part of foreign language learning and teaching, because it can be used by students to express their ideas, thoughts, and feelings orally in foreign language. Richards (2008) stated that the mastery of speaking 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 on the basis of how much they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency. Students need to practice their skills everyday to improve their speaking ability. Therefore, teacher should give students opportunity to practice their speaking by giving more activities.

One of the learning objectives from the learning process of communicating phase which is made based on curriculum 2013 for the eleventh grade students of senior high school is that the students will be able to tell

the information of analytical exposition text and present it in front of the class by paying attention to the social function, structure, and the language element. In the curriculum used before (school based curriculum or KTSP), there is no such an activity like in the learning process of communicating phase (curriculum 2013). Moreover generally, in teaching and learning process, the students will mostly get the information from the teacher. The students are not given much opportunity to share their thoughts especially which enables them to tell the information orally. On the other way, based on the new curriculum, the students are expected to be given more opportunities to tell their ideas or arguments orally since there is an activity of communicating phase from the learning process.

Furthermore, regarding the lesson about analytical exposition text, it is a new material for the eleventh grade students at senior high school to be learned since they were never

taught about this kind of text before. Yusak (2006) states that expositions are a text type we use when we want to offer opinions, give suggestions and convince people to take particular actions. It is a text that elaborates the writer's idea about the phenomenon surrounding. Its social function is to persuade the reader that the idea is important matter. In analytical exposition text, the students learn how to share arguments about some issues which can be provided with facts, statistics, reasons, examples, or differentiation. Mastering this type of text in both spoken and written form are expected from the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 3 Pontianak. Consequently, the teacher should consider implementing some tasks or activities in the learning process for students to be able to tell the information of analytical exposition text. The researcher provided the discussion task from task based approach as one of the effective ways which can also be referred to as opinion gap activity to teach speaking of analytical exposition text for eleventh grade students.

Task based language teaching is considered to be an effective approach that fosters a learning environment in which learners are free to choose and use the target language forms which they think are most likely to achieve the aim of accomplishing defined communicative goals (Ellis, 2003; Willis, 1996). Task-based language teaching has presented opportunities to employ effective and meaningful activities. It can promote communicative language use in the language classroom. According to N. S. Prabhu (1987), one of three main categories of task is opinion gap activity. An opinion gap involves identifying and articulating a personal preference, feeling, or attitude in response to a given situation (Samuda & Bygate, 2008). One example is taking part in the discussion of a social issue. The activity may involve using factual information and formulating arguments to justify one's opinion, but there is no objective procedure for demonstrating outcomes as right or wrong, and no reason to expect the same outcome from different individuals or on different occasions.

Opinion gap activity as a discussion task is an interaction between two persons or more to solve the problems or to find the solution. According to Bridges cited in Killen (1998), "a discussion is an orderly process of face to face group interaction in which people exchange ideas about issues for the purpose of solving problem, answering questions, enhancing their knowledge, and making a decision." In speaking class, there should be interaction activity both of student to student and student to teacher. Therefore in order to make students active in speaking, one of the techniques can be used by teachers in teaching speaking that is through discussion task. In the discussion task, students are expected to help each other, to discuss and argue with each other, to assess each other current knowledge and fill in gaps each other's understanding. The students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning. The discussion task emphasized on the procedures in which students engage in some steps in their cooperative group to comprehend the material and solve the task.

The researcher chose to follow Willis's framework that includes all three stages of task based language teaching and the task type of opinion gap activity in teaching speaking of analytical exposition text. Those three stages as follows: 1) Pre task, the teacher explains the topic and gives the direction to the students in the task phase clearly then begins the students with key vocabulary or grammatical constructs in the lesson. 2) Task cycle, the students complete the task in pair or typically in small groups by using the language resource depend on the type of activity, there are some stages in this stage, they are task stage which students gain fluency and confidence in themselves as communicators by start working in pair/small groups to do the task, planning stage which the students start to plan and prepare reporting their findings, and report stage which the students present the information to the class orally or read the written report. 3) Language focus, the teacher reviews what happened in the task and highlights relevant the text used earlier in the task cycle.

