

**SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION IN TEACHING READING
COMPREHENSION AT SMA NEGERI 2 TOILI****Abdul Rabbi Arrasul¹, Lia Rahmawati², Yusniati N. Sabata³, Sitti Hardianti⁴, Armin Haluti⁵**¹PBI FKIP Universitas Muhammadiyah Luwuk, ²PBI FKIP Universitas Muhammadiyah Luwuk, ³PBI FKIP Universitas Muhammadiyah Luwuk, ⁴PBI FKIP Universitas Muhammadiyah Luwuk, ⁵PJKR FKIP Universitas Muhammadiyah Luwuk
Email: arrasulabdulrabbi@gmail.com¹, lhyarahma123@gmail.com², yusniati.n.sabata³, diansudarman21@gmail.com⁴, haluti1479@gmail.com⁵**Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah *Small Group Discussion* dapat meningkatkan pemahaman membaca siswa di SMA Negeri 2 Toili atau tidak. Desain penelitian penelitian ini adalah eksperimen semu. Populasi penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas sebelas SMA Negeri 2 Toili yang terdiri dari 46 siswa dari dua kelas yaitu XI IPA (eksperimental) dan XI IPS (kontrol). Kedua kelas diambil sebagai sampel. Tes diberikan sebagai instrumen penelitian. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kelas eksperimen memperoleh peningkatan tertinggi dibandingkan kelas kontrol, yaitu dari 68,51 menjadi 84,81 pada post-test. Dengan demikian diperoleh thitung sebesar 7,740 dengan tingkat signifikan 0,05 yaitu 1,680 dan (df) sebesar 44. Artinya, thitung lebih besar dari ttabel. Kesimpulannya H_a diterima sedangkan H_0 ditolak. Dengan kata lain, diskusi kelompok kecil dapat meningkatkan prestasi pemahaman membaca siswa di SMA Negeri 2 Toili.

Kata kunci: Pemahaman Membaca; Reading Comprehension; Small Group Discussion.

Abstract

This research aims to seek whether *small group discussion* can improve students' reading comprehension at SMA Negeri 2 Toili or not. The research design of this study was quasi-experimental. The population of this research was eleven grade students of SMA Negeri 2 Toili consisted of 46 students from two classes, XI IPA (experimental) and XI IPS (control). Both classes were taken as the sample. Tests were administered as the research instruments. The results show that experimental class got the highest improvement compared to the control class, from 68,51 became 84,81 in post-test. Therefore, it was obtained the *t*-counted 7,740 with the significant level 0,05 is 1,680 and the (df) is 44. It means that, *t*-counted was higher than *t*-table. In conclusion, H_a was accepted while H_0 was rejected. In other words, *small group discussion* can improve students' reading comprehension achievement at SMA Negeri 2 Toili.

Keywords: Reading Comprehension; Small Group Discussion.

Introduction

Talking about coastal communities cannot be separated from the group of people who live in coastal areas and rely directly on the utilization of marine and coastal resources for their livelihoods. For coastal communities, they generally work in the fisheries sector or work as fishermen, and even so far, they are considered as part of marginalized groups in society. Kusnadi 2000 (Helmi, 2012) stated that studies on the lives of fishermen generally emphasize poverty and economic uncertainty due to the difficulties faced by fishermen and their families. This situation is caused by the relationship between fishermen and their environment (coastal and marine) which is

enveloped in a situation of uncertainty (Adriati, 1992; Kusnadi, 2000; Satria, 2009). Education is one of the very important aspects to discuss, people can get many things and problems that will arise in the achievement of educational goals. Education is also one of the efforts to realize personal development both physically and non-physically that can be applied in various living environments such as family, schools, and the community environment.

In Indonesian educational curriculum, English is taught as one of the primary subjects for senior high school students. It can beneficially give the students opportunity to get into specific tasks like bridging cultures or serving as the instruction language while interacting with other nations. Because of this, English plays a significant part in a variety of industries, including trade, science, technology, and of course education. When it comes to reading content connected to languages, students who form the habit of disliking foreign languages typically struggle greatly. The majority of scientific publications and magazines are published in English, making reading a crucial ability to teach in a foreign language. Reading textbooks and other reading resources can help you improve your reading abilities. Adhini (2017) said that reading is a gainful action since students get the data from the content as well as can expand their English capacity by implications. Meanwhile Arrasul, (2020) stated that reading is processes of comprehending or understanding a written text and when we read a text, there is an interactive process between the readers' as seeker information and the text as the source of information.

