

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION LEARNING MODEL IN IMPROVING THE LEARNING ACTIVITY OF CLASS VIII STUDENTS IN ENGLISH SUBJECTS AT SMP NEGERI 1 GUNUNG SINDUR

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis penerapan model pembelajaran Small Group Discussion (SGD) dalam meningkatkan aktivitas belajar siswa pada mata pelajaran Bahasa Inggris di SMP Negeri 1 Gunung Sindur. Pengumpulan data dilakukan menggunakan model Miles dan Huberman dengan pendekatan kualitatif serta metode deskriptif. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa penerapan SGD secara efektif meningkatkan interaksi, partisipasi, dan kepercayaan diri siswa dalam belajar Bahasa Inggris. Model ini mendorong keterampilan berbicara siswa serta meningkatkan partisipasi mereka dalam keseluruhan proses pembelajaran. Selain itu, peran guru sebagai fasilitator aktif dalam membimbing dan memberikan motivasi melalui sistem penghargaan juga menjadi faktor pendukung keberhasilan metode ini. Keabsahan data diuji melalui triangulasi sumber dan metode, sehingga memastikan validitas serta konsistensi hasil penelitian.

Kata kunci: *Small Group Discussion (SGD); Aktivitas Belajar; Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris; Meningkatkan Aktifitas Siswa*

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the implementation of the Small Group Discussion (SGD) learning model in enhancing students' learning activities in English subjects at SMP Negeri 1 Gunung Sindur. Data were collected using the Miles and Huberman model, employing a qualitative approach and a descriptive method. The findings indicate that the application of the SGD model effectively enhances student interaction, participation, and self-confidence in learning English. This model fosters students' speaking skills and increases their engagement in the overall learning process. Furthermore, the role of teachers as active facilitators in guiding students and providing motivation through a reward system serves as a crucial supporting factor in the success of this method. The validity of the data was ensured through source and method triangulation, guaranteeing the reliability and consistency of the research findings.

Keywords: *Small Group Discussion (SGD); Learning Activity; English Learning; Increasing Student Activity*

Introduction

The implementation of education and the learning process in schools today shows that the conditions are concerning and far from expectations. Many experts argue that learning has not achieved the desired results for students. Some problems include learning that only focuses on providing information, tests that only test students' ability to produce, passive student tendencies, and similar things. This shows that many learning activities carried out by teachers do not automatically create practical learning activities for students (Wedi, 2016).

Education is one of the main pillars of developing quality human resources (Ratnasari & Nugraheni, 2024). In the world of education, the success of the learning process is determined not only by the teaching strategies used by the teacher but also by the level of student activity in participating in the learning process. Student learning activity is an important indicator in determining learning effectiveness because active students tend to understand the material more efficiently, develop critical thinking skills, and have higher motivation in learning. However, many students are still passive in class, especially

English as a subject in schools has an important role in the current era of globalization. Mastery of English is an academic requirement and an essential skill in work and international communication (Sari et al., 2024). Therefore, a learning strategy is needed that can increase students' active participation in learning English so that they can better understand and apply the language. One approach that can be applied is the *Small Group Discussion* (SGD) learning model.

Small Group Discussion (SGD) learning model is a method that places students in small groups to discuss a particular topic (Nugroho, 2013). In this discussion process, students are encouraged to express opinions, share ideas, and work together to understand and solve problems. This model increases social interaction between students and trains them to think critically, argue, and be more confident in expressing opinions. In the context of English learning, this model is very relevant because language is a skill that develops through interaction and communication.

Several previous studies have proven that the *Small Group Discussion strategy* can improve students' confidence and speaking skills in learning English (Rosadi et al., 2020). However, these studies emphasize students' speaking skills, while the overall learning activity factor has not been widely studied. Learning activities include more than just speaking; they also involve students discussing, providing opinions, and interacting actively with their group members. Therefore, this study seeks to expand the scope of the study by looking at how the Small Group Discussion learning model not only impacts speaking skills but also increases student participation, interaction, and involvement in the English learning process.

In addition, previous research conducted by (Waluyati, 2020), entitled "Implementation of Focus *Group Discussion* (FGD) to Improve the Ability to Utilize the Environment as a Learning Resource", focused more on measuring students' speaking results without looking at how involved they were in the discussion process as a whole. Effective learning trains the courage to speak and builds critical thinking habits and teamwork. Therefore, this study seeks to expand the scope of the study by looking at how the Small Group Discussion learning model can improve students' learning activity, not only in speaking English but also in terms of their participation, interaction, and involvement in the English learning process.

Based on the observations conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Gunung Sindur, various challenges were still found in increasing student learning activity, especially in English subjects. Students tend to be passive in learning due to a lack of self-confidence, limited vocabulary, and low motivation to communicate in a foreign language. If not addressed this

condition can impact low understanding of the material and less-than-optimal communication skills. Therefore, innovation in learning strategies is important to increase active student participation.

