

THE USE OF SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION (A STUDY CONDUCTED AT SMP NEGERI 1 LANGOWAN)

Stella S. Tambuwun, Deysi Batunan, Tirza Kumayas

English Education Department

Faculty of Language and Arts

Universitas Negeri Manado, Tondano, Indonesia

Email : tambuwunstella@gmail.com

Abstract : The purpose of this research is to found out whether or not small group discussion could improve students' reading comprehension through pre experimental design with one group pre-test and post-test design as quantitative research. The data collection in this research consists of 10 essay questions with 2 points for each question and 20 points for total point of the questions. The subject of this research was the eighth students in SMP N 1 Langowan which consisted of 20 students. This research is conducted during pandemic of Covid-19 so it is held online with using social media and video call to ensure students and teacher health following the health protocol to minimalized physical interaction and to make sure parents and students feel save in their house but still maintained to make sure students were focus in their online class meeting. The data of this research are analysed statistically using mean score formula. The result in this study shows that the score of the post-test is higher than the result of the pre-test. The mean score of the pre-test is 42,5 and in post-test is 77,5. It could be concluded that Small Group Discussion is effective to improve students' reading comprehension on narrative text.

Keywords : *Small Group Discussion, Reading Comprehension, Narrative Text.*

1. INTRODUCTION

English as an international language became a very important language as a communication tool. Therefore, the use of English in everyday life is very important in various and important aspects, for example: education, business, economics, politics, culture etc. Liando and Lumentu (2017:21) stated "As a tool of communication, language is an essential part in human life." English is a well-known language since it is used internationally. Panembunan, Tulung & Maru (2016:2) stated "As an International language English is important to be learned by people around the world." Liando (2009:146) stated "English, despite its status as a second language, has become more and more popular among scholars, bureau crafts, and the elites in Indonesia as the use of information technology is increasing." According to Hamp (2019:16), "In learning English there are parts that must be considered, namely listening, speaking,

reading, writing beside the important and main parts are grammar and vocabulary." Lambe (2017) states "Reading comprehension is a process of getting information from context and combining disparate elements into a new whole." Language also can be a medium for improving the quality of human resources by which it can assure people to get a better life. Therefore, teaching and learning English are very important to help people to communicate and to get information.

Teaching and learning process in English are needed to be comprehensible for students so that students can get the information and comprehend the material that given by the teacher. And the role of the teacher does not only give the material and give an assessment but also teacher has role to motivate, interact, and to provide the knowledge for the students and to help them to comprehend the material that given. Teacher also has role to teach skills in

English and there are four skills in English: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

To help students in comprehending the material, reading as one of skills in English can help students in learning English. Because students have to master reading as one of English skills and almost all the material is in reading text form. Swan (1992, p. 1) states that *“by reading students can enlarge or enrich their knowledge and experience because most of the information served in written form”*. Reading is the common activity for people and reading also an activity that very often used in the classroom. On the other hand reading activity can also make an interaction with reader and writer in order to exchange information or idea through written text. Like someone who is talking, the writer try to convey some messages to another person. He must read well if he or she wants to broaden the experience, develop the ideas, solve the problem and acquire good understanding and ways of thinking. So, teaching and reading are important to improve students' reading comprehension.

In teaching reading comprehension, narrative text is a text that is very helpful in increasing students' comprehension in reading. Because of the use of this text is very often and the story is about something that is interesting for students because of the characters. In this narrative text, it has a good message and life lesson. For an example is fable. Narrative text can be the right text to use in increasing students' comprehension in reading.

Students are expected to not only be able to read the reading text but to comprehend the text. Grellet (1992) states that reading comprehension means understanding a written text to extract the required information from it as efficiently as possible (p. 3). When students comprehend the text, it will be easier for them to answer the questions about the reading text and it could influence their grades. Students could get a good grade if they could comprehend the text.

Based on the observation and informal interview about English with students and teachers that the writers have from Teaching

Practice Program (PPL) 2019 at SMP N 1 LANGOWAN. There have been some problems that have faced by the students. First, writer gave questions to the English teacher about teaching English and the difficulties that found in the classroom. Three English teachers answered that it is hard to teach students and to help all of the students because there are a lot of students. Second, the writers give question about learning English to the students and 65% of the students, answers that they face difficulties in learning English especially in comprehend the reading text 30% just follow the others answer and 5% do not have interest with the questions and English lesson. They said that they didn't understand all of the content of the text and they hoped they could work in a group with other students to make the easier in understand the reading text.

