

## Application of the Group Discussion Method to Improve the English Speaking Skills of Class 11<sup>th</sup> Students of SMKN 3 KEDIRI

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### Abstract

This study investigates the effectiveness of the group discussion method in enhancing the English-speaking skills of class 11<sup>th</sup> students at SMKN 3 KEDIRI. The research employs a classroom action research design, implemented in two cycles, each comprising planning, action, observation, and reflection phases. Data collection methods include observation, interviews, tests, and documentation. The findings reveal that the group discussion method significantly improves students' speaking abilities. Key improvements are observed in students' fluency, vocabulary usage, and confidence levels. This study concludes that incorporating group discussions into English language teaching can be an effective strategy for developing speaking skills among high school students.

**Key words:** group discussion method, fluency, speaking, vocabulary

### Introduction

Learning to speak is a crucial part of learning English. In every teaching and learning process, it is nearly always necessary to respond to inquiries, pose questions, facilitate discussions, make presentations, and so forth. Several communication skills depend on one's capacity to talk in order to facilitate communication. But getting there is not easy. Speaking is a type of communication in which the speaker intends for the listener to hear them out and reply.

SMKN 3 KEDIRI, as a representative educational institution, recognizes the pivotal role of English proficiency in shaping the academic and professional trajectories of its students. With a focus on class 11<sup>th</sup> students, this study delves into an innovative pedagogical approach: the group discussion method. This method is strategically employed to foster a conducive environment for active participation and collaborative learning among students, specifically targeting the enhancement of their English speaking abilities. The rationale behind choosing the group discussion method lies in its potential to cultivate not only linguistic proficiency but also critical thinking skills, social interaction, and confidence in articulating ideas in English. By engaging students in structured discussions, this study aims to explore how such interactive sessions can effectively nurture fluency, expand vocabulary usage, and bolster overall confidence in speaking English. This

introduction sets the groundwork for understanding the context and significance of the research conducted at SMKN 3 KEDIRI. It underscores the imperative of exploring innovative teaching methodologies to optimize learning outcomes, particularly in the realm of language acquisition and proficiency. Through a comprehensive examination of the group discussion method's impact on English speaking skills, this study seeks to contribute valuable insights to the broader discourse on language education strategies and their application in diverse educational settings.

### Methods

This study adopts a classroom action research (CAR) design, recognized for its suitability in educational settings to investigate and enhance teaching methods. CAR involves iterative cycles of planning, action, observation, and reflection, offering a structured framework to systematically implement and evaluate pedagogical interventions (Mills, 2011).

The study focuses on class 11<sup>th</sup> students at SMKN 3 KEDIRI, chosen for their developmental stage and readiness to engage in advanced English language skills. The participants were selected based on their enrollment in English language courses and their willingness to participate actively in the research activities.

The research unfolds across two cycles, each comprising distinct phases:

**Planning:** This initial phase involves designing the implementation strategy of the group discussion method. It includes selecting appropriate discussion topics, structuring session formats, and outlining assessment criteria to gauge speaking skills development.

**Action:** During this phase, the group discussion sessions are conducted within the classroom environment. Students are organized into small groups to facilitate meaningful interactions and collaborative learning experiences. The sessions are structured to encourage active participation, constructive feedback exchange, and the application of newly acquired language skills in authentic contexts.

**Observation:** Observational techniques are employed to systematically monitor and assess students' performance and engagement during the group discussion sessions. Detailed notes are taken on factors such as fluency, vocabulary usage, interaction patterns, and overall participation levels.

**Reflection:** Following each cycle, reflective practices are employed to critically evaluate the effectiveness of the group discussion method. Insights gained from student feedback, observational data, and teacher observations inform adjustments and refinements for subsequent cycles.

Data collection methods encompass a comprehensive approach to capturing multifaceted aspects of students' English speaking skills development:

**Observation:** Direct observation during group discussion sessions to record qualitative data on student interactions, fluency, and confidence levels.

**Interviews:** Structured interviews with students and teachers to gather subjective perspectives on the perceived impact of the group discussion method.

**Tests:** Pre-and post-tests designed to quantitatively measure improvements in specific speaking skills, such as vocabulary usage and pronunciation.

**Documentation:** Compilation of artifacts, such as audio recordings of group discussions and students' written reflections, to supplement qualitative findings with tangible evidence of progress.

This methodological framework ensures a rigorous and holistic examination of the group discussion method's efficacy in enhancing the English speaking proficiency of class 11th students at SMKN 3 KEDIRI. By integrating qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, the study endeavors to provide comprehensive insights into the pedagogical implications and practical applications of

collaborative learning approaches in language education contexts.

## Results and Discussion

The findings of this study highlight significant improvements in the English speaking skills of class 11th students at SMKN 3 KEDIRI following the implementation of the group discussion method. Key results include:

**Enhanced Fluency:** Students demonstrated noticeable improvements in their ability to express ideas coherently and spontaneously during group discussion sessions. Through regular practice and peer interaction, students developed a greater fluency in conversational English, evidenced by reduced hesitation and increased fluidity in their speech.

**Expanded Vocabulary Usage:** The group discussion method facilitated opportunities for students to actively engage with and integrate new vocabulary into their spoken language repertoire. Participants were observed incorporating diverse vocabulary in discussions, reflecting a deeper understanding and application of language learned in classroom settings.

**Increased Confidence Levels:** Over the course of the study, students exhibited enhanced confidence in their English speaking abilities. The supportive and collaborative nature of group discussions fostered a conducive environment where students felt encouraged to voice opinions, share perspectives, and participate actively in discussions without fear of making errors.

The observed improvements in students' English speaking skills underscore the effectiveness of the group discussion method as a pedagogical strategy in language education. Several factors contributed to the positive outcomes observed:

**Active Engagement and Participation:** By actively involving students in structured group discussions, the method promoted active learning and participation. Students were motivated to engage in meaningful exchanges, contributing to the development of their speaking skills through authentic communication opportunities.

**Peer