



Students' Perception on the Implementation of Small Group Discussion in English Speaking Activity (A Study at SMP N 1 Palembang)

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Abstract

Small Group Discussion as one of the techniques in teaching and learning process such as for English speaking activity. This study was conducted to find students' perception on the implementation of small group discussion in English speaking activity. This study used descriptive research. The data was collected by using, questionnaire, and interview. The participants of this study was the students of the second grade of SMP N 1 Palembang. It is consisted of three classes that are taught by a teacher. There were 95 students in the academic year 2022/2023. The result of this study showed that students had positive perception on the implementation of small group discussion in english speaking activity with the percentage of 52% in the excellent category and 48% in the good category.

Keywords:

Perception, Small Group Discussion, Speaking

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INTRODUCTION

Language takes fundamental for human life since it is a means of communication. A person cannot communicate with others without language. One of the most widely used languages in the world and historically one of the most significant is English. English is a foreign language that many Indonesians take seriously in order to be competitive internationally. Therefore, the scope of teaching English is a special interest. It is due to the significance of English in all aspects of our lives. Speaking, listening, writing, and reading are all language abilities that must be learned in order to acquire English.

Nowadays, there are many different techniques available today that can be applied in the process of teaching and learning. This will help the students learn more independently and set them up for success. One of the techniques is Small Group Discussion. In Indonesian education system has used Curriculum 13 (K-13) which improves students' competencies, personalities, and knowledge assisting students in becoming ready to pursue higher education and converse effectively in English on a

general level. The students collaborate to attain a common goal through interaction and interdependent relationships by employing the small group discussion technique (Slavin, 1990). Applying this method will aid students in understanding in the process of teaching and learning

Small group discussion has been used all over the world. It is a method used in the process of teaching and learning that helps participants to develop participants' cognitive and the effectiveness (Brewer, 1997). Small-group learning has been shown to boost academic achievement, positive attitudes about learning, and persistence in learning more about courses and programs. According to Beebe and Masterson (2015), the use of this small group discussion must prioritize goals and all groups are interdependent in completing tasks.

Brewer (1997) stated that small group discussion has several advantages. The group discussion is open to the participants, which is a good method to pique their interest in the subject. They might comprehend another participant's explanation more readily than a presenter's explanation for those participants. Small group conversations helped close the communication gap between students and teachers, increased student communication skills, and encouraged students' critical thinking.. Meanwhile, several disadvantages of small group discussion in its implementation needs a lot of time and will be quite noisy. Students may do other things besides discussing the subject matter and not all students will fully participate in group discussions (Harmer, 2001). However, small group discussion is very appropriate to be implemented in the teaching and learning process in English activity.

Small group discussion has become a tool in in the process of teaching and learning for English skills, particularly speaking skills, which are the most crucial for learning English. One of the abilities that a person uses to interact with other people is speaking. People would communicate their thoughts, feelings, and ideas to other people clearly and accurately when they spoke. Nunan (2003) stated that speaking is a useful oral skill that requires the production of structured verbal utterances to convey meaning.

Based on the researcher's preliminary observation in junior high school with the teacher who taught English in the activity, small group discussion is one of the hopes of the teacher. The students can participate during small group discussions. Students still have difficulties applying this technique. Besides that, one way teachers might use small group discussions to help students learn together and exchange perspectives on the subject at hand is through small group discussions. Meanwhile, some students are still less motivated. They don't know the importance of implementing this technique to improve the learning process which would impact the students' achievement in the learning process. Moreover, the students also face difficulties doing the discussion, whether difficulties with group members or in understanding the material. By learning with this technique, students have been challenged to face their difficulties in completing the task. Besides that, the students have to adapt with group members to more quickly understand the learning materials using the small group discussion technique.

Several studies have been conducted related to the effectiveness of small group discussions. The first study is conducted by Eka (2017) that is about the effectiveness of small group discussion on speaking skills and speaking anxiety. The second study

is conducted by Nilma (2018) about the effectiveness of the small group discussion method in the teaching of reading comprehension to the second-grade students of SMA N 3 South Binjai. Another study has been conducted related to the perception of small group discussion. This study is conducted by Servinus Yanse (2016) about students' perceptions of the use of group discussion and their engagement in the speaking of CLS 1. The last study has been conducted by Wardiatul Janna (2019). The study explores how students see the utilization of group work activities for English language instruction.