So, based on the situation above, the writers thought to try a different technique in teaching English in order to make a very interesting learning process in learning English and to make students be able to comprehend the reading text.

The technique chosen by the writers is Small Group Discussion. Mc. Laughlin et al. (2012) state that class discussion played an important role in reading comprehension. Small group discussion could make the learning process became easier because student could work with other student, they could share an information and help each other (p. 433). With this small group discussion student could be more focus to discuss about the topic and students could be more aware of the diversity of the opinion about the topic.

The writers hope that teaching reading comprehension could be easier with using small group discussion and students could be active in learning reading comprehension with using this small group discussion.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Reading

Reading is a very needed activity not only in school but also in the office, hospital, at

home, in business, etc. In this modern era, people read a lot of text because we often use social media that uses written text as a media to share the information and reading is the only way to understand the written text. With reading we could develop our knowledge about many things depended on what we read.

According to Grabe (2009), reading is a process when readers learn something from what they read and involve it in an academic context as a part of education (p. 5) and reading as an activity in which the readers respond to and make sense of a text being read connected to their prior knowledge (Spratt et al., 2005, p. 21). Like someone is talking, the writers are trying to convey some messages to another person. He must read well if he or she wanted to broaden the experience, develop the ideas, solve the problem and acquire good understanding and ways of thinking, all of which are innate in their personal growth. Well, from those definitions reading could be an action from an interaction between reader and writer by written or printed text. Well, through reading the purpose from the writer that written in written text or printed text could be understood and delivered. An information could be easily obtained by reading activity.

2.2 Reading Comprehension

According to Harris and Sipay (1980), reading comprehension ability is taught to be a set of generalized knowledge acquisition skills that permits people to acquire and exhibit information gained as a consequence of reading printed language (p. 179). Lambe (2017) states "*Reading comprehension is a process of getting information from context and combining disparate elements into a new whole.*" Reading as an activity often we do in our lives is very helpful to get the information from the written text. And not only in our daily life but also in education. Students spend a lot of times in reading in learning process. Reading could help students to get more knowledge but a lot of students could read but to understand the reading text, only few of students especially reading text in English. Sometimes students that have already known to read the text don't want to understand the text for some reason. They sometimes find it is hard to

understand the text or too lazy to understand. The comprehending of the text is needed so the message from the writers to the reader could be achieved. But because of students couldn't understand the reading text it's could affect their grade and in their knowledge about the reading text.

The ability in comprehending a text from the students are different. There are students that could understand the text by himself but there are students that need help from other people to understand the reading text. So as a teacher, we had to be able to understand that we should found different way that could help students not only for students that had difficulties in comprehend the text but also the students that could understand the text without help from other people. Because sometimes even though the students could understand the text with easier sometimes it was hard for them to express what they knew about the reading text.

From the problems above the writers consider about giving a technique that could make student be more active and understand with putting students in a group that could make students work together to comprehend the text and be able to answer the questions that will be given by the teacher. The technique is Small Group Discussion Technique.

2.3 Narrative Text

Narrative text is a kind of text that often used in teaching and learning process. It is very interesting with variations story. The implication of narrative text could make students more comprehend the material.

Suyono stated that *Narasi adalah jenis wacana yang berusaha mengisahkan suatu kejadian atau peristiwa. "Dalam narasi pembaca seakan-akan diajak melihat atau mengalami sendiri kejadian atau rangkaian peristiwa yang dikisahkan disusun berdasarkan rangkaian waktu"* (Suyono, 2004). In other word a narrative text is a text that's trying to tell an event and in narrative text also stimulus the reader to feel the event that arranged by time with interesting story.

2.4 Small Group Discussion

Small group discussion is an activity under the guidance of a presenter (teacher), discusses issue or topic to achieve knowing and understanding. Its goals are to spark new thought and concept exploration, encourage analysis information, develop open-minded attitudes to accept other people opinion.