Understanding a written text or reading is one type of basic language skill. Understanding reading is a life skill that needs to be learned by students. This is related to the text that contains information so that students can understand it well. Students must be able to read efficiently. By understanding vocabulary, grammar, and ideas or information in a text, they can easily understand the information in the text.

Besides that, reading can also be a practice media for readers to train their English pronunciation. However, for some students, reading English text is not easy. Sometimes they do not understand the content of the text or they can't get information from the text. This happens because of several factors such as learners teaching methods, techniques, and materials.

Teaching reading is to enable students to get meaning from written language. In Senior high school, students are expected to have a high ability to comprehend and find information from text. Students who have a different understanding of various parameters need to be given special attention by teachers. Because senior high school students are in the age of preparation for university. Teaching them is more challenging for teachers in terms of preparing and presenting materials. Eleventh grade is categorized as learners of pre-intermediate level in learning English. The fact is that they still have some difficulties in learning English, especially in reading comprehension.

Based on the observations that the researcher conducted at SMA Negeri 2 Toili on March 23, 2022, the researcher found that although they had studied English every semester, most of them still have low achievements, especially in reading comprehension. Numerous factors, such as a lack of interest in and focus on reading comprehension, contribute to students' poor reading comprehension. It is exceedingly challenging for senior high school students to demonstrate good reading achievement when they lose interest and focus in their reading. The researcher wanted to discover a solution to this issue and looked for a suitable technique. The researcher used small group discussion to help the students' reading comprehension. In a small group discussion, a group of students interact with the goal of solving a problem while also drawing conclusions from their discussions. Small group discussion usually consists of 3-5 people in one group to discuss. It helps students in comprehending reading text. It can also be done in the

teaching and learning process as an effort to provide an understanding of lessons to the student.

In light of the foregoing description, the researcher felt motivated to carry out a research under the heading "The Use of Small Group Discussion in Teaching Reading Comprehension at SMA Negeri 2 Toili."

Along with speaking, listening, and writing, my other English skills include reading. It is the method for deciphering textual communication. According to Nuttal (2005), reading refers to the interaction between an author's and reader's prior knowledge. With this, the reader can understand the author's message or intended meaning. Using this method, the reader attempts to interpret the writer's meaning and is able to comprehend both the writer's message and meaning.

Grabe and Stoller (2020) reading is the skill of writing meaning and understanding the news in the book correctly. It can be said that reading is also interactive in terms of the linguistic explanation of the text and relates to information obtained by the reader from long-term memory, as a knowledge boost. Arrasul & Lang (2022) also said that reading also has a positive effect on students' vocabulary knowledge, on their spelling and on their writing. From previous definitions, it can be inferred that reading is an activity that involves seeing written readings and the process of comprehending the material aloud or silently. Finding out written messages or information requires seeing and understanding activities at the same time. When we are learning something for the first time, reading might boost our knowledge of it.

Teachers must pay close attention to the fact that there are four different degrees of reading comprehension. The levels are as follows:

1. Literal Reading Comprehension

At this level, teachers ask pupils to research and find knowledge ideas that are stated explicitly in the text. For the benefit of readers, being able Fluency and knowledge of the English language are required to read for literal meanings word in the situation It also includes an understanding of the text's plain meaning, such as facts, terminology, dates, times, and places. Day and Park (2005) this is the level entails understanding the surface within the context in which students/readers are reading, and answering literal interpretation comprehension question simply requires students to recall what is said in the text from memory. Literal comprehension, in other words, is the most basic degree of comprehension.

2. Interpretative Reading Comprehension

Readers/students in this class level go Read for deeper meanings beyond what is presented. Chang (2000) said that Students must be able to look at the connections between as a result, they must understand how ideas work fit together and the meanings of these concepts Because all of the information, concepts, and meaning is implied or hinted. Students and readers are also included required to conclude, create assumptions and forecast results.

3. Critical Reading Comprehension

This level entails reading in order to evaluate and review ideas. This requires a lot of concentration as well. Students/readers must be able to distinguish between opinions, assumptions, and facts, as well as spot erroneous or illogical reasoning, false assertions, emotional language, and so on. While Chang (2000) stated that students at this level, expected to possess skills such as the capacity to discern persuasive assertions, the ability to distinguish between fact and opinion, and the ability to assess the correctness of the information supplied in the text.

