

**DEVELOPING DESCRIPTIVE WRITING SKILL BY USING
SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION FOR TENTH GRADERS**

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Abstrak

Peneliti menekankan pada deskripsi pelaksanaan diskusi kelompok kecil untuk mengajar menulis teks deskriptif untuk kelas X SMAN 1 Menganti Gresik. Peneliti mengumpulkan tanggapan-tanggapan siswa terhadap pelaksanaan diskusi kelompok kecil dan dianalisis siswa komposisi terhadap pelaksanaan diskusi kelompok kecil di samping menilai efektivitas teknik pengajaran ini. Peneliti menerapkan desain penelitian deskriptif kualitatif.

Data yang dikumpulkan dari catatan lapangan mengungkapkan bahwa guru menerapkan diskusi kelompok kecil. Instrumen yang digunakan berupa angket dan komposisi siswa, yang mana digunakan untuk mengumpulkan tanggapan siswa terhadap diskusi kelompok kecil untuk mengajar menulis deskriptif teks. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa siswa menganggap bahwa diskusi kelompok kecil sebagai teknik pengajaran yang berguna. Kuesioner membuktikan bahwa diskusi kelompok kecil membantu dan menyenangkan untuk keterampilan menulis. Selain itu, analisis komposisi siswa mengungkapkan bahwa siswa menulis lebih baik setelah pemberian diskusi kelompok kecil. Kesimpulannya yang didapat, diskusi kelompok kecil mampu memotivasi siswa untuk menulis lebih baik.

Kata kunci: diskusi kelompok kecil, teks deskriptif.

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Abstract

This researcher emphasized on the description of the implementation of small group discussion to teach writing of descriptive text to the tenth graders of SMAN 1 Menganti Gresik. The researcher gathered students' responses towards to the implementation of small group discussion and analyzed students' composition towards the implementation small group discussion in addition to assessing the effectiveness of this teaching technique. The researcher applied descriptive qualitative research design.

The data gathered from the field notes revealed that the teacher implemented small group discussion. The instruments used are questionnaire and students' compositions, which they were used to gather the students' responses towards of small group discussion to teach writing descriptive. The result showed that students viewed small group discussion as a useful teaching technique. The questionnaire revealed that small group discussion helped and enjoyable for writing skills. Moreover, the analysis of students' compositions revealed that the students wrote better after the provision of small group discussion. In conclusion, small group discussion was able to motivate students to write better.

Keywords: *small group discussion, descriptive text.*



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INTRODUCTION

According to the current curriculum 2013, our government decides that English can only be taught on junior high school and senior high school. That is the reason why we should make teaching and learning process to be more effective and attractive in order to build the students' understanding, draw their attention, and make them willing to learn about English. Some of the students have a basic knowledge about English because they have been taught that subject in their previous level. Based on the KI 4 of the latest in Indonesia - curriculum 2013, the students are required compose texts, either spoken or written. Thus, writing is one of the important skills in learning English as a foreign language because writing is such a basic skill which students have to master (Robespierre, 2001).

Ariyanti (2010:91) states that writing is an important skill in taking, retaining, and expressing information. In line with that, Taselin (2010: 140) mentions that writing is an important part of language teaching as it also functions as an essential tool for learning in which students improve their knowledge of the language elements in real use. Writing can be divided into several genres such as narrative, procedure, report, recount, and descriptive. Writing about something is not an easy thing to do especially when the students have no talent and eagerness to write. Teachers should know how to raise students' interest toward writing descriptive text. Writing descriptive text is writing a text that describes someone, something, place and other stuff that can be seen (Siahaan, 2008:98). The generic structure of descriptive text is identification and description. Identification is a part of paragraph which introduces or identifies the character, while the description is a part that describes the character (Anderson and Anderson, 1998: 27). Writing descriptive text aims to show rather than tell the students what something is like (Shahid, 1999:3). Seeing this fact, therefore, in order to have students understand about the concept of writing descriptive text and make them easily in comprehending how to write the descriptive text, there is a technique found and created by experts called Small Group Discussion. In the small group discussion, the students can learn how to work together in a small group. This technique is appropriate to be applied since the cooperation aspect is better than the competition aspect in the teaching and learning process. The small group discussion is applied in order to help the teacher dealing with the large class that contains of more than 10 students. Additionally, this technique also helps the students

who have some self-esteem problem (McKeachie, 1994). For example, the students who are too shy to state their opinion in front of the class during the activity (Framil, 1998:43). This technique will make them to be more active since they have the responsibility to do the task well. It is quoted by Deutsch in Cohen (1999: 17) that the students tend to be more helpful after a cooperative task assigned. They also show the responsible behavior on the group task and progress (Brown, 1994:174). They understand that they are responsible for the group task as the same as their friends in group. Hence, they will not be passive and not engage themselves during the teaching learning process. They will be more active and brave enough to explain their ideas.

In addition, Wajnryb (1990) showed the result of his research about the implementation of small group discussion to teach descriptive text in Australia. It is showed that the teachers in Indonesia have also been implemented this technique. Besides, Susanti (2010) has already implemented the same technique in teaching listening. She found that the effectiveness of the small discussion group in teaching listening. Thus, it can be said that this technique can be implemented in the teaching writing as well. Given the explanation above, this study is interested observing the implementation of small group discussion in teaching descriptive text. Besides, the teacher has an assumption that the tenth graders have average English proficiency. That is why, in implementation this technique, the teacher considers both to the length of the text and the way how she guides the students in following the lesson. In short, simple passage of descriptive text is chosen and small group discussion is selected as the technique. While in this thesis entitled to "Developing Descriptive Writing Skill by Using Small Group Discussions for Tenth Graders Composition of SMAN 1 MENGANTI " the researcher use this technique for teaching descriptive text to develop students' writing ability and make them easier to write descriptive text. Also in 2013 curriculum, this technique is well suited for a more scientific approach and appropriate to be applied in teaching learning process.