Small group discussion could help students in intellectual, emotional and social. Because the interaction with other students could develop students' knowledge and awareness about diversity in opinion and students are able to respect other students opinion and develop their social with the interaction with other students. Well, small group discussion could be a media to sharing information and get information.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this research writers use quantitative research method through experimental study with pre-test and post-test, this research is a process of calculation that produces rates and measures.

Hatch and Farhady (1982) state that one group pre-test and post-test design and similar to one shot case study (p. 20). There are two test T1 is pretest and T2 posttest, X used to symbolize the treatment.

And the design is showing down below:

Pre-Test	Treatment	Post-Test
T1	X	T2

T1 : Pre-test to measure the students' achievement in reading comprehension before applying the new teaching technique.

X : The new teaching technique is applied for the certain period time.

T2 : Post-test to measure the students' achievement in reading comprehension after the new teaching technique is applied.

3. 1 Subject of the study

The participants of this study is the eighth grade of A class in SMP Negeri 1 Langowan.

3. 2 Research

The data are collected through the test and the instrument of this research that is written test that is essay in pre-test and post-test.

There are 10 questions in each text with 20 points total.

Scoring rubric adapted from Brown (2003)

INDICATORS	POINTS
GRAMMAR	1
CONTENT	1

Total point of each text is different. Adjusted with the questions and indicators in the questions.

$$Score = \frac{Gained\ Score}{Maximal\ Score} \times 100$$

3. 3 Data Analysis

In analyzing the data, the writers use mean score to analyze the data. The analysis is focused on mean and standard deviation. The statistical formula use as follows:

Mean score formula:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum x}{n}$$

Where:

- \bar{x} : Mean Score
- $\sum x$: Number of total
- n : number of sample

4. ANALYSIS OF DATA

In collecting the data, the writers choose one class as a sample by using online meeting application which are Whatsapp and Messenger with Video Call and Chatting fitur to reach the students with keep

following the health procedure in this pandemic. The students aske to discuss with their friends in social media and answer the questions together. The experimental design is used and the treatment that used in teaching process is Small Group Discussion technique. The writers give tests to compare the result of pre-test and post-test after treatment by using Small Group Discussion technique.

Table 1. The computation of the pre-test mean score.

Number of Students	X ₁
1	45
2	50
3	60
4	60
5	35
6	35
7	45
8	50
9	55
10	50
11	45
12	40
13	50
14	60
15	35
16	40
17	55
18	55
19	60
20	55
Total Points	845

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

$$\bar{X} = \frac{845}{20}$$

$$\bar{X} = 42.5$$

The mean score of the pre-test is 42.5. The achievement in the pre-test shows us that from the 20 students who take part in the T1, the highest score is 60 and the lowest

score is 35. It shows that students' achievement in pre-test was lower.

Table 2. The computation of post-test mean score

Number of Students	X ₂
1	65
2	70
3	90
4	75
5	75
6	65
7	75
8	85
9	87
10	83
11	78
12	89
13	85
14	76
15	67
16	65
17	70
18	75
19	93
20	82
Total	1.550

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

$$\bar{X} = \frac{1550}{20}$$

$$\bar{X} = 77.5$$

The mean score in post-test is 77.5. It shows that students achievement is improve. The arrangement of achievement in the post-test shows us that all the 20 students got better result in post test.

From the result of both test pre-test and post-test. It could be concluded that the achievement in pre-test is lower than in the post-test.

Table 3. Matrix of pre-test and post-test

Students Number	Pre Test	Post Test
1	45	65
2	50	70
3	60	90
4	60	75
5	35	75
6	35	65
7	45	75
8	50	85
9	55	87
10	50	83
11	45	78
12	40	89
13	50	85
14	60	76
15	35	67
16	40	65
17	55	70
18	55	75
19	60	93
20	55	82
Total	845	1.550

The result of this research shows that small group discussion is effective to improve students' reading comprehension. The score of post-test are higher than those of pretest. In other words, when small group discussion is applied the scores increased.

