

Enhancing tenth-grade students' reading comprehension via small group discussions on narrative texts

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to increase students' reading comprehension and learning activities using small group discussions. The researcher employed the Classroom Action study design as a study approach. This study was conducted through two cycles involving tenth-grade students at SMK N 9 Bandar Lampung. The researcher employed an observation sheet and a reading test to gather data. The researcher discovered that students' learning activities improved significantly during the first and second cycles. The average score of the students' observation sheets in cycle 1 and cycle 2 was 6.38 and 7.61. Students' learning activity improved significantly during cycles 1 and 2, with an improvement of 1.2 in the active category. The results of students' reading tests from cycle 1 to cycle 2 provided significant improvements in students' reading comprehension during the first and second cycles. The average reading test score for students in cycle 1 was 62, while 82 in cycle 2. It implies that students reading test scores gained around 20 points during cycles 1 and 2. Meanwhile, 82% of students scored higher than the MCC. Based on the research's findings, the researcher concluded that implementing small group discussions improved students' learning activities and reading comprehension in tenth-grade students at SMK N 9 Bandar Lampung in the academic year 2022/2023.

Keywords: *CAR, Reading Comprehension, Small Group Discussion.*

I. INTRODUCTION

English is generally taught as a foreign language in Indonesia, and the goal of learning English is to exchange information. To exchange information effectively, students must master the four basic abilities listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Of all these four skills, it can help them communicate and share information. Another example is reading several narrative texts that can help students know the context of the text and the meaning contained in the text, as well as students can know the structure of the text. According to Finnocchiaro & Bonomo in Husnu (2010), reading is understanding and getting meaning from printed and written material. Students must comprehend the four abilities of a fourth language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Based on the curriculum's concept and English capabilities. Studying English implies improving fourth language abilities, which include a language component, vocabulary, structure, and pronunciation (in speaking) or spelling (in writing) that assists students in mastering English. Reading is very important to entire people, including students. They can feel benefits, such as improved knowledge of the outside world. For example, by reading a

newspaper, they can figure out what events are happening or have happened in the world. According to Kustaryo in Tyas (2019), Reading is the process of interpreting written material in connection to the readers using text and experimental/conceptual basis for the notion of written language, story structure, purpose, and content that has been read.

Reading comprehension can be explained as the capacity to extract knowledge gathered from written material and implement it in an atmosphere that illustrates the comprehension or knowledge from the reading material. According to Linse (2005), "Reading comprehension is a process of negotiating to understand between the writer and reader ."It means that the reader may feel how the authors are thinking by reading. The reader can take the information and knowledge from written text. Nowadays, much information is available in written language, so the readers need to read it to update their knowledge of the news. Through reading comprehension skills, the reader can get the information needed.

Reading comprehension of narrative text necessitates students' ability to grasp the content suits on its generic structure, namely identification and description, which typically involves numerous passages in that students should be able to recognize five reading elements, namely, i.e., the main idea, specific information, a reference, inference, and the meaning of words in context. However, certain students struggle with entirely understanding the content. The students themselves and their learning process are the two primary aspects that likely affect students' reading comprehension skills. Their reading comprehension decreased far due to a lack of vocabulary. This additionally becomes especially challenging for students to determine the meaning of difficult words from the text. Usually, teachers should find texts with words that students can easily understand and recognize. Therefore, they can understand the text more easily. In addition, teachers usually use traditional learning modes in the learning process, such as lectures, question and answer and note-taking. Nimasari (2016) states that students who understand the teacher's explanation can do the task easily, while those who do not usually have difficulty doing it. Learning strategies are an approach to achieving various learning objectives under various contexts.

According to initial research on tenth-grade students of BDP at SMKN 9 Bandar Lampung, the researcher finds several issues about students' reading comprehension. According to the result from the English teacher, the student's problems in reading comprehension were; that the students were not active and enthusiastic about following the reading lesson, and they had difficulties comprehending the material they read. Therefore, these problems must be decreased to improve the students' reading comprehension. If the students actively follow the lesson, they will know how to be good readers by reading the teacher's explanations. The student's difficulties in learning reading comprehension can be decreased by implementing a suitable technique because when the teacher uses a suitable technique, the teaching and learning process can proceed more properly. The teacher can use several techniques for teaching and learning, specifically in reading lessons, that is, the small group discussion technique. In this case, the first researcher acted as a teacher who taught in the classroom to solve the students' reading comprehension skills better.

