STUDENTS’ PERCEPTION ON THE ROLE OF GROUP DISCUSSION IN GRAMMAR CLASS AT UNIVERSITY OF JAMBI

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed at getting students’ perception on the role of group discussion in grammar class at university of Jambi. This research showed their perception when doing group discussion in grammar class whether it is helpful or not for them. In particular, this research attempted to answer the questions: What are students’ perceptions on the role of group discussion in grammar class at University of Jambi? This qualitative research used case study as the main design. The data were collected by interviewing six participants who have passed all grammar class. The data were analyzed by using inductive analysis and the researcher found about perception on the role of group discussion and created three major themes and each major themes has their sub-themes : (1) advantages of group discussion in grammar class (To give good influence, to motivate the students, and to develop students’s skill), (2) disadvantages of group discussion in grammar class (to give bad influence and to have some problems in understanding grammar), and (3) expectation of group discussion in grammar class (the equal member of the group, the other method to use, and the way the lecturer run the class). It can be concluded that group discussion can not help students to understand and mastering grammar in grammar class.

Key words: students’ perception, group discussion, grammar class

INTRODUCTION

1. Background

Grammar can help students discover the nature of language, such as that language consists of predictable patterns that make what we say, hear, read, and write intelligible (Azhar, 2007). People can not speak clearly and the listener will feel hard to understand what the speaker said without grammar. According to Goh (2007), there are difficulties that Asian students found when they learn English. Likewise, Indonesian
students, one of the main difficulties are students still lack the ability about mastering the grammar rules.

The statements above supported by Hizbulla (2010) who stated that students hard to understand the rules of grammar even when the teacher already explain it clearly to them. Although they do not understand about the lesson, they feel afraid to ask the teacher about what parts are still confusing to them. The students also feel afraid to look foolish or stupid in front of all of their friends and in front of the teacher (Bilik, 2014).

Based on researcher’s experience in learning grammar and researcher’s informal observation with students in Jambi University, a lot of students feel afraid to ask about the lesson. They do not want to look stupid in front of their friends. The teacher usually asks the students whether the students understand or not after he or she explains about the lesson. However, the students just keep quite even when they did not understand the lesson.

Some lecturers are using group discussion in grammar class as a technique to make them mastering the grammar rules. Because group discussion is rare to use as a technique in grammar class, So the researcher wants to know the reaction and perception from the students while using group discussion in grammar class, wheather the group discussion in grammar is useful or not based on their perception. This paper will show how their perception about group discussion in grammar class.

2. Research Question

What are students’ perception on the role of group discussion in grammar class at University of Jambi?

3. Research Objective

This research wants to get about students’ perception on the role of group discussion in grammar class at University of Jambi.

4. Significance of the Research

This study is expected to make the teachers see about the fact of group discussion in grammar class in University of Jambi. This research hopefully can make the students express their perception that related with this study and for the other researchers, this study hopes
could be a reference when they are doing their own research that the topic related about group discussion in grammar class.

**REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

1. **Perception**

   Perception is someone’s thought about something that they learn to measure how their attitude toward using something, whether they agree or not about that method or about something that they learn (Hong, 2003). Eken (1999) said that students’ perception is a process point of view about something that happen in the learning process in the class and the student will provide suggestions or argument for the teacher or classmates to improve students’ process in learning.

2. **Group Discussion**

   Group discussion is when a group of people are together to do a work and they are doing interaction with the member of their group and who are taking part themselves to be a group on a learning process (Salvin, 1990). Group discussion also can be interpreted as an activity where the number of people talk together through exchanging opinions on a topic or an issue based on the fact that allows about the issue or topic. It can be said that group discussion is one of the ways that the teacher can use to the students to learn together and to share their opinion to the topic given.

   a. Types of Group Discussions

      According to Raharja (2002), to give students discretion to participate actively, teacher is expected to provide various types of group discussions. The first type of group discussions is *buzz group*. In this buzz group, participants are separated to small groups that consist of 2-3 people and they talk rapidly about one certain topic to give comment or feedback which will be included in plenary discussion. In *plenary discussion*, all participants can join to explain a topic or particular concept, so all the participants’ understanding are expected to be same. The next type of group discussions is *Brainstorming*. Brainstorming is done to get more inputs in a short time as the beginning of discussion before participants move to the further discussion. In this discussion, the quality are not the main concern but it is expected that all the participants can contribute. *Games* is another type of group discussion. Games are used to liven up the class atmosphere. Make the participants active and as the opening of the discussion about a particular topic.
b. Group Size

The number of group size is one of important thing in grouping. A small group is often considered to consist of three or more people (Beebe & Masterson, 2003, cited in Bruke, 2011) because Discussion in small group can increase students’ confidence and motivation using the target language (Bilik, 2014). In general, it is suggested that groups of four or five members tend to work best (Davis, 1993, cited in Bruke, 2011).

c. Grammar

There are three areas that have to be considered in grammar. First is grammar as rules, second is grammar as form, and the last is grammar as resource (Al-Mekhraf, & Nagaratnam, 2011). This study has three grammar courses, grammar one, grammar two, and grammar three, this research needs students who already pass their grammar two, because there is a group discussion method in grammar two class. The material that the participants had been studied in grammar two such as tenses, passive voice, and other materials that related to the rules to make a correct sentences.

