

TEACHING ENGLISH GRAMMAR THROUGH GROUP DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION

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Abstract

The mastery of basic grammar for first semester students in the Lamongan Billfath University is still low so that the right teaching method is needed to accommodate this problem, namely group discussion and presentation. This classroom action research is aimed to find out whether group discussion and presentation can improve the students' understanding and mastery in Basic English Grammar courses. Four discussion groups with a total of 16 first semester students were formed after the pretest. Group discussions are conducted on each lecture day (14 meetings). The final results of the lecture are determined by posttest. Individual presentations are carried out at the end of the lecture. The t test is used to analyze the variables of the pretest, posttest and presentation scores. The Mann-Whitney t test showed a significant difference of $0.001 < 0.05$ between the pretest score and the posttest score. A significant difference of $0.026 < 0.05$ was also obtained between the pretest score and the presentation score. The data analysis indicated that the lecture process with the group discussion method is significantly improved student understanding and mastery of Basic English Grammar courses so that it helps mastery the presentation test material.

Keywords:

English Grammar, Group Discussion, Presentation

A. Introduction

Grammar is an important part of learning any language including English¹. Understanding and mastering grammar can simplify the process of learning English. Furthermore grammar mastery will facilitate communication

with English. The method of learning English is growing, from the one originally focused on the approach to memorizing the grammar formula now changing with the communicative approach. The communicative approach is believed to make it easier for students to understand grammar, rather than just memorizing grammar formulas².

¹ MaryAnn Christison et al., *Teaching and learning English grammar: research findings and future directions*. (New York: Routledge, 2015), 3.

² Thomas S.C. Farrell, "The Reflective Assignment: Unlocking Pre-Service English

Some forms of communicative approaches are group discussions and presentations. Good English learning requires a balance between receptive and productive skills³. Teaching strategies with discussions provide many opportunities for students to get solutions to problems, facilitate understanding of certain topics and individual knowledge acquisition, and build students' critical thinking⁴. Active discussion in English learning activities has the potential to be applied while the lecturers only acted as facilitators in the discussion.

In general, various universities program several competencies such as writing (scientific work), oral / verbal communication, leadership and collaboration⁵. One of the important competencies that must be mastered by

students is the ability to present well, especially for educational students who in the future will become teachers. A good presentation includes how to deliver, presentation material, mastery of the material, timing, audience mastery, visual tool, and audience feedback. Presentation skills are not only important in the world of education, but also have a very significant influence on the success of the professional business field⁶.

Basic English Grammar is a basic course for students in the first semester, therefore an appropriate method is needed to provide good understanding and mastery so that each student has a strong foundation to study English courses in the following semester. Besides conventional learning, learning with group discussion methods⁷ and individual oral presentations⁸ are thought to increase understanding and mastery of basic english grammar. This study aims to

Teachers' Beliefs On Grammar Teaching." *RELC Journal Volume* 30 No. 2 (December, 1999): 1-17.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/003368829903000201>.

³ Abd. Ghofur, "Another Alternative in Teaching English: A Theoretical Perspective." *Okara Vol. 7 No. 2* (November, 2013): 61-78.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.19105/ojbs.v7i2.447>

⁴ Wu-Yuin Hwang, Yung-Hui Li, and Rustam Shadiev. "Exploring effects of discussion on visual attention, learning performance, and perceptions of students learning with STR-support". *Computers & Education Volume* 116 (January 2018): 225-236.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2017.09.015>.

⁵ Debra Kerby and Jeff Romine. "Develop Oral Presentation Skills Through Accounting Curriculum Design and Course-Embedded Assessment." *Journal of Education for Business Volume* 85, Issue 3 (July 2009): 172-179.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08832320903252389>.

⁶ Kim Sydow Campbell et al., "Peer versus Self-Assessment of Oral Business." *Business Communication Quarterly Volume* 64 No. 3 (September 2001): 23-42.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/108056990106400303>.

⁷ En-Chong Liaw, "Teacher efficacy of pre-service teachers in Taiwan: The influence of classroom teaching and group discussions." *Teaching and Teacher Education Volume* 25, Issue 1 (January 2009): 176-180.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2008.08.005>.

⁸ Chutamas Sundrarajun and Richard Kiely. "The oral presentation as a context for learning and assessment." *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching Volume* 4, Issue 2 (July 2010): 101-117.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17501220903125021>.

analyze whether group discussions and presentations can improve the first semester Lamongan Billfath University students' understanding and mastery of Basic English Grammar courses.

B. Method

The study was conducted for one semester (14 meetings) with the subject of Basic English Grammar courses. The object of the study was 16 first semester Lamongan Billfath University students. Pretest is used to assess the initial abilities of each student. Students are divided into four groups based on the score of the pretest. Students with above-average grades are appointed as group leaders. Lecture material is shared with students one week before the lecture day. On the lecture day each group discussed the material presented by the lecturer. The final results of the study were assessed by the posttest. After the posttest, each student chooses one of the Basic English Grammar materials that have been taught to be presented. Assessment of presentations includes delivery, material, time, audience interaction and use of visual tools⁹.

The mean scores of pretest, posttest and presentation were analyzed

⁹ R.Tamil Selvi and G. Chandramohan, "Peer Assessment of Oral Presentation: An investigative study of using Clickers in First-year Civil Engineering Class of a reputed Engineering Institution." *IEEE 8th International Conference on Technology for Education* (December 2016): 132-135. <https://doi.org/10.1109/T4E.2016.034>.

by Mann-Whitney t test after normal data distribution was obtained but not homogeneous, using SPSS 25. The application of group discussions and presentations during the lecture process was analyzed descriptively.