Small group discussion refers to the students' activities in learning which implemented the small group discussions technique to decrease the students' problems related to the subject matter they faced in everyday life. According to Kenz & Greg in Puspitasari (2021), A small group is a collection of people that engage with one another and work toward a common objective through their interdependent relationship. The students can cooperate to solve their issues or respond to the teacher's inquiry. It means a small group discussion could be expressed

in different words as an activity conducted with two or more people presenting each other with specific purposes of the material discussed, finding ideas to fixing an issue found from the discussion result. This technique will improve students' thinking ability. They will work together to resolve an issue discussed and enhance their reading skills. The students will read first before they do the discussion. After they understand, they will do the discussion.

Based on the explanation above, the researchers were interested in implementing the small group discussion technique to enhance students' reading comprehension. The researchers subsequently proceeded to teach students using the small group discussion approach. Therefore, this research entitled "Enhancing Tenth Grade Students' Reading Comprehension via Small Group Discussions on Narrative Texts."

II. METHODS

Research Design

This research was carried out in several points. The common technique to conduct action research was succinctly explained in four steps. According to Suharsimi Arikunto (2006), the action research model has four stages that are commonly passed, named (1) planning, (2) implementation, (3) observation, and (4) reflection. The cycle ended with the student fulfilling the requirement set by the school's minimum completeness criteria (MCC), which was 75.

Participants

This research was carried out on April 2023 and applied Classroom Action Research (CAR) design. This research used tenth-grade students of BDP at SMKN 9 Bandar Lampung, which consisted of 33 students, as the research subject. The researcher determines that this technique is suitable to apply in this research. Therefore, the focus of this research was to increase student learning activities and students' reading comprehension. The first researcher performed as a real teacher in the teaching and learning process during research.

Instruments

The researchers used tests and nontest for collecting research data. A reading test was employed for collecting quantitative data. Meanwhile, observation and interviews were utilized for collecting qualitative data. After collecting both data, the researchers decided to continue data analysis as the next research steps

Data analysis

After collecting data analysis, the researcher conducted data analysis which consisted of qualitative and quantitative analysis. This current study used SPSS to analyze the improvement of students' reading tests and students' learning activities in cycle 1 and cycle 2. This data analysis was used to investigate whether there was any significant improvement at the end of cycle 1 and cycle 1. Moreover, the researchers analyzed data from observation sheets and interviews to explore the qualitative data. Combining qualitative and quantitative methods for analyzing the data could make the data more reliable and valid.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Finding

The action of cycle 1 was carried out on April 10th, 2023, and May 8th, 2023, and the action of cycle 2 was carried out on May 10th, 2023, and May 22nd, 2023. The researchers

implemented small group discussion techniques in the teaching and learning process. This research consists of the expected steps. There were: planning, action, observing, and reflecting.

1. The Use of Small Group Discussion in Improving Students' Learning Activity

a. Result of Students Observation Sheet Cycle 1 and Cycle 2

The result of the students' observation sheet indicated that they were still confused while using Small Group Discussion, and the students found it difficult to get the main ideas in reading the text. The teaching and learning process in cycle 2 was more efficient than in cycle 1. Most students were enthusiastic about doing the assignment given by the teacher. The students very much enjoy learning reading using Small Group Discussions. The result of the student's observation sheet in cycle 1 and cycle 2 indicated that the student's learning activities had improved significantly.

Table 1. Result of Students Observation Sheet Cycle 1 and Cycle 2

No.	Cycle	Mean Score
1.	Cycle 1	6.38
2.	Cycle 2	7.61

It evidenced that the student's observation sheet result in the first cycle obtained a mean score of 6.38. Meanwhile, in the second cycle was 7.61. The outcome of this research indicated that students' learning activities from the first to the second cycle increased by 1.23 points in the active category. Therefore, the researchers ended this research because the outcome indicated that the students had passed the MCC success indicators.