4. Creative Reading Comprehension

This level asks students/readers to think while they read and to apply their creativities in addition to the material supplied by the author. In addition, the students attempt to come up with a fresh or alternate solution to the author's suggestions. Dagostino, et all (2013) stated that This The term "level" refers to the height of anything, the capacity to perform an overall assessment of a specific piece of information or a concept that has been read, as well as the precision or applicability of a fresh idea's provided information. At this level, the reader is also encouraged to think in fresh and creative ways.

Teaching Reading Comprehension

Teaching reading comprehension is a way of transferring knowledge from teachers to students by using certain techniques certain strategies and materials to master reading itself. Harmer (2010) teaching is not an easy job, but it is important and can be very rewarding when we see student progress and know that we have helped make it happen. In teaching reading, the teacher must help. Students achieve this goal is to motivating reading by choosing the right text, creating useful reading assignments, to create a supportive environment for practicing reading.

Teaching reading is the process of imparting knowledge by having students read or look at written material in order to comprehend it. Teaching letters, sounds, and vocabulary are all part of teaching reading. Reading instruction should cover explanations of a variety of engaging books and different kinds of texts, including software and online web content.

Small Group Discussion

Small group discussion is a structured procedure that involves a number of people working together face-to-face to share information, make choices, and resolve issues Djamarah, et all (2006). Students can learn a topic or find a solution to a problem in their group by participating in small group discussions. The conversation in small groups might also encourage students to think broadly and develop previously undiscovered insights. groups that are split into multiple smaller groups from larger organizations. which are modified according to each person's capacity, expertise, and size Ornstein & Frederick (2021). Small group discussions encourage students to think deeply and communicate their objectives to others. According to Rusmiati (2015), small-group discussions can be a helpful tool for teaching children how to read, giving them a clear understanding of what they read, and assisting them in comprehending a material. In a smaller group than in a bigger one, kids can be encouraged to communicate, think, and contribute much more readily. Small group discussions' basic premise is that comprehension may be increased by cultivating knowledge, a focused goal, and an attitude for reading, discussion, and comprehension growth after reading in Ornstein & Frederick (2021).

Benefits and Weaknesses

Siswanti, Ngadiso, & Setyaningsi (2014) stated that there are several benefits and weaknesses of small group discussions that we need to know. Here are the following benefits and weaknesses:

Benefit when small group discussions are used in teaching reading:

1. Encourage more students to enroll in reading courses. They feel better at ease performing the task as a group as opposed to alone after discussing it in groups.
2. Encourage participation from the kids in the reading-learning process.

3. Create a welcoming, engaging, and laid-back learning environment in the classroom.
4. Give pupils the chance to interact and exchange information in the classroom.

Weaknesses when small group discussions are used in teaching reading:

1. When groups are established, the classroom becomes boisterous. The study's findings show that the classroom becomes noisier as students form groups. They talk to one another as they search for the rest of their party. They are also worried about how their new team will be seated. The result is that the classroom is suddenly filled.
2. Although the problem seems unsolvable, there is a similar solution to the one that was used for the pair work. The aforementioned assertion indicates how the classroom atmosphere becomes noisy when SGD is used to teach reading. As a result, the teacher needs to control the class effectively.
3. Students speak in their native tongues rather than English.

Teaching Reading through Small Group Discussion

Simorangkir, Nurmanik, and Yuliwati (2019) stated that small group discussions were chosen to encourage students to be more active in reading English.

There are several steps of teaching through reading group discussions as follows:

1. The English teacher divides the students into several discussion groups consisting of four or five members.
2. The English teacher gives material or topics to each group.
3. Students work in each group or to complete reading questions.
4. For the discussion to run well, each member gives an opinion on each question.
5. Opinions from small group members are written by the leader.
6. At the end of the discussion process, each group leader gives their opinion and the English teacher adds some suggestions and gives the correct answers to each other.

Small group discussions provide opportunities for students, for face-to-face, give and take, to practice in longer conversational exchanges. This technique puts students in a situation where they will try to reconcile their different opinions with other members to understand the text.