In previous research, there are some researchers who discussed the use of task based language teaching in teaching speaking. The previous research which was conducted by M. Mojibur Rahman (2010) in Indian School of Mines University, Dhanbad, has shown that the use of task-based is significant positive and can help to improve students' oral communication skills. The tasks described were well received by the majority of the learners. They found the experience to be rewarding, intrinsically interesting, and educationally beneficial. They got involved in the task, because the tasks were giving the feeling of real life situation. This is also in line with the research conducted by Amir Marzbana and Mojgan Hashemi (2012) at intermediate level at Helal College Institute in Babol, Mazandaran, Iran. The purpose of their study was to investigate the effect of opinion gap task on the speaking ability of intermediate EFL learners. Their finding revealed that there was a significant different between the pre-test and post test at the level of .05. and the mean score obtained from the post test is higher than the pre test. This difference indicates that opinion gap task resulted in the students' increased on the speaking ability of intermediate EFL learners.

In this case, the researcher only focused on applying the discussion task and to test whether it can be applied to the senior high level and help to support the teacher as an alternative way of teaching speaking of analytical exposition text or not. The researcher also only focused on how effective the discussion task can be applied in the classroom. The researcher chose experimental design as the suitable research design where the strong willing in doing this research is to try out the new way of teaching and learning language and not to solve the problems or increase the students' score as the main concern. Furthermore, the researcher chose SMA Negeri 3 Pontianak in consideration that the school just already applied the curriculum 2013 for the first time in 2015 and the researcher ever had teaching practice in that school.

From those explanations, it can be considered that the use of discussion task is relatively simple and highly recommended in teaching speaking of analytical exposition text because the students can be engaged with the active speaking activities. The researcher believes that the discussion task can be effectively used in teaching learning process to the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 3 Pontianak. The researcher hopes that the findings of this research will be able to improve students' speaking skill and also can be one of the teachers' effective ways to be implemented in the classroom.

## METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted in a pre-experimental study. Cohen (2000) divides pre-experimental design into three types, they are; *One-shot case study*, *One group Pre-test and Post-test*, and *Static group comparison*. The researcher chose *One Group Pre-test and Post-Test* design in this research. The researcher chose this research because this research aims to determine an effect before and after the treatment given to a sample of research. This research used pre-test and post test to investigate students' speaking skill.

The population of this research was taken from grade XI students in SMAN 3 Pontianak academic year 2014/2015. There are 6 classes of grade XI students in the school and the total of the students is 213. According to Creswell (2012), sample is the selected individuals who are representative of the entire population that the researcher plans to study for generalizing the population. For the technique this research used *convenience sampling*. Tejero (2006) emphasizes that all participants of the investigation are derived through equal chances. Meanwhile, researcher assumed that the sample has the same chance and the population was homogeny. Therefore, the sample of this research was the students in XI MIA 2, as they represent the entire population that has the same problem. However, due to the time constraints, the researcher took 21 students in this class to be evaluated in pre-test and post-test. On the other hand, in the

treatment the researcher involved all of the students in that classroom.

In collecting the data of students' learning achievement, the researcher measured the students' learning achievement before and after the treatment. First, researcher gave a pre-test to know student's prior ability in speaking. In the pre test, the students were asked to make an analytical exposition text based on the students' prior knowledge about the topic which had been decided by the researcher. Then, they presented it as they gave a speech in front of the class. The researcher recorded the performance to make her easy to check and watch it repeatedly. The second is treatment. The researcher gave them the treatment. The researcher applied the discussion task in the teaching learning process. Creswell (2012) states, "a posttest is a measure on some

attribute or characteristic that is assessed for participants in an experiment after a treatment." Therefore, after giving the treatment, the researcher tested them again with the same test item in pre-test.

The tool of data collecting is oral speaking test through speech. To have sufficient data, the oral performance in pre-test and post-test of students' monologue speaking is recorded by using a digital camera and voice recorder. Furthermore, the materials which the researcher gave to the students were adapted from Buku Guru Bahasa Inggris Kelas XI Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan 2014.

The aspects that can be measured in speaking are fluency, accuracy, vocabulary, and content (Heaton,1998).