Based on the study above it can be concluded that what has been studied in previous studies related to the small group discussion. Studies have been done to determine how well small group discussions can be used to educate reading comprehension as well as how well they can improve speaking abilities and reduce speaking fear. Additionally, the perception section focuses on how students perceive the usage of small group discussion in senior high school and university settings in terms of student involvement and academic success.

This study is different from the previous study that discusses the perception of students toward the implementation of small group discussion which will be analyzed from the stages of small group discussion. Moreover, small group discussions take a role to help students to get efficiently communication in English activity. This study will take the junior high school level to be researched.

Based on the background above, the researcher is interested in researching "Students' Perception on the Implementation on Small Group Discussion in English Speaking Activity (A Study at SMP N 1 Palembang)"

RESEARCH METHOD

The researcher used descriptive research to find out the students' perceptions of small group discussion in english speaking activity. According to Sugiyono (2013), descriptive research is a study that employs qualitative and quantitative methods to describe phenomena, symptoms, or conditions. The information gathered is based on the experiences and viewpoints of the participants. It tries to come up with a detailed description of persons, objects, events, locations, and conversations.

The research's source was the second grade students of SMP N 1 Palembang. It consisted of three classes that are taught by a teacher. There were 32 students who were in class VIII 1, 31 students who were in VIII 2, and 32 students in VIII 3 class of the academic year 2022/2023.

The instruments are questionnaire, and interview. There were twenty questions for questionnaire. The students had to give a check(√) to the question that had been provided. They are (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree (3) agree, (4) strongly agree. Additionally, the researcher spoke with the students in an interview to get more specific data connected to the questionnaire. The researcher consulted experts to determine whether the contents of the instrument were accurate and suitable for use in order to validate the results. The data was then gathered and examined by the researcher.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Data Description, Findings, Discussion

Data Description

The data from this research was gathered and analyzed by using descriptive research to fill the the research question finding the students' perception on the small group discussion's implementation in English speaking activity at the second grade students of SMP N 1 Palembang. The data for this study were gathered using interview and questionnaire.

Table 4.1 Students find out the goals, rules, and norms in small group discussion

No .	Interpretation Score	Category	Frekuensi	Percentage (%)
1	81 – 100	Excellent	46	48%
2	61 – 80	Good	49	52%
3	41- 60	Fair	0	0%
4	21 – 40	Poor	0	0%
5	<20	Very poor	0	0%
Total			95	100%

Table 4.1 showed that students' perception of finding the goals, rules, and norms in small group discussions was given 48%. It means that this indicator had an excellent category. Additionally, there were 52% that had in the good category. It can be concluded that the result of this indicator was positive. Students agreed that small group discussions had goals, and rules during the discussion.

Table 4.2 Students can interact well through the group structure used in small group discussion

No	Interpretation Score	Category	Frekuensi	Percentage (%)
1	81 – 100	Excellent	28	29%
2	61 – 80	Good	64	67%
3	41- 60	Fair	3	3%
4	21 – 40	Poor	0	0%
5	<20	Very poor	0	0%
Total			95	100%

Table 4.2 presented that the perception of students towards this indicator was 29% in the excellent category and 67% in the good category. Meanwhile, there were 3% in the fair category of students' perception that was able to interact through group structure used in small group discussion. However, the result of this perception indicated that students had a positive perception.

Table 4.3 Students feel involved in contributing while in small group discussion

No	Interpretation Score	Category	Frekuensi	Percentage (%)
1	81 – 100	Excellent	57	60%
2	61 – 80	Good	37	39%
3	41- 60	Fair	1	1%
4	21 – 40	Poor	0	0%
5	<20	Very poor	0	0%
Total			95	100%

Table 4.3 showed that there were 60% out of 100% that categorized as an excellent category. Additionally, there were 39% that had in the good category. It interpreted that students had a positive feeling involved in contributing while in small group discussions. Although most of the respondents agreed with this indicator, there was still 1 % that categorized it as fair.