This study analyzes the effectiveness of applying the *Small Group Discussion learning model* in improving student learning activity in English subjects at SMP Negeri 1 Gunung Sindur. This model has been implemented to increase student active participation in the learning process, both in terms of speaking, listening, reading, and writing in English. On the other hand, this study is also expected to provide insight for educators in choosing learning strategies that are more innovative and according to student needs.

Based on the background that has been explained, the formulation of the problem in this study is how the application of the Small Group Discussion (SGD) learning model improves student learning activity in English subjects at SMP Negeri 1 Gunung Sindur. In line with the problem formulation, this study aims to determine and describe the application of the Small Group Discussion (SGD) learning model in increasing student active participation in English learning at the school.

Research Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method to examine implementing the *Small Group Discussion* (SGD) learning model in increasing students' active participation in English learning at SMP Negeri 1 Gunung Sindur. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, with a purposive sampling technique involving one English teacher and all grade VIII students as informants. Data analysis was carried out using the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. Data validity was tested through source and method triangulation techniques to ensure the credibility and consistency of the research results.

Findings and Discussion

1. Implementation of Small Group Discussion Model

Small Group Discussion is a learning method that involves students in small groups to discuss topics, aiming to increase participation, understanding of concepts, and communication skills. This model provides opportunities for students to share information, solve problems, and develop independence in the learning process (Ratnaningsih, 2025). The results of observations and interviews show that the application of the Small Group Discussion (SGD) model in the classroom in English subjects is carried out with the following steps: In implementing discussions (SGD) at SMP Negeri 1 Gunung Sindur, teachers have a structured strategy so that discussions run effectively. The initial step is to apply rules during learning. These rules are mandatory and must be obeyed by all students so that the discussion so that atmosphere becomes more understanding of their boundaries and responsibilities during the discussion process.

Before entering the discussion, the teacher delivers the entire material. This is done so that students have a basic understanding before discussing it further in their respective groups. With sufficient initial understanding, students can more easily discuss, express opinions, and develop their ideas in a more structured manner. After the delivery of the material is complete, the teacher begins to form small discussion groups consisting of 1 to 7 students. This is in line with the research presented by (Bliss & Lawrence, 2009), entitled "Is the whole greater than the sum of its parts? A comparison of small group and whole class discussion board activity in online courses" that in their research Small Group Discussion can be defined as where small group interactions take place synchronously or asynchronously, where participants share ideas and build shared understanding.

Forming groups is done by counting up to 7, which aims to create groups randomly so students can interact with different friends. Each group has a group leader (Leader) tasked with coordinating the course of the group discussion. The selection of leaders can be done in two ways: determined by the teacher based on the student's ability to lead or selected spontaneously using a counting method. With this system, students selected as leaders can practice their leadership and help ensure that the discussion continues to run well.

During direct discussions, the teacher's role is limited to supervising and functions as a facilitator. The teacher is active in directing the course of the discussion, asking questions so that students are more critical, and ensuring that each group member can speak and contribute to the discussion. This is supported by research conducted by (van Blankenstein et al., 2011), examining how social interactions in small group discussions support learning. They found that listening and providing explanations during discussions contributed significantly to individual understanding. Strengthened by research by (Rois Muliadi and Ary Rahmat Hariadi, 2024), the implementation of the SGD model increases students' self-confidence and critical thinking skills. The results show that this model effectively improves both aspects, with students becoming more courageous in expressing opinions and more critical in analyzing information.

With proper guidance, students become more confident in expressing their opinions and more involved in learning. This aligns with research (Ratih et al., 2019) entitled "Improving Speaking Using Small Group Discussion", where this article discusses small group discussion-based learning strategies in teaching English speaking skills and finds that this method effectively encourages student engagement. This finding aligns with the implementation of Small Group Discussion (SGD), which has been proven to increase student activeness in ongoing learning.

To make the discussion more enjoyable and easy to understand, teachers use supporting media such as Infocus and speakers to help students understand the material visually so that they are more focused and interested. This media also makes the classroom atmosphere more dynamic, with illustrations or videos supporting the material. The implementation of Small Group Discussion is carried out routinely twice a week with a duration of 40 minutes per session, which has been proven to increase student activity; by getting used to discussing in small groups, students not only understand the lesson better but also learn to work together, think critically, and develop communication skills that are useful in various situations. This is in line with research conducted by (Siska & Yelizza, 2023), examining the implementation of group discussion techniques in increasing students' courage to speak English. The results show that using this technique, supported by collaborative learning and video media, effectively increases students' skills and confidence in communicating.

2. *The Role and Facilitation of Teachers in SGD*

The teacher actively facilitates the discussion by going to each group, observing the discussion, and ensuring that students are truly involved in the activity. Every time they visit a group, the teacher asks, "Have you found any difficulties?" to find out what obstacles they face. If a vocabulary word is not found in the dictionary, the teacher helps by explaining it.

In addition, teachers implement a reward system by giving stickers to students who successfully answer questions correctly or actively participate in discussions and presentations. These stickers motivate students, and the students with the most stickers will receive a reward at the end of the learning session.

Based on the results of interviews and observations, teachers noted that this method helped students to be more confident in expressing their opinions. Some students who were initially reluctant to speak began to dare to convey the results of

their discussions after being given support from friends and teachers. This is in line with research conducted by (Telaumbanua et al., 2024), where this study explains that using small group discussions effectively increases student activity in learning English.