**Table 1**  
**Scoring Criteria of Students' Speaking Performance**

<b>Score</b>	<b>Fluency</b>
5	No hesitation; speech is smooth and flowing. No hesitancy or rephrasing.
4	Minor hesitation; speech is smooth for the most part. Few hesitancy. Some rephrasing. Long pauses occur in one time
3	Occasional hesitation; speech is generally hesitant and often choppy. (Long pauses occur in 2-3 times)
2	Frequent hesitation; speech is extremely hesitant and choppy. Frequent pauses and/or unfinished phrases. Long pauses occur in 4-6 times)
1	Dominated by hesitation; speech is limited to isolated words or short phrases. No fluency. (Long pauses occur more than 7 times).
<b>Score</b>	<b>Accuracy</b>
5	Demonstrates mastery of structure; no or very few grammatical errors. (1-2 error)
4	Minor problems in structure; some grammatical errors, errors do not impede comprehension. (3-4 errors)
3	Several errors in structure; several grammatical errors occasionally impede comprehension. (5-6 errors)
2	Major problems in structure; many grammatical errors frequently impede comprehension. (7-8 errors)
1	No mastery of sentence construction; grammatical errors are found in every sentence that comprehension is totally impeded.

<b>Score</b>	<b>Vocabulary</b>
5	Effective/appropriate word choice; uses a wide range of vocabulary appropriately.
4	Minor errors in word choice; uses a fairly wide range of vocabulary. Most of vocabulary is used appropriately. (1-3 words)
3	Occasional error in word choice; uses an adequate range of vocabulary, but sometimes inappropriately. (4-6 words)
2	Frequent errors of word choice; uses a limited range of vocabulary. Vocabulary is often used inappropriately. (7-9 words)
1	Little knowledge of English words; shows no appropriate of vocabulary. (more than 10 words)

<b>Score</b>	<b>Content</b>
5	The spoken text is organized well and addresses the assigned topic. Effective thesis, position and preview are presented, leads to arguments, supporting evidence in elaboration is developed fully to support the arguments, the conclusion stresses the importance of the thesis statement and gives the conclusion of a text. All important information in the text is delivered by the speaker clearly.
4	The spoken text is organized well and addresses the assigned topic but loses some details. Acceptable thesis, position and preview are presented, leads to arguments, supporting evidence in elaboration is developed adequately to support the arguments, the conclusion stresses the importance of the thesis statement but does not give the conclusion of a text. There are 1-3 important information in the text which are not delivered by the speaker.
3	The spoken text is organized well but written somewhat off the Poor thesis, position and preview are presented unclearly, does not lead to arguments, supporting evidence in elaboration is developed slightly to support the arguments, the conclusion does not stress the importance of the thesis statement and does not give the conclusion of a text but still related with the topic. There are more than three important information in the text which are not delivered by the speaker.
2	The spoken text is not organized well and completely inadequate. Very poor thesis, position and preview are not presented, does not lead to arguments, unclear supporting evidence in elaboration to support the arguments, the conclusion is not related with the topic. There are 1-3 information in the text which are not delivered by the speaker.
1	The spoken text is not organized well and completely inadequate. Very poor thesis, position and preview are not presented, does not lead to arguments, unclear supporting evidence in elaboration to support the arguments, the conclusion is not related with the topic. There are more than three important information in the text which are not delivered by the speaker.

*(Modified from Heaton, 1998)*

The data was collected through students' speaking performance from pre-test and post test. Then, the score was measured using the formula to find the t-test result as follow:

$$t = \frac{\bar{D}}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum d^2 - \frac{(\sum d)^2}{N}}{N(N-1)}}}$$

T-test formula (1)

Note:

t : the t-test score

$\bar{D}$  : the mean of difference score

$\sum d$  : the sum of students' difference score

N : the number of student

The effect size from the pre-test and post test result as follow:

$$ES = t \sqrt{\frac{1}{N}}$$

Effect Size Formula (2)

Note:

ES : Effect Size

t : The result of *t-test*

N : Number of students

The result of the measurement then will be classified according to the following classification by Cohen (2007).

**Table 2**  
**The Criteria of Effect Size**

Effect Size	Qualification
0–0.20	weak effect
0.21–0.50	modest effect
0.51–1.00	moderate effect
>1.00	strong effect

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In order to know the ability of students in speaking, there were four components of speaking skill that were assessed. Those components were fluency, accuracy, vocabulary, and content. After analyzing the data, the score would be classified into four which were excellent, good, average, poor, and fail. The result of the analyzed data will be elaborated below.