In line with the background of the study above, the researcher formulates the research questions as follows:

1. How is the implementation of small group discussion which is used in K13 writing stage in the teaching learning process?
2. How are the students' responses toward small group discussion which is used in K13 writing stage in the teaching learning process?

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RESULT OF THE STUDY

RESEARCH METHOD

This study aimed to describe the implementation of small group discussion to the teaching of written descriptive text, and to describe the students' responses toward the implementation of selected technique. This study used the qualitative research by designing the descriptive model of research design. According to Ary, Jacobs, and Sorensen (2010), qualitative research focuses on understanding, social phenomenon from the view of the human participants in natural setting. In addition, Parahoo (1997:142) describes a research design as "a plan that describes how, when and where data are collected and analyzed". Meanwhile, according to Sukamadinata (2005: 60), qualitative research has two main purposes, the first is to describe and to explore, and the second is to describe and explain. In this study, the researcher acts as the observer.

The subjects of the study were the students of the tenth grade in SMAN 1 Menganti, Gresik. The researcher takes the students of tenth grade X MIA-1 of SMAN 1 Menganti because they were from different intelligence throughout the classes. The researcher chose the 10th graders because they were learning descriptive text particularly in the second semester and will be continued until the end semester so this grade was the appropriate one to be the subjects of this study. Therefore, the researcher would like to know the use of small group discussion to students' writing ability in teaching descriptive text.

There were three kinds of research instruments researcher used to collect the data in this study. They were observation checklist, field notes, and questionnaire. Firstly, the researcher used the two first instruments, observation checklist and field note, to record the implementation of the technique, as what the answer of first research question demands. The last technique in collecting the data was the questionnaire. The questionnaire was given after the implementation of small group discussion. The researcher asked the students to fill questionnaire about their responses of teaching process.

There were two observations conducted in this study. This data was obtained from class MIA-1 SMAN 1 Menganti Gresik, consisting of 30 students. All of the data that observer got from observation were described and was presented into form of words.

The implementation of Small Group Discussion as a technique to teach writing descriptive text.

The first observation was held on Saturday 28th march 2015. The researcher came to the teacher in teacher's room. Before entering the class, the researcher prepared the appropriate lesson plan and media to apply, also materials that related to the topic, while the instrument was an observation checklist. The bell rang at 10:30 o'clock; we entered to the class then. The students seemed already know that there was a researcher from The State University of Surabaya because their teacher already told them previously, so that they were curious. The students felt curious and happy because their class was selected to be observed. They also interested in the material that is going to discuss. While having the conversation, the student helped the teacher to prepare *laptop*, LCD, and they sat down at the back of row in the class. After that, the teacher gave the students some brainstorming questions to make them familiar with the learning material. The students' were motivated well with this technique and enthusiastically answered all of the questions. The brain storming questions were "what we will learn today?" "What is descriptive text?" "Have you read any descriptive text in this slide?" From those, the students were motivated to answer the question from the teacher, even though they make some mistakes while answering. The teacher helped the students to activate their thoughts and correct their mistakes.

The second observation was conducted on Saturday 04th of April 2015 as the last observation. The way how the researcher observes the activity for the second observation was almost the same with previous observation. The class began at 10:30 o'clock and the students were ready to start the lesson. The teacher explained more about descriptive text function, language futures and generic structure (identification and description) after that, the teacher asked the students to make

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group. Make a small group, the group consist 4-5 students. The teacher asked students to draft what they were going to write by designing mind mapping and in 10 minutes, and then students write their draft for 10 to 15 sentences in 30 minutes. The observer saw that the students were very excited in making group.

The Students' Responses toward the Use of Small Group Discussion as a Technique

In this result of students' responses, most of the students were interested in the use of small group discussion as a technique to teaching writing descriptive text. They will be more active and confident enough to state their ideas. It could be seen that most students stated that the small group discussion were interesting for the teaching writing descriptive text. In analyzing the students' responses toward the implementation of small group discussion as technique to teach writing descriptive text, the researcher could make a conclusion that most of students enjoy small group discussion to apply as a technique to help them in getting ideas when they composed written descriptive text.

Conclusion

Based on the result of the data analysis and the description written in the previous chapter, this chapter presented conclusion overall aspect of using small group discussion in teaching writing descriptive text and some suggestion to be used for further study, the researcher concluded that both of the students and the teacher were active to learn the lesson. In the implementation of small group discussion can be used to teach writing descriptive text, the teacher seemed active in every moment to help the students who needed more help in teaching descriptive text using small group discussion and successfully make this technique in the classroom, and about the students that was happy to use this technique to write descriptive text. It could be seen from students who are very enthusiastic in teaching learning process by using small group discussion. The data gathered from observation shows that students can be more active in helping each other and stating opinion as what they thought. It was approved from the analysis of students' composition done by researcher that there

was better done by the students. Because teaching writing by using small group discussion makes students easy to absorb their new knowledge and they can write they idea based on the group discuss then produce good descriptive text. Small group discussion can help the to look for the ideas in writing the descriptive text. So, they can use new vocabularies creatively. Small group discussion could help the students in mastering the material related to the descriptive text genre. Previously they said that they do not like learning English and get difficultly to write, especially in writing descriptive text, by using small group discussion they become interested and more enthusiastic in writing descriptive text. Beside that the teacher also gives them a good motivation while implementing small group discussion. Students also said that small group discussion make them easier to get the idea and make them too easy in write descriptive text.

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