4. Previous Study

The first previous study is “Collaborative Learning as an Alternative Technique in Teaching Grammar” by Setyowati in 2013. Her study and this study are similar because this study also focused about group discussion in grammar class. The difference between this study and her study are this study using qualitative method to see their perception how group discussion can work in grammar class while her study is using action research to see the effectiveness of collaborative learning especially group discussion in grammar class.

The second previous study is “Students Perception on the Role of Group Discussion in International Speaking Class” by Martisha Olivia Bilik in 2014. In her research, she tried to find out what students’ perceptions towards the role of group discussion in international speaking class. This similar thing from her research and this research is the same because both are using group discussion as a method of teaching in class, but what makes it different Martisha’s study focused about on the role of group discussion in international speaking class while this study focused on the role of group discussion in grammar class.

The third previous study is “ESL Students’ Perception of Group Discussion as a Tool for the Collaborative Learning Process When Learning Writing Skill” by Chee Choy in 2014. His study and this study are similar because these studies discuss about collaborative learning in the form of group discussion. But, the different is his study is focus on ESL learners while this study focus on EFL learners.
METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative research which used descriptive way in analyzing the data. This research used an interview as the instrument of this study. The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore and describe the perspective of students in University of Jambi about group discussion in their grammar class. This research uses case study research to describe about the role of group discussion in grammar class for getting their perception, the researcher asked them about group discussion in grammar class in-depth. That is the reason why the researcher uses descriptive qualitative in this research, in order to describe about group discussion in grammar class for students at University of Jambi.

The sampling techniques that is used in this research is purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is when researcher intentionally selects individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2012). Students selected from different classes and will be chosen based on their demographic background profile that they had answered. The researcher used informed consent to protect the participants who will be involved in this study. There are six students were asked related to this topic. The researcher chose six students because they already fill the criteria in this study and they also fill what the researcher needs in this study. Those are B class and I class because they had been doing group discussion in grammar class.

After those six students had been chosen, the researcher did the interview and asked those students with some questions that have already prepared, then recorded the responses by using recorder tool which is a recorder device in researcher’s Smartphone. Those students had learning schedule start from Monday to Friday, so researcher had arranged and match their schedule to do the interview. After recording the students’ responses by using recorder device in Smartphone and get the data, the researcher created the transcription of the responses that have been recorded in recorder device. After create the transcription, the researcher analyzed the data using inductive analysis. Findings organized by themes to make meaning from the data Inductive analysis involves discovering patterns, themes, and categories in one’s data (Patton, 2002).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. Biographical Description of the Participants
There were six students as the participants to be interviewed. They all were fifth semester students of English Education Study Program in Jambi University who had passed grammar class in their previous semesters. They consisted of three male students and three female students. Four (three female students and one male student) of them are from regular classes and the rest two (male students) are from regular-mandiri classes. They had various score in grammar II while they were doing group discussion in grammar class. They start from A until C+. All of their names are pseudonyms.

- **Dini** got an A score from regular class.
- **Aisyah** got an A score from regular class.
- **Nina** got a C+ score from regular class.
- **Surya** got a B+ score from regular class.
- **Agung** got a B+ score from regular-mandiri class.
- **Bayu** got a B+ score from regular-mandiri class.

### 2. Perception on the role of group discussion in grammar class

There is a major topic: findings on perception on the role of group discussion in grammar class at Jambi University. The purpose of this research is to get about students’ perception on the role of group discussion in grammar class. After the researcher analyzed the data, there were three major themes and eight sub-themes related to the first research question based on interview analysis. Each theme and sub-theme is illustrated by a table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAJOR THEMES</th>
<th>SUB-THemes</th>
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| (1) Advantages of group discussion in grammar class | a. To give good influence  
b. To motivate the students  
c. To develop student’s skill |
| (2) Disadvantages of group discussion in grammar class | a. To give bad influence  
b. To have some problems in understanding grammar |
| (3) Expectation of group discussion in grammar class | a. The equal member of the group  
b. The other method to use  
c. The way the lecturer run the class |
a. Advantages of group discussion in grammar class

According to Beebe & Masterson (2003, cited in Bruke, 2011), there are advantages and disadvantages about group discussion. By understanding the benefits and potential pitfalls, a group can capitalize on the virtues of group work and minimize the obstacles that hinder success. In this study, the participants have various perception about the advantage of group discussion in grammar class based on them. Five of six participants reported that they have good influence in group discussion in grammar class by interaction with other students, educate them to be active and it give the influence for another activities that they have.