2. The Use of Small Group Discussion in Improving Students' Reading Comprehension

a. The result of the Students' Reading Test on the First and the Second Cycle

The researcher administered test 1 on May 8th, 2023; test 2 was administered on May 22nd, 2023. The outcome of the reading test on the first to the second cycle indicated that students' reading tests improved significantly. The outcome of the students' reading test in cycle 1 was an average score of 62. Meanwhile, the percentage of the students who scored over the MCC was 42%. It indicates that 14 students passed the MCC.

Henceforth, the outcome of the students' reading test in cycle 2 was an average score of 82. Meanwhile, the percentage of students who scored over the MCC was 82%. It indicates that 27 students succeeded in exceeding the MCC. According to the research result, the students' learning completeness from the first to the second cycle showed an improvement of 20%. It showed that teaching and learning activities through the Small Group Discussion strategy succeeded in passing the MCC target. Therefore, the researchers decided to stop this research because it had been proven.

Table 2. The result of the Students' Reading Test on the First and the Second Cycle

No	MCC	Cycle 1		Cycle 2		Criteria
		Students Number	Students Percentage	Students Number	Students Percentage	
1	≥ 75	14	42%	27	82%	Passed
2	< 75	19	58%	6	18%	Failed

The result of students' completeness in cycle 1 indicated that the students' percentage who succeeded in exceeding the MCC was 42%, while the percentage of students who failed to pass the MCC was 58%. Besides, there were 27 students, 82%, who exceeded the MCC, while the number of students who failed to exceed the MCC was 6 students or 18%. According to the

data presented above, the researcher inferred that small group discussions with the tenth-grade students of BDP at SMKN 9 Bandar Lampung can significantly improve students' reading comprehension.

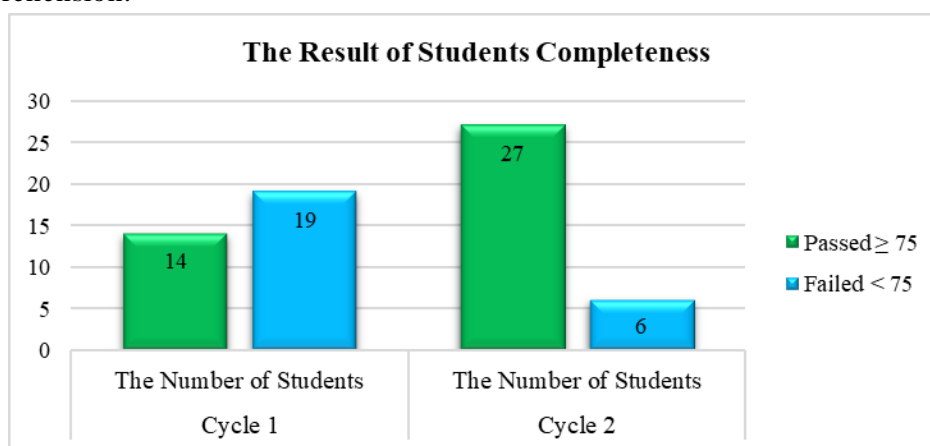


Figure 1. Students Reading Comprehension

According to the diagram above, the result of students' reading tests from cycle 1 to cycle 2 showed an enhancement of 20%.

Discussion

The result of the students' observation sheets and the reading test indicated that the teaching and learning process had improved significantly, especially in students learning activity and reading comprehension. The use of small group discussions could assist students in finding detailed information contained in the text. This technique could be used as a more effective and efficient learning strategy. There were described as follows:

1. The Use of Small Group Discussion in Improving Students' Learning Activity

According to the students' observation sheet, the pupils still appear perplexed even after using small group discussions. It was proven that students struggled with their vocabulary, particularly with unusual words, making it difficult for them to comprehend the text and all the information contained. Therefore, numerous students were inactive and apprehensive about responding.

Based on the research results, the process of teaching and learning in cycle 2 resulted in better improvement compared to cycle 1. Almost all the students looked excited to complete the assignment the teacher gave. The students very much enjoy learning reading using Small Group Discussions. It was evidenced that students are more interested in learning material. The students participated actively in their discussions, openly expressing their ideas and opinions. Therefore, the students are more focused on their words. The description of the first and the second cycle indicated that the student's learning activity and reading comprehension improved significantly.

