THE APPLICATION OF GROUP DISCUSSION METHOD TO IMPROVR THE STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT ON SPEAKING SKILLS OF SEVENTH GRADE AT SMPN 4 PEMATANGSIANTAR

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to find out the effect of using group discussion on students' speaking skill at the seventh grade of SMPN 4 Pematangsiantar. This research quantitative with true- experimental method approach. Population of this research was seventh grade with 10 classes which consist of 313 students. And the sample of this research was 64 students in two classes. The technique of collecting data was pre-test and post-test. The technique of analyzing data by using SPSS version 25.0. The result of research was T_{count} (4.553) > T_{table} (1.695) at the significance level α = 0.05 with the degree of freedom (df) = 31. It means that H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted. The post-test score was significantly higher than the pre-test score, indicating that the use of group discussion effectively improves students' speaking skill. It could be happened that group discussion can be successfully utilized as a learning tool to enhance their confident and teamwork in learning process by giving them stimulation, correcting their pronunciation and also finding the unfamiliar words during teaching. Therefore, group discussion can be considered an effective and enjoyable teaching method for improving speaking skill among junior high school students.

Keywords: Group Discussion, Speaking Skill, Learning Method, English Language Teaching, True-Experimental Design

I. INTRODUCTION

The Background of Research

Speaking skills are one of the fundamental abilities that are very important in learning English, as they allow students to communicate directly and effectively in everyday life. In today's increasingly connected global era, this skill is not only useful as a means of communication but is also highly needed in education, careers, and social interactions. Speaking skills involve the ability to convey information, ideas, and feelings orally, and encompass aspects such as pronunciation, intonation, fluency, and appropriate word choice.

Despite its importance, many students struggle to master English speaking skills. Factors such as lack of self-confidence, limited vocabulary, and fear of making mistakes often become major obstacles. Observations at SMPN 4 Pematangsiantar show that most students still have low speaking ability. Only a few students can speak with correct pronunciation and intonation, while others have difficulty forming sentences or responding in English.

To address this issue, innovative and effective teaching approaches are needed. One method that can be used is group discussion, which involves interaction among students to exchange ideas, find solutions, and make decisions together. In group discussions, each student has the opportunity to speak and interact actively, which can help build their confidence and improve their English speaking skills.

The Problem of Research

Based on the background of problem above, the following problem can be identified: Does the application the group discussion method improve students' achievement on speaking skills of a seventh grade at SMPN 4 Pematangsiantar?

The Objective of Research

In discussing this title, the researcher will put forward a thing that is the main objectives of the research as follow: "To find out the application of the group discussion as teaching method improve the students' speaking skills of a seventh grade at SMPN 4 Pematangsiantar".

THE REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The definition of Speaking

Language has always played a crucial role in human life, especially as a tool for communication. It allows people to express and understand thoughts, emotions, and ideas, while also fostering social relationships and cultural identity. Language shapes how we view the world and supports the development of knowledge. Beyond communication, language serves as a reflection of a community's culture and history, helping define societal values and perceptions. It is essential for maintaining social interaction and continuity across generations.As Bonvillain (2019) states, language is a fundamental aspect of human behavior and the primary means through which people interact. Through language, individuals express intentions, emotions, and desires to others.

Teaching Speaking

Teaching speaking skills is very important because speaking is one of the most frequently used communication abilities in daily life. The process of teaching speaking aims
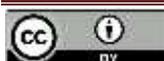
to develop students' language proficiency, and according to Farizi & Herwiana (2022), the concept of teaching is divided into three categories: as success (directly related to learning), as an intentional activity (expected to result in learning), and as normative behavior (intended to bring about learning in others).

The main goal of teaching speaking is to achieve communicative efficiency, which means students must be able to express their intentions clearly using their current language abilities, while avoiding confusion caused by mispronunciations, grammatical errors, or incorrect vocabulary. Students must also observe social and cultural rules in every communication context.

According to Sholihah, cited in Farizi & Herwiana (2022), teaching speaking includes several key aspects: producing correct English speech sounds, using appropriate word and sentence stress, intonation, and rhythm, selecting suitable words and sentences based on the social context, audience, situation, and topic, organizing thoughts logically, using language to express values and judgments, and speaking fluently and confidently with minimal unnatural pauses.

Teaching Method

The study of modern trends and teaching methods is one of the important studies that has received the attention of researchers and scholars due to its educational importance in the field of teaching and education. Teaching methods have varied and varied, and each method has its own rules, advantages, and steps (Suaad Hadi Hassan Al- Taai, 2021). Then Munzaki et al. (2016) mentioned that teaching method is used to help the learners to gain the knowledge and help them to achieve their learning targets.

Group Discussion

Mogea & Oroh (2022) outline several steps for conducting small group discussions in the classroom. These include dividing students into small groups with a leader, providing case study questions aligned with learning standards, guiding the group to work on the questions, ensuring participation from all members, and finally concluding and evaluating the discussion.
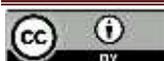
The authors emphasize that two-way communication through small group discussions is effective in enhancing students' speaking skills. This method encourages verbal interaction between students and teachers and supports more meaningful, independent learning.

By engaging in small group discussions, students become more responsible for their own learning. The overall process involves group formation, distribution of materials, active discussion, and evaluation of outcomes.