Table 4.4 Students can interact well with their grub members

No	Interpretation Score	Category	Frekuensi	Percentage (%)
1	81 – 100	Excellent	55	58%
2	61 – 80	Good	40	42%
3	41- 60	Fair	0	0%
4	21 – 40	Poor	0	0%
5	<20	Very poor	0	0%
Total			95	100%

Table 4.4 showed that the perception of students was positive and that students were able to interact well with their group members. There were 58% and 42% that categorized as an excellent and good category to this indicator. None of the fair, poor, and very poor were had category. It implies that small group discussion lead students to always interact well in group discussion.

Table 4.5 Students can achieve the goal

No	Interpretation Score	Category	Frekuensi	Percentage (%)
1	81 – 100	Excellent	48	51%
2	61 – 80	Good	47	49%
3	41- 60	Fair	0	0%
4	21 – 40	Poor	0	0%
5	<20	Very poor	0	0%
Total			95	100%

Table 4.5 showed that students' perception in achieving the goals, small group discussion was given 51%. It implies that this indicator had an excellent category. Additionally, there were 49% that had in the good category. Students agreed that they were able able to achieve the goals in small group discussion. It was indicated that the result of this indicator was positive.

Table 4.6 Students feel ready to perform their work in a small group

No	Interpretation Score	Category	Frekuensi	Percentage (%)
1	81 – 100	Excellent	42	44%
2	61 – 80	Good	52	55%
3	41- 60	Fair	0	0%
4	21 – 40	Poor	1	1%
5	<20	Very poor	0	0%
Total			95	100%

Table 4.6 showed that there were 99% categorized as an excellent and good category. It was indicated that students have a positive feeling about performing students' result discussion in small group discussion. Meanwhile, there was still 1 % that categorized as poor towards this indicator.

Table 4.7 Students find it easy to get feedback given by the teacher and other students

No	Interpretation Score	Category	Frekuensi	Percentage (%)
1	81 – 100	Excellent	41	43%
2	61 – 80	Good	49	52%
3	41- 60	Fair	5	5%
4	21 – 40	Poor	0	0%
5	<20	Very poor	0	0%
Total			95	100%

Table 4.7 represented that there were 43% categorized as an excellent category. Additionally, there were 52% that had in good category. It interpreted that students have a positive to get feedback even the evaluation from the teachers and other students after performing their discussion result. Meanwhile, there were 5% that categorized fair to this indicator.

Research Finding

Considering the data presented in the previous section. The research's findings are explained the results, which may be classified into the following table, explain how students generally perceive small group discussions in English speaking activity

Table 4.8 The Category of Students' Perception on the Implementation of Small Group Discussion in English Speaking activity

No.	Interpretation Score	Category	Frekuensi	Percentage (%)
1	81 – 100	Excellent	49	52%
2	61 – 80	Good	46	48%
3	41- 60	Fair	0	0%
4	21 – 40	Poor	0	0%
5	<20	Very poor	0	0%
Total			95	100%

Table 4.8 represented that none of the categorizes above had fair, poor, and very poor category. There were 52% and 48% (95 people) of respondents had excellent and good category. The implementation of small group discussions in the English speaking activity was well received by students, as a result. Interview results confirmed that most respondents had positive perceptions regarding the application of small group discussion in English speaking activity.

Three aspects of perception including cognitive, emotional, and conative perception were taken into consideration in the students' perceptions of the small group discussion's implementation. It is shown in the table below to help make it clear.:

Table 4.9 The Category of Students' Perception on the Implementation of Small Group Discussion in terms of Cognitive Component in English Speaking Activity

No.	Interpretation Score	Category	Frekuensi	Percentage (%)
1	81 – 100	Excellent	57	60%
2	61 – 80	Good	38	40%
3	41- 60	Fair	0	0%
4	21 – 40	Poor	0	0%
5	<20	Very poor	0	0%
Total			95	100%

Table 4.9 showed that students' perception in terms of cognitive component towards small group discussion was given 60%. It implies that this component had an excellent category. Additionally, there were 40% that had in the good category. The perception of the students on the implementation of small group discussion had a higher percentage of excellent that good category. It indicated that the result of this indicator was positive.