Hypothesis

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2008) “research Problems offers restated as hypothesis” (p. 40). The hypothesis is a prediction regarding the possible outcomes of a study. Those are two kinds of hypotheses such as null hypothesis (Ho) and alternative hypothesis (ha). The Null Hypothesis (HO) Represents a theory that has been put forward, either because it is believed to be true or because it is to be used as a base for argument, but has not been proved. Meanwhile, the alternative hypothesis (ha) is a statement of what a statistical hypothesis test is set up to establish”. Thus, the hypothesis used in this study is as follows:

The research hypothesis is formulated as follows:

1. Null Hypothesis (HO): There is no improvement on students’ reading comprehension achievement using small group discussions at SMA Negeri 2 Toili.
2. Alternative Hypothesis (Ha): There is an improvement on a students’ reading comprehension achievement using small group discussions at SMA Negeri 2 Toili.

Research Method

The researcher employed quantitative research and its design was quasi experimental research. Creswell (2014) said that quantitative research is a subset of

educational research in which the subject matter is chosen, questions are focused and narrow, participants provide quantitative data, statistics are used to interpret the data, and objective surveys are carried out. This study used a research design known as a quasi-experiment. A study design known as a quasi-experimental design has assignments but does not use random assignment

Population and Sample

The population of this research was eleven-grade students of SMA Negeri 2 Toili. The researcher took the population as the sample because there were only two parallel classes of class XI at SMA Negeri 2 Toili.

Instrument of Data Collection

In this research, the main instrument used was a test. There were two kinds of tests they were, pre-test and post-test. Pre-test and post-test were used to support the quantitative data. A pre-test was used to find out the students reading comprehension before and a post-test was used to find out the improvement of students reading comprehension. The test was in the form of an essay that consisted of only one question.

Data Analysis Technique

In collecting data, the researcher got through the process of pre-test and post-test. The individual score of students', the researcher used formula as follows:

$$\sum = \frac{x}{n} \times 100$$

Then to determine the mean score to find out the difference between pre-test and post-test the researcher used formula as follows:

$$M = \frac{\sum fx}{N}$$

Next, Formula is counting the variance for each other used the formula by Gay et al (2012):

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{SS}{N}}, \text{ where } SS = \sum x^2 - \frac{(\sum x)^2}{N1}$$

The last was to find the t-counted, researcher used the formula adapted by Gay et al (2012) as follows:

$$t = \frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{SS1+SS2}{n1+n2-2}\right) \left(\frac{1}{n1} + \frac{1}{n2}\right)}}$$

Findings and Discussion

The results of this research provided solutions to the problems that have previously been posed. The research findings comprised the pre- and post-test scores of the students, their classification, mean scores, statistical significance of the difference between pre- and post-test scores, and hypothesis testing of the tested sample. Students' reading comprehension have been improved by the use of small group discussions. This study used a quasi-experimental approach with two subjects in the experimental group and one control group. XI IPA 1 as the experimental class consisted of 27 students and IPS 1 as the control class consisted of 19 students.

The researcher calculated every score gained by the students in both pre-test and post-test. In the following table, the results of the research were put statistically in order

to know the scores comparison between experimental and control classes. Here is the interpretation of the table:

Tabel 1. The Result of the Research

Sample	N	Mean Score of Pre-test	Mean Score of Post-test	Score Deviation	Df	Sig. Level	T
XI IPA (experimental class)	27	68,51	84,81	16,29	44	0.05 (1.68023)	7,440
XI IPS (control class)	19	64,57	71,10	6,52			

The table above shows the statistical data of the class (experimental) and control (control) average values, which can be shown by the pre-test and post-test mean scores for the experimental class, which are 68.51 and 84.81. The average post-test score of the experimental group was greater than that of the pre-test groups.

The degrees of freedom (df) $(N1 + N2) - 2 = (27 + 19) - 2 = 44$, and the t-table at the 0.05 significance level is 1.68023. The researcher came to the conclusion that based on the table distribution; the t-count value is higher than the t-table value ($7.440 > 1.68023$). The next researcher tested the hypothesis after calculating the data. The researcher found that the t-count was 7.440 and the t-table was 1.68023, and also came to the conclusion that H_a was accepted while H_0 was rejected. As a result, because there is a real impact on improving students' reading comprehension by using small group discussions.

The purpose of this research was to find out whether the use of small group discussions could help students' reading comprehension skills when learning English, so many researchers tried to improve students' reading comprehension by using different techniques. Meanwhile the researcher used small group discussion to improve students' reading comprehension at SMA Negeri 2 Toili.