II.   THE METHOD OF RESEARCH

The Research Method

Research methods are systematic approaches used to collect, analyze, and interpret data to answer research questions or test hypotheses. These methods can be qualitative, quantitative, or a combination of both, depending on the research objectives and data type. Creswell & Creswell (2017) define research methods as techniques for understanding a phenomenon, while Punch & Oancea (2014) describe them as structured steps in seeking scientific knowledge.

In this study, the researcher applied a quantitative research approach, which focuses on collecting and analyzing numerical data to identify patterns, relationships, or trends (Emon, 2024). Quantitative research aims to quantify variables and uncover consistent patterns that are generalizable to larger populations. The study used experimental research to test cause-and-effect relationships, comparing results before and after treatment (Creswell, 2015). The research followed a true experimental design, using an experimental class and a control class.

The Technique of Collecting Data

A data collection technique is one of the methods used in research to collect complete data from respondents, or tools to aid the researcher in data collection. The data collection techniques used by pre-test and post-test.

The Technique of Analyzing Data
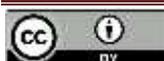
In this research, the researcher use Statistical Program For Social Science (SPSS) 25.0 to analyzing data. The data analysis technique is systematically carried out with the following steps:

Frequency test, In this table we can see how many the student can reach the KKM. After that data will be analyse with statistic table. In this table we can see a lot of data. We can check the students' ability in speaking through group discussion.

Before the researcher decided whether to use parametric or non-parametric statistics to analyze the data and test the research hypothesis, the researcher first needed to perform a normality and homogeneity test. The normality test was conducted to determine if the data follows a normal distribution.

After performing the normality test, the researcher proceeded to test the homogeneity of the data. The purpose of the homogeneity test was to determine whether the data or samples from both groups were homogeneous or Heterogeneous. This test is essential to ensure that the data from the two groups have similar variances, allowing the hypotheses to be tested using at-test.

After assessing the normality and homogeneity of the data, the researcher calculated the data to test the hypothesis regarding whether there is a significant difference between the speaking skills of students using group discussion in the experimental class and those using group discussion in the control class. The researcher applied the t-test formula, as the data was found to be normal and homogeneous. The t-test was used to determine the effectiveness of group discussion on students' speaking skills.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Data Analysis

The data above present the findings of a study conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of using group discussion on improving students' speaking skill. The study was conducted with a population of 313 students, and a sample of 64 students was selected for the study. The researcher selected two classes as experimental and control class. The pre-test and the post-test were conducted to measure the effectiveness of the group discussion.

In the pre-test of the control class, the majority of students (9.4%) scored 80. The mean score was 60.41 with the median 64.50. The standard deviation was 16.694. The data was found to be normally distributed based on the Sig. score of 0.174. For the post-test, the

majority of students scored 80 (6.3%). The mean score was 62.53, with a median of 63.00. The normality test indicated that the data was normally distributed or homogeneous, with a Sig. score of 0.163.

For the experimental class, in the pre-test, the majority of students (12.5%) scored 70. The mean score was 66.81 with the median 70.00. The standard deviation was 12.973. The data was found to be normally distributed based on the Sig. score of 0.096. For the post-test, the majority of students scored 80 (15.6%). The mean score was 82.15, with the median of 83.50. The normality test indicated that the data was normally distributed or homogeneous, with a Sig. score of 0.140.

The analysis involved a homogeneity test that compared the post-test results between the control and experimental classes. The t-counted score was 18.564. Referring to the t-table, with degrees of freedom (df) = 62 and α = 0.05, the t-table value was 4.00. Since the t-counted value (18.564) is greater than the t-table value (4.00), it means that the null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted. This indicates a significant difference in students' speaking skills through the use of group discussion.

III. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

Based on the result of hypothetical analysis showed that $T_{counted}$ score was 4.553. Referring to the T_{table}, with degrees of freedom (df) = 31 and α = 0.05, the T_{table} value was 1.695. Since the $T_{counted}$ = 4.553 is higher than the T_{table} = 1.695 it means that the null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted. This indicates there is a significant effect of using group discussion model in the seventh-grade students' speaking skills at SMPN 4 Pematangsiantar.

There is an effect from group discussion model in students' speaking skills ability. The students in experimental class who taught by group discussion was more active in learning process. In this class the researcher uses group discussion as a learning method. During teaching the researcher teach the material and also give them stimulation by asking their own opinion about the topic and let them decide the example of procedure text that they can understand easily. The researcher also helps them to understand what the text is talking about by finding the unfamiliar word, so that they know about the content of the text. After that, the researcher correcting students' pronunciation by reading the example of the text together and also ask the students to repeat after the teacher. At the end the researcher gives a chance to the students to discuss about the procedure text that they want to make with their

group. They learn how to arrange the text together, share their own ideas, and also have some practice with their friend before present it in front of the class. The practice makes them less nervous and speak in front of the class clearly and calmly.

Suggestion

According to the results of the research, there are several suggestions presented for students, english teacher, and researchers.

1. Students

    This study highlight the potential of using group discussion as teaching method in improving their speaking ability. By selecting topic with easy vocabulary and built a good environment, students can improve their speaking.

2. Teacher

    This research to learn about how to conduct a good group discussion and facilitate the student about the topic that they want to discuss about. This research can be advantages with English teacher.

3. Future researcher

    The study provides a foundation for future research on the effectiveness of using group discussion as a teaching method for learning language especially in speaking ability.

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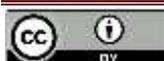
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