Table 4.10 The Category of Students' Perception on the Implementation of Small Group Discussion in terms of Affective Component in English Speaking Activity

No.	Interpretation Score	Category	Frekuensi	Percentage (%)
1	81 – 100	Excellent	43	45%
2	61 – 80	Good	51	54%
3	41- 60	Fair	1	1%
4	21 – 40	Poor	0	0%
5	<20	Very poor	0	0%
Total			95	100%

Table 4.10 showed that small group discussion implementation was seen by students as having a higher good category when considering the affective component. There were 54% out of 100% that categorized as good category. Additionally, there were 45% that had in the excellent category. It interpreted that students had a positive feeling involved in applying small group discussions. Although most of the respondents had positive perception with this component, there was still 1 % that categorized it as fair.

Table 4.11 The Category of Students’ Perception on the Implementation of Small Group Discussion in terms of Conative Component in English Speaking Activity

No.	Interpretation Score	Category	Frekuensi	Percentage (%)
1	81 – 100	Excellent	39	41%
2	61 – 80	Good	56	59%
3	41- 60	Fair	0	0%
4	21 – 40	Poor	0	0%
5	<20	Very poor	0	0%
Total			95	100%

Table 4.11 showed that there were 41% categorized as an excellent category. Additionally, there were 59% that had in good category. In terms of the conative component, it interpreted that students have a positive perception. on the implementation of small group discussion.

From the result of the perception of students in terms of three components above, these three components almosts have excellent and good categories for implementing small group discussion in English speaking activity. The cognitive component has the highest percentage of students’ perception, while the conative component has the highest percentage of the perception of students on the implementation of small group discussion.

Discussion

The findings indicated that students’ perception on the implementation of small group discussion in english speaking activity. It had showed some assumptions could be taken about the perception of the students. This is a Likert scale in order to find out the students’ perception on the implementation of small group discussion namely’ excellent, good, fair, poor, and very poor category.

According to the findings, it can be concluded that students’ perception on the implementation of small group discussion in english speaking activity was positive response which 52% of respondents had excellent category and and 48% of

respondents had good category and it also revealed on the implementation of small group discussion at the stages including forming, storming, norming, and performing in the learning process. The perception of the students on the implementation of small group discussion considered three components of perception. According to Altman (1985), there are three components of perception; cognitive, affective, and conative. Cognitive deals with the attitude as the subject of people's knowledge, judgment, and belief. Meanwhile, affective is a person's attitude that is formed and conative is related to the action in doing something.

Cognitive aspect deals with the attitude as the subject of people's knowledge, judgment, and belief. In this research, students agreed that could find out the goals, rules, and norms in small group discussion. They formed the responsibilities to the goal of their discussion that allowed in discussing the material in small group discussion. Meanwhile, affective is emotional that is related to like or dislike towards an object's attitude. In fact, students felt involved in contributing while in small group discussion and felt ready to perform their work. Beside that, students interacted well in learning with small group discussion. It was related to conative aspect that was the action in doing something. It is line with Harmer (2001), who argues the advantages of small group discussion; encourages students to talk more, provides more opportunities for different perspective and contributions than pair work. Furthermore, students had positive perception towards small group discussion. In line with Vega's finding (2022) stated that the perception of students was positive in terms on their engagement that learn using small group discussion.

This research was supported by the interview that almost of students enjoy and feel comfortable in learning used small group discussion. Beside that, according to the findings of interviewee data that almost of the students could practice well their english speaking skill learned by small group discussion technique and felt more confident while performing speaking skill in front of the class. It can be conclude that the perception of students on the small group discussion's implementation in english speaking activity (A study at SMP N 1 Palembang) had positive perception.

CONCLUSION

The research problems are related to the study findings' conclusion. The students' perception on the implementation of small group discussion in english speaking activity at the second grade students SMP N 1 Palembang was in positive perception. The data showed, there were 52% and 48% (95 people) of respondents had excellent and good category. It meant that the students enjoyed and felt more comfortable learning used small group discussion in the class.

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