3. *Student Responses and Perceptions*

Based on observations and interviews, students responded positively to implementing the Small Group Discussion Model. Students expressed that they felt more comfortable and brave in expressing their opinions in small groups compared to conventional learning in front of the class. One student stated, "Group discussions make me not afraid to speak and express my opinion because I feel supported by my friends" This is in line with research conducted by (Education & Fadilah, 2024); the study found that the application of small group discussions can improve students' ability to express their opinions verbally.

In the discussion session, students were seen to be more active in asking questions, discussing, and responding to friends' opinions. This shows a significant increase in learning activity, where students are no longer passive. They are more courageous in expressing their thoughts and engaging in interactions that support a deeper understanding of the material. When compared to the previous method, this change is quite striking. Before implementing the Small Group Discussion (SGD) model, most students hesitated and were reluctant to speak, especially in expressing their opinions. However, after English teachers implemented this model at SMP Negeri 1 Gunung Sindur, an increase in self-confidence was visible; even in students who previously seemed quiet, they began to show initiative in conveying ideas and were more confident in participating in learning.

This is in line with the research conducted by (Rosadi et al., 2020), which article discusses small group discussion strategies in teaching English speaking and finds that this method is effective in increasing student participation. This is relevant to the implementation of SGD, which increases student activeness in discussions. Supported by research that has been conducted by (Komaruddin et al., 2021), the study examines how the implementation of the SDG strategy can improve the speaking fluency of intermediate-class students at Ma'had Al-Jam'iah UIN Maliki Malang. The findings show a significant increase in student communication and explanation after the implementation of SGD.

4. *Increasing student activeness in learning*

Based on teacher observations, implementing SGD or Small Group Discussion has increased student activity. Some students who previously rarely participated in class began to be more active during the discussion and presentation sessions. This can be seen from the students' enthusiastic responses to the teacher, such as " Miss, are we presenting again? "which shows their interest in this model, where students are faster in completing tasks and more responsive in answering questions. In addition, when asked about the number of stickers obtained, students proudly answered, " I have four stickers!" This encourages them to participate more actively.

Teachers also found that SGD or Small Group Discussion helped students to complete tasks faster. When the teacher asked, " Have you finished?", many students answered confidently, " Yes, sure ", indicating that they can work well together in groups. In line with the article (Arifah & Nur, 2025), small group discussions have been shown to improve students' collaboration skills. With the right strategies, such as role division and conflict management by teachers, the

discussion dynamics become better, and individual responsibility is increased.

Observation results show that in some groups, students can complete tasks faster than others who are still confused about understanding the material. This shows that understanding the material in Small Group discussions is very dependent on group dynamics and the activeness of its members. According to research (Susilowati et al., 2024), groups with high scores are more active and involved in negotiations during discussions than groups with low scores. This shows that the diversity of perspectives in the group can enrich analysis and understanding, which plays an important role in developing critical thinking skills.

5. Obstacles and solutions in implementing SGD

Some of the obstacles found in the implementation of SGD include:

- a. English learning is in the last hour, making students feel tired and difficult to condition.
- b. Instructions should be delivered more slowly because not all students are used to instructions in English.
- c. Bilingual (Bahasa Indonesia and English) is necessary to ensure student understanding.
- d. Student activity in discussions is not evenly distributed, so some students still tend to dominate discussions while others follow without contributing much.
- e. Time constraints in discussions are also potential obstacles because some do not get a chance to present the results of threesome discussions results in obstacles are in accordance with research conducted by Mardani and Nurhidayah (2024), which shows that discussions in small groups often face several obstacles, such as domination by smarter students, which reduces opportunities for student.

Based on the observation results, teachers overcome these obstacles with several strategies, including:

- a. Ice breaking before the discussion to refresh the classroom atmosphere so that students are more enthusiastic
- b. Provide instructions in stages and use simple language so students can understand better.
- c. Encourage each group member to be active, for example, by giving specific questions to students who appear to be participating less.
- d. Using time management methods, such as dividing discussion time into several small sessions, so that all students have the opportunity to contribute actively.
- e. Provide real examples or interactive videos before the discussion so students understand the material better and are more motivated.

This strategy has been supported by research conducted by (Education & Fadilah, 2024), which emphasizes the importance of time management and the active role of teachers in maintaining the dynamics of the discussion so that it continues to run actively.

Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that the use of the Small Group Discussion (SGD) model effectively increases students' active participation in English lessons at SMP Negeri 1 Gunung Sindur. This model encourages students' speaking skills and increases their participation in the overall learning process. Implementing of SDG from a pro, starting

with teachers, understanding teachers, and groups and facilitating discussions, has proven to be an interactive and enjoyable learning environment. In addition, the role of teachers as active facilitators in guiding and providing motivation through a reward system is also a supporting factor for the success of this method. With the increase in student activeness in discussing, expressing opinions, and working together in groups, this learning strategy should be applied more widely, especially in subjects that require active interaction and communication, such as English.

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