This study also shows that group discussion in grammar class can motivated the students and it is also include become the advantage of the group discussion in grammar class. Two of six students, Dini and Nina, said that they are motivated for understanding grammar by doing group discussion. In other hand, Aisyah reported that group discussion sometimes can be motivated and sometimes not, it depend on the explanation from other group in font of the class. However, Bayu, Agung, and Surya reported that they don’t think that group discussion in grammar class can motivated them to learn and understand about grammar.

In this study showed that group discussion in grammar class can developing skill such as speaking skill and writing skill because they have conversation each other when working together. All of the participants reported that they can developing their skill especially in speaking and in writing skill.

b. Disadvantages from group discussion in grammar class

The researcher also asked about the bad influence that they might be have because the previous part the researcher already explain about the good influence of group discussion in grammar class. Five of six participants got bad influence in grammar class when doing group discussion method. Based on agung’s perception, when all the students in that group that do not understand the material well, it can make the presentation did not running well because he also can not catch the material and they just focus with their material without thingking about others so it can make them hard to understand all the material that being present and Bayu also has the same perception about that. Dini, Nina, and Aisya reported that the bad influence from group discussion is when the students who usually being active and they will got more active and some students in that group just join without working at all.

In this study, the researcher also asked the participant about their problem that they face when doing group discussion in grammar class. Five of six participants have problem when doing grammar class. Dini, Bayu, and Nina have the problem on the member of the group itself, wheather it is about their group problem or the group that explain in front
of the class. Some students feel group discussion cannot run well because of their group member is not suitable for them to work together and some member of the group did not want to do their job and just join the name of the group. And the rest of the participants have their own problem to mastering the grammar because of group discussion.

c. Expectation of group discussion in grammar class

The result of this investigation is important for this study program, thus, this study can be a reference to make grammar class in this study program getting better. After the researcher analyzed the data, there were 3 sub-themes that appear in this study (1) the member of the group; (2) other method (3) the lecturer. The students expected that the lecturer give more attention for grouping them in a group because when the students have the wrong group, they cannot help their teaching and learning better and Dini expected that the lecturer always see the way they work together in order to make them learn better and they can all present the material well in front of the class like Bayu reported that they must make clear explanation about their topic to make the other member understand about the topic that they get.

Five of six participants have an other method that they think it suit for them to do in grammar class. One participant, Nina, reported that she does not matter for doing the group discussion in grammar class. However it would be better doing something else after the group discussion. The participants expected an other method in grammar class such as doing the task individually or answering the question in front of the class individually or if it is possible they expected that doing some activities outside the classroom because remembering that grammar is difficult to understand and a little boring.

Students understand more about the materials from the lecturers’ explanation. The lecturers should be a good motivator in the classroom to make students be more interest in learning the course that she or he taught. The way lecturers teach also influenced students’ interest in learning. Four students of six reported that they enjoy their grammar class because of the lecturer is nice and fun. They do not have any explanation about the the way the lecturer give the material, because they said they enjoy learning it.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

1. Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussions in chapter four, it can be concluded that the role of group discussion is not important for them in teaching and learning process in
grammar class because group discussion gives them some problems to understand about grammar. It is not helpful because of the process of group discussion is not running well like the researcher explained in chapter four about disadvantages of group discussion such as the problem that they usually get for example they did not work together in that group because the group member is not cooperative, and the other problem is sometime there is a group member that can not explain well in front of the class.

2. Suggestion

The researcher suggests that the lecturers have to consider about the class that can use group discussion because not all class can use group discussion as a method in teaching and learning process example like grammar class itself is not helpful to use group discussion in grammar class. The researcher also suggests to all lecturers in this study program when doing the group discussion and group presentation, the lecturers have to pay more attention about the member of one group and see directly the process how they discuss about the material and how they work, knowing the process about group discussion before group presentation and after doing group presentation, the lecturers are better to explain it clearly. The students have to be active and can express their idea clearly to their friends and their lecturer to make teaching and learning process run well.

REFERENCES


Setyowati. 2013. Collaborative Learning as an Alternative Technique in Teaching Grammar