C. Results

Descriptive statistical results in Table 1 show that the lowest and highest student pretest scores are 60 and 90, mean 70.94 and standard deviation 9.17. While the posttest score showed an average increase of 84.06 and a decrease in the standard deviation of 8.80, with the lowest score of 65 and the highest of 95. The lowest and highest scores of individual presentations were 60 and 95 with a mean of 79.69 and standard deviation of 11.18.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Pretest, Posttest and Presentation Scores; and Liliefors' Test of Normality

Values	Variables		
	Pretest	Posttest	Prese- ntation
N	16	16	16
Minimum	60	65	60
Maximum	90	95	95
Mean	70.94	84.06	79.69
Std. Deviation	9.17	8.8	11.18
Liliefors' Test of Normality (Sig. 2- tailed)	0.182	0.2	0.158

The pretest, posttest and presentation variables were normally distributed as shown in Table 1 where

each variable showed significance values of 0.182; 0.200; 0.158 > 0.05.

The homogeneity test in Table 2 showed insignificant results $0.002 < 0.05$, meaning that the data was not homogeneous. Therefore the non-parametric statistics of the Mann-Whitney t test are used to analyze the mean differences between all variables.

Table 2. Levene's Test of Homogeneity

ANOVA	Between Groups	Within Groups	Total
Sum of Squares	1429.17	4295.31	5724.48
df	2	45	47
Mean Square	714.58	95.45	
F	7.486		
Sig.	0.002		

The Mann-Whitney t test in Table 3 showed that the pretest score was significantly different from the posttest score and presentation score, which were 0.001 and 0.026 < 0.05, respectively. While the posttest and presentation score did not show a significant difference, $0.276 > 0.05$.

Table 3. Mann-Whitney t Test

Mann-Whitney t Test	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest * Posttest	0.001
Pretest * Presentation	0.026
Posttest * Presentation	0.276

The ability to understand and master the basic English grammar courses of students at the beginning of the lecture (pretest) is less evenly distributed and more below the average score of 70.94 which is 10 students (62.5%). While 6 students (37.5%) had a score above average. This is possible from the history of their English

education in high school and also the interest of each student in learning English¹⁰. The interest and motivation of each student is visible from the beginning to the end of the lecture, where students with high interest and motivation have a better score because they are always interested in the material being studied.

Significant increase in understanding and mastery of basic English grammar courses was seen at the end of the lecture, with an increase in the average posttest score of 84.06 and a decrease in standard deviation because the number of students who scored above the average posttest rose to 62.5% (10 students). When compared with the average pretest there was a score increase of 87.5% (14 students).

The group discussion method is used to increase the interest and motivation and activeness of students in learning basic English grammar courses. During the lecture students are directed to discuss the material that the lecturers have delivered with their respective groups. Direct observation during lectures indicates that group discussions provide flexibility and comfort for students who are shy / introverted by discussing or asking questions about the material to other students in the group. This provides a comfortable and conducive learning environment for all students. Conducive and highly motivated learning groups have a positive effect on the success of the

¹⁰ MaryAnn Christison et al., 3

learning process, and vice versa¹¹. The group discussion has a significant effect in increasing the final score of students both those who have low and high learning motivation. Furthermore conventional teaching methods do not have a significant effect on students, it is possible because the method is less interactive so students are less motivated in learning¹².

For most students presentation is a scary thing, stressful and needs to be avoided. This is due to a lack of confidence to speak in front of many people. This can be seen from several individual student presentation performances which are not maximal in terms of delivery, material, audience mastery and use of visual tools. However, these results are efforts that need to be appreciated, because most students made their presentations for the first time. During the lecture there were 3 students who did not take the presentation test, allegedly lacked confidence and were not ready to conduct presentation tests, so they were not included in the data analysis.

Student presentation skills are not evenly distributed, as seen from the

standard deviation of the presentation test score of 11.18. The percentage score below and above the average presentation test score is 50%. Presentation skills must be mastered by every student, especially for students majoring in education who will become teachers¹³. Therefore training and habitual presentation are needed so that students' self-confidence and presentation skills increase.

In the student's point of view, the Presentation test makes and forces them to better understand Basic English Grammar material, even though discomfort and anxiety occur during their presentation.¹⁴

D. Conclusion

The group discussion method was significantly able to improve students' understanding and mastery of basic English grammar courses and to help mastering presentation material, the results of the Mann-Whitney t test between pretest and posttest scores and between pretest and presentation scores were 0.001 and 0.026 < 0.05. The posttest score and presentation did not

¹¹ Mitsuko Tanaka, "Examining EFL vocabulary learning motivation in a demotivating learning environment" *System* Volume 65 (April 2017): 130-138.

¹² Sebastian Menggo, Ketut Seken, and Made Ratminingsih. "The Effect of Discussion Technique and English Learning Motivation toward Students' Speaking Ability". *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Indonesia Undiksha* Volume 1 (2013): 1-10

¹³ Oguzhan Ozdemir and Ahmed Tekin. "Evaluation of the presentation skills of the pre-service teachers via fuzzy logic." *Computers in Human Behavior* Volume 61 (August 2016): 288-299. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.03.013>.

¹⁴ Karen Turner et al, "Oral presentation as a form of summative assessment in a master's level PGCE module: the student perspective." *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* Volume 38, Issue 6 (July 2013): 662-673. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2012.680016> .

differ significantly, $0.276 > 0.05$. The students' main problem in the presentation test was the lack of self-confidence and not being used to speaking in front of the class, therefore further studies are needed to overcome the problem.

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