After a considerable amount of discussion, the researchers showed up around the conclusion that small group discussions can enhance students' reading comprehension. That statement was supported by Arisman & Haryanti (2019), who stated that the small group discussion method is a branch of the discussion method to improve students' learning activity. Therefore, small group discussion is a very efficient technique because students could be related directly to each other.

Small Group Discussion requires active students in their discussion, sharing ideas and interacting during the discussion class with the group members. All students were involved in

the activities while the teacher monitored them in doing the activities and helped them if it is needed. It could make the students more responsible according to the result of students' observation sheets. That was supported by Serravallo (2010), who stated that the benefit of small group discussions could facilitate students to enhance students learning activity. In addition, implementing small group discussion techniques could affect everyone with or without a leader assigned to a group. Therefore, small group discussion was a technique English teachers could implement to improve students' learning activity. According to the student observation sheet result, the researcher inferred that the student's learning activity on the first to the second cycle showed an improvement of 1.23.

2. The Use of Small Group Discussion in Improving Students' Reading Comprehension

According to the research result, the average score from students reading test 1 to students reading test 2 improved significantly. The result of reading test 1 revealed that implementing Classroom Action Research through the small group discussion technique obtained the average reading test score of 62. Meanwhile, the percentage of students who passed the MCC was 42%. It indicated that 14 students achieved the score passed the MCC, and 19 students failed to achieve the MCC.

Henceforth, the mean scores on reading tests on the second cycle were 82; meanwhile, the percentage of students who exceeded the MCC was 82%. It indicated that 27 students achieved the score that passed the MCC. The percentage revealed that an improvement in students' completeness from cycle 1 to cycle 2 was 82%. The researcher inferred that the small group discussion technique implemented in this research had succeeded in exceeding the predetermined MCC target to improve the students' reading comprehension.

Having conducted the research, applying small group discussion techniques could be guided the students to involve in social interaction. It has a positive impact on students' learning activities. The condition of cooperative learning would encourage the students to be more active in sharing their ideas for completing each other. Students were encouraged to explore ideas, boost knowledge of new subject matters, employ creative approaches, support the development of thinking and verbal communication abilities, increase teamwork in groups, and increase student involvement in decision-making during small group discussions. That statement was supported by Djamarah in Simamora et al. (2017), who stated that the small group discussion technique is a learning method that can facilitate the students in improving their reading comprehension.

In addition, utilizing the Small Group Discussion technique could improve students' reading comprehension abilities. Likewise, implementing small group discussions could assist students in comprehending a text easily and also make students actively involved in the classroom atmosphere. That statement was supported by Fibrina (2012), who stated that small groups can facilitate the students to involve actively and become the main form of teamwork when reading is a means of learning. Therefore, she said this strategy was appropriate for increasing the student's reading ability to comprehend the text. According to the explanation above, the researchers inferred that using small group discussions throughout teaching and learning activities could increase the student's reading comprehension in tenth-grade students of BDP at SMK N 9 Bandar Lampung.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The researcher drew inferencing based on the research result at tenth-grade BDP of SMK N 9 Bandar Lampung, afterward conducting classroom action research. The researchers ended

up at the conclusion that small-group discussions can enhance students' reading comprehension and students' learning activities.

Based on student learning outcomes in this research, the score of students learning activity in cycle 1 obtained a mean score of 6.38, classified as quite active, whereas cycle 2 had a score of 7.61, which is active. This indicates that there were certain improvements in the students' learning activity. It could be inferred that the student learning activity in cycle 1 and cycle 2 was 1.23 points. According to the outcomes of students' reading tests, the average score of reading tests in cycle 1 was 62, with 14 students, or 42% of the students succeeding in exceeding the MCC. Meanwhile, in the second cycle was obtained a mean score of 82, with 27 students, or 82% of the students succeeding in exceeding the MCC. As an outcome, it might be proposed that the students' reading comprehension increased by 20 points, indicating that their reading comprehension improved significantly.

According to the above explanation, implementing small group discussions on the tenth-grade BDP of SMK N 9 Bandar Lampung in 2022/2023 could increase the student's learning activities and reading comprehension.

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