Table 4. Students gaining scores

Students Number	Pre test	Post test	Significances Study
1	45	65	20
2	50	70	20
3	60	90	30
4	60	75	15
5	35	75	40
6	35	65	30
7	45	75	30
8	50	85	35
9	55	87	32
10	50	83	33
11	45	78	33
12	40	89	49
13	50	85	35
14	60	76	16
15	35	67	33

16	40	65	25
17	55	70	15
18	55	75	20
19	60	93	33
20	55	82	27
	845	1.550	

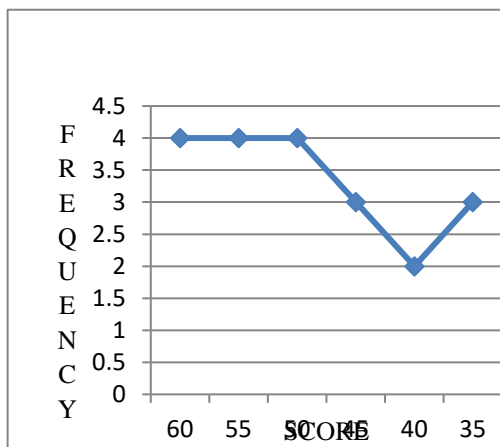
The data show that there are 20 students taking part in the test. 2 students get increased by 15 points, 1 student gets increased by 16 points, 2 students get increased by 20 points, 1 student gets increased by 27 points, 3 students get increased by 30 points, 1 student gets increased by 32 points, 4 student get increased by 33 points, 2 student get increased by 35 points, 1 student gets increased by 40 points and 1 student gets increased by 49 points.

Table 5. Frequency distribution matrix of Pre-test

Scores	Tally	Frequency	%
60	IIII	4	20 %
55	IIII	4	20 %
50	IIII	4	20 %
45	III	3	15 %
40	II	2	10 %
35	III	3	15 %

In action pre-test shows that students achievement of the mean score $X = 42,25$. 4 students get 60 scores or 20%, 4 students get 55 scores or 20%, 4 students get 50 scores or 20%, 3 students get 45 scores or 15%, 2 students get scores 40 or 10%. 3 students get scores 35 or 15%.

Frequency Polygon of Pre-test



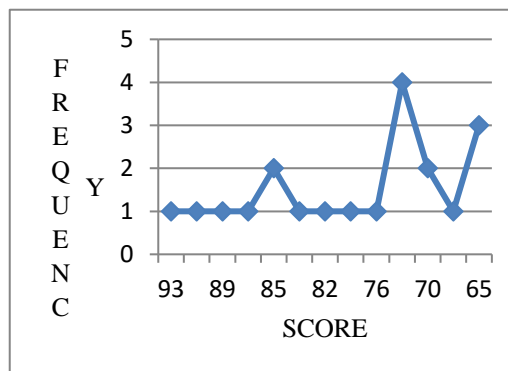
The frequency polygon above shows us that 5 students get 60, 4 students get 55, 7 students get 50, 4 students get 45, 3 students get 40, and 5 students get 35.

Table 6. Frequency distribution matrix of Post-test

Scores	Tally	Frequency	%
93	I	1	5 %
90	I	1	5 %
89	I	1	5 %
87	I	1	5 %
85	II	2	10 %
83	I	1	5 %
82	I	1	5 %
78	I	1	5 %
76	I	1	5 %
75	IIII	4	20 %
70	II	2	10 %
67	I	1	5 %
65	III	3	15 %

The result of post-test shows that students' score increases. The frequency distribution above shows that 1 student gets 93 or 5%, 1 student gets 90 or 5%, 1 student gets 89 or 5%, 1 student gets 87 or 5 %, 2 students get 85 or 10 %, 1 student gets 83 or 5%, 1 student gets 82 or 5%, 1 student gets 78 or 5%, 1 student gets 76 or 5%, 4 students get 75 or 20%, 2 students get 70 or 10%, 1 student gets 67 or 5% and 3 students get 65 or 15%.

Frequency Polygon of Post-test



The frequency polygon above shows us that the students score has been improved, there are 2 students who get 90, 5 students who get 85, 3. Students who get 80, 6 students who get 75, 4 students who get 70, and 8 students who get 65.