### Findings

The result of the measurement from pre-test showed that the mean score of the students' pre-test was 56.42. It is categorized

as Average. The mean score of pre-test showed that the student had average prior ability in English. On the other hand, the mean score of the students' post-test was 82.14. The score can be categorized as Excellent. It means pre-test and post-test has different category in score. It was improving from Average to Excellent.

From the data, the researcher got result that the mean score of pre-test and post-test were quite significant difference. It showed that the treatment given affecting students' in developing their speaking skill. The measurement on the mean score of students pre-test and post-test is shown in the following table

**Table 3**  
**Students' score in Pre-test and Post-Test**

No	Students' Code	Pre-test X1	Post-test X2	D (X2-X1)	D <sup>2</sup>
1	RW	60	90	30	900
2	TH	70	100	30	900
3	QN	55	85	30	900
4	PJ	55	90	35	1225
5	KT	60	90	30	900
6	TR	60	70	10	100
7	DH	85	100	15	225
8	FA	75	95	20	400
9	FN	50	80	30	900
10	AD	50	75	25	625
11	RC	50	75	25	625
12	AN	60	85	25	625
13	HN	35	60	25	625
14	LS	40	70	30	900
15	SH	75	90	15	225
16	TS	55	85	30	900
17	RN	60	80	20	400
18	AT	35	60	25	625
18	IS	35	70	35	1225
20	DW	70	95	25	625
21	NV	50	80	30	900
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1185</b>	<b>1725</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>14750</b>
<b>MEAN</b>		<b>56.42</b>	<b>82.14</b>	<b>25.7</b>	<b>702.38</b>

Then the researcher computed the t-value and the effect size. The result of the t-test showed that the obtained *t-value* is 17.98 which is higher than *t-table value* with 20 *the degree of freedom* which is 2.086 at the 0.05 level. It is also strengthened by the result of the computation of the effect size of the treatment which is 0.84 (which is between 0.51-1.00) or categorized as moderate effect. From the result, the alternative hypothesis which is stated the use of discussion task is effective in teaching speaking of analytical exposition text to the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 3 Pontianak in academic year 2014/2015 is accepted and the effect is categorized as "Moderate Effect".

### Discussion

In this research, the researcher used discussion task in teaching speaking of analytical exposition text. The aim of this research is to investigate whether discussion task is effective or not in teaching speaking of analytical exposition text and how effective the use of discussion task in teaching speaking of analytical exposition text.

The students during the treatments always seemed active and enjoyed the activity. The students can share their feeling and ideas through discussion in group. The treatments allow the students to be more active in participating in discussions, using non verbal appropriately and conveying factual information, giving relevant opinion about the topic and inviting contributions from the group

members. Although, not all the students in sample class practice their English frequently, but they always practice their speaking in the stages of discussion task. By practicing speaking English a lot during this kind of task, they can decrease their nervousness and hesitation in their speaking English. In other words, they can feel more confident in speaking English that they used to be.

In this class, the researcher acted as their facilitator and the students must be the active one. The students were demanded to do the discussion task based on the form of task based instruction. There were three steps included in the instruction; they are pre task, task cycle, and language focus. Through all these steps, the students worked together to maximize their own and each other's learning, to comprehend the material and to solve the task.

In the step of pre task, teacher explored the topic with the class, highlighted useful words and phrases, also helped students understand task instructions. This step could open the students' prior knowledge about the topic given and enrich some useful words related to the topic. Afterwards, in the task cycle step, there was a task which enabled the students to raise their consciousness in identifying and processing specific language features they have noticed in the task. This task brought the grammatical and generic structure to the students as to persuade the audience by making an argument, students should write the text in the correct grammar.

Next, in the second task of task cycle, the development of understanding with the topic can be achieved by analyzing a text related to the topic and answering some questions related to the text. Then in the language focus step, students were asked to create a monologue text with their group. This step needs students to engage in discussion about the topic given and exchange their ideas. The bigger chance were given through the group work when they were asked to do opinion exchange task and present the report of their work in front of the classroom. While presenting their report in front of the classroom, the other students could give feedback to them. Through this step, the students found the way to the development of

fluency and content of their text. The feedback given covered the arguments and recommends that they already made with their own group. Simultaneously, the language use and language learning can take place in doing this kind of task. This interpretation is in line with the superiority of task based language teaching has been emphasized by Ellis (2003) which lies in the meaningful, purposeful, communicative and authentic nature of task based approach.

In conducting this research, applying the discussion task can build creative and critical thinking skills for students. By using this kind of task, the students are triggered to maximize their potential to speak out their minds toward some issues. In fact, this advantage was not perfectly achieved due to the condition of eleventh grade students who were tended to depend on their teacher in providing the materials. However, the researcher can motivate the students to build their creative and critical thinking skills for example by giving an opportunity for the students to find the sources material from other references which can be useful in doing their task.

Aside from the advantages mentioned above, the effectiveness of using discussion task in teaching speaking of analytical exposition text is moderate can be due to the problems during the research. One of them is the limited time available. In each meeting, there were only two lesson hours in which one lesson hour consists of 45 minutes. The researcher only had 90 minutes for each meeting. This is not easy for the teacher to create an effective process of teaching and learning through discussion task considers the difficulties of students in oral activities. Besides that, the researcher also had to consider the sample class which consists of 36 students. It is considered as a big class to be observed with limited time available. Seeing this situation, the researcher should have managed the class well and wisely. In addition, there were some students who were also still not confident to participate actively during the process of teaching and learning. In this case, the researcher should have also encouraged the students to increase their participations in teaching and learning process.



Even though the discussion task has both advantages and weaknesses, there is a contribution in the improvement of students' ability in speaking skill. The important point to believe is that from the collecting data proves that discussion task gives positive results to the improvement of students' oral skill. On the other hand, the weaknesses of the technique prove that there is no perfect teaching technique. Therefore, the technique later that would be chosen must be suitable for the students based on their levels and needs, so that the goals of teaching speaking which the students are willing to be able to carry out can be reached.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

### **Conclusions**

Referring to the findings and discussion in this research, it can be concluded that the use of discussion task in teaching speaking of analytical exposition text contributed an improvement of the students' achievement in speaking skill, especially for grade XI students of MIA 2 at SMAN 3 Pontianak in the academic year 2014/2015. It showed that discussion task is moderately effective in teaching speaking of analytical exposition text in SMAN 3 Pontianak and schools which have similar situation and characteristics with this school.

Moreover, by using discussion task in teaching speaking of analytical exposition text, students were able to use simple present tense accurately in making an argument, open their prior knowledge about the topic given and enrich some useful words related to the topic. Students also had to engage in discussion about the topic given and exchange their ideas. Then, the students found the way to the development of fluency and content of their text. Finally, by using discussion task, the students in the classroom become more active in participating in discussions. The students are triggered to maximize their potential to speak out their minds toward some issues. While the students were practicing speaking English a lot during this kind of task, they can feel more

confident in speaking English that they used to be.

### **Suggestions**

Based on the data analysis of the research and the conclusions, the researcher would like to give some suggestions as follows: **1)** Discussion task is recommended to the English teachers as the alternative technique to teach English in speaking class or oral activity, especially in teaching analytical exposition text. In addition, the technique must be required to pay attention to the time management and classroom condition. **2)** The teachers should manage time and classroom effectively in order to create a nice and enjoyable atmosphere during the teaching and learning process in classroom. In order to avoid wasting time also, the teachers need to prepare lesson plan appropriately and do it firmly. It will decrease consuming time ineffectively. When all those things are prepared well and teachers know what they have to do, then everything will run smoothly and effectively. **3)** The teachers are suggested to give more activities in form of any other kind of discussion task because it will encourage the students to speak. It needs more opportunities to make the students improve their skills. Giving the students space in discussion task and present their performances in front of the class is one of the efforts to motivate students to practice speaking English. **4)** The teachers need to provide a guideline of discussion task. The guideline in the discussion task is aimed to involve students in doing things with the language and make sure the activity challenge them to use their abilities in speaking skill. **5)** The teachers should be creative in selecting the materials for the students. They need to have materials from any of English sources in discussion activity. If they do not get it, it could be simply to apply discussion as brainstorm activity in teaching process. **6)** Students should provide themselves with sufficient knowledge from various sources of information as they can develop and find the knowledge from unlimited sources available.

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