The results of this research were obtained through sequences of activities. First, the pre-test was conducted in order to screening or obtaining students' prior reading comprehension achievement. After conducting the pre-test to both experimental and control classes, it was obtained that the result with the (experimental group) mean score was 68,51 while the control group pre-test mean score was 64,57. Next was treatment. The treatment was applied in six meetings. While in the control class there was no implementation of small group discussions. The total meetings in this research were eight meetings, including meetings for pre-test and post-test. The researcher applied the treatment starting from the second meeting. Teaching students about the narrative text, including its definitions, usage, structures, and linguistic characteristics. The researcher then prepared the following narrative text and gave it to the students the researcher explained how the small group discussion process, the purpose, and how to use small group discussion. The researcher offered the students a practical assignment at the end of the teaching process, and they had small group discussions while working on it. The second treatment used the same substance. Opening the lesson by asking the researcher to review with students what they have learned from the previous week. Following the instructions for using small group discussions to improve student understanding of the

reading text, the researcher conducted a test to practice the use of small group discussions. In the end, the lesson ended and the researcher closed the class.

In the third treatment, the were reminded about the evaluation and discussion of the narrative text from the previous meeting, and the researcher asked each student individually about the definition, language structure, and linguistic features of the narrative text. The next, researcher prepared news item text in teaching reading comprehension and asked them to read the text one by one. The third meeting material was reused in the fourth treatment. The researcher tested or evaluated the students during this meeting and encouraged discussion about the subject matter and made conclusion of the lesson.

Teaching activities for the fifth treatment were still the same as the third treatment. It was about text description. The researcher opened the lesson first. The researcher then reminded the class about their previous discussion and evaluation of the news item text. The researcher then prepared explanation text in teaching reading comprehension asking them to read and discussed with their group members. The sixth meeting was about practicing small group discussions in reading comprehension. To understand their reading comprehension better, the researcher evaluated the material and discussed it. After administering a treatment, it altered the post-test of experimental class was 84, 81 and the control class was 71,10. As a result, the experimental class has shown highly significant improvement. Nevertheless, in control class was 6,53. T-counted (7,440) t-gain table of the hypothesis of the test shows that it was significant at 0.05. (1,68023). Then, the researcher came to the conclusion that the experimental class reading comprehension scores were significantly impacted by the use of small group discussions.

From the summary above, it may be inferred that when reading comprehension was tested using traditional method at eleven grade students at SMA Negeri 2 Toili has just shown little improvement compared to the reading comprehension which was treated by using small group discussion. It really shows highly significant improvement on students' reading comprehension achievement at SMA Negeri 2 Toili.

These results show that what we can see from the use of mall group discussion is not only the improvement of students' reading comprehension achievement, but also it gives such a new different classroom atmosphere for students at SMA Negeri 2 Toili in understanding a written text. It is in line with the statement from Siswanti, Ngadiso, and Setyaningsih (2012) who stated that small group discussions can create some benefits for students in reading activities. They are: (1) increasing students' motivation in taking reading classes. By discussing the task in groups, they feel more comfortable doing the task with the group compared to working individually, (2) making students active as participants in learning to read, (3) making the classroom atmosphere comfortable, interesting, and more relaxed, and (4) Providing opportunities to share exchanges and information for students in the classroom.

Conclusion and Suggestion

It is clear from the preceding study issue in the previous chapter that small group discussion can improve students' reading comprehension of the eleventh grade at SMA Negeri 2 Toili. The students' reading comprehension achievement scores before being

given treatment was still dismal. Students who participated in small group discussions performed better on the post-test than they did on the pre-test.

The experimental class's mean post-test score was 84,81, while the control class from as a whole scored 71,10. The t-counted value was 7,440. The alternative hypothesis is accepted if the value exceeds the t-table value (1,68023). In conclusion, using small group discussions can improve students' reading comprehension of eleventh grade at SMA Negeri 2 Toili.

Several recommendations can be made from the perspective of the researcher's findings. From a conclusion perspective, we can make several recommendations:

1. Teaching and learning Techniques in the classroom should be developed by English teachers using creativity and innovation. It aims to increase students' enthusiasm and motivation to learn English.
2. Schools should support all teacher initiatives to increase their creativity and innovation in the classroom.
3. English teachers can use small group discussion strategies so that students are more varied in teaching and learning because small group discussions can help students do exams better and can save time.
4. Other researchers. A follow-up study is needed to identify variations of other measures and the benefits that can be found for improving reading comprehension of students through small-group conversations. It may also be advantageous for other researchers to undertake their research in various educational settings because the issue appears to be one that many kids in Indonesia are having.

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