Table 7. Recapitulation of mean scores of pre-test and post-test

Test	Mean Score
T1	42,25
T2	77,5

5. DISCUSSION

The information presented that there were 20 students who take part of the test. From twenty students in pre-test, 4 students get 60 scores or 20%, 4 students get 55 scores or 20%, 4 students get 50 scores or 20%, 3 students get 45 scores or 15%, 2 students get scores 40 or 10%. 3 students get scores 35 or 15%.

From 20 students who take part in post-test, 1 student gets 93 or 5%, 1 student gets 90 or 5%, 1 student gets 89 or 5%, 1 student gets 87 or 5 %, 2 students get 85 or 10 %, 1 student gets 83 or 5%, 1 student got 82 or 5%, 1 student gets 78 or 5%, 1 student gets 76 or 5%, 4 students get 75 or 20%, 2 students get 70 or 10%, 1 student gets 67 or 5% and 3 students get 65 or 15%. It could be said that the result of the post-test is better than pre-test.

By those descriptions above the result of this research shows that using small group discussion was effective to improve students' reading comprehension on narrative text.

6. CONCLUSION

Based on the data presentation and analysis, the writers conclude that the students' ability in comprehending reading text after applying small group discussion, the result was much better.

The result of this research shows that the score of the students in post-test are higher than the students' score in pre-test. The mean score of pre-test is 42,25 while the mean score of post-test is 77,5. It is clear that the result of post-test is better than pre-test. Using Small Group Discussion in teaching reading helps students to improve their reading ability in comprehend the written text, especially narrative text.

REFERENCES

- Barker, Larryl. (1987). *Communication*. Englewood Cliffs Jersey: Prentive Hall, Inc.
- Brown. (2003). *Language Assessment Principles and Classroom Practices*. California: Longman University Press.
- Grabe, W. (2009). *Reading in a Second Language (Moving from Theory to Practice)*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Grellet, Francoise. (1992). *Developing Reading Skill: a practical guide to reading comprehension exercise*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hammp, L. P. (2019). *Use Songs in Teaching Simple Tobe and Past Tense Teaching*. Journal of English Language and Literature Teaching. Vol.4,No.1. <http://ejournal.unima.ac.id/index.php/jeelt/article/view/939/879>
- Harris and Sipay. (1980). *How to Increase Reading Ability*. New York: Longman Publisher Inc.
- Hatch E. and Farhady H. (1982). *Research Design and Statistic for Applied Linguistics*. Rowley. Massucetts: Newburry House Publisher, Inc.
- Lambe, Livianni. (2017). *Teaching Reading Comprehension in EFL Classroom: A Glance at Some Approaches and Activities*. Journal of English Language and Literature Teaching. Vol.2,No.2.<http://ejournal.unima.ac.id/index.php/jellt/article/view/9>
- Liando, F. V. N., Lumentu, Raesita. (2017). *Students' Personal Initative towards their Speaking Performance*. Canadian Center of Science and Education. Vol.10,No.8. <http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/ies/article/view65175>
- Liando. F. V. N. (2009). *Success In Learning English as A Foreign Language*. LITERA.Vol.8,No.2. https://www.academia.edu/34336501/Success_in_Learning_English_as_a_Foreign_Language
- Mc. Laughlin. (2012). *Reading Comprehension What Every Teacher Needs to Know*. Reading Comprehension Journal, Vol.65, no. 7, pp. 432-440.
- Panembunan, E., Tulung, G. J., & Maru, M. G. (2016). *Improving Students' Speaking Ability Through*

Communication Language Teaching of The Second Level Students at 'MEC' Megalia English Course.
Lembaga Penelitian Unima:
Universitas Negeri Manado.
<http://ejournal.unima.ac.id/index.php/jell/article/view/44/23>

Spratt, M., A. Pulverness and M. Williams. (2005). *The TKT (Teaching Knowledge Test) Course*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Suyono. (2004). *Cerdas Berpikir Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia*. Geneca Exact.

Swan, M. (1992). *Inside Meaning. Proficiency Reading Comprehension*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wainwright, G. R. (1972). *Rapid Reading*. London: Whyndham Company.

Contoh narrative text
:<http://www.shortkidstories.com/story/aesops-fables/>

Pengertian fable :
<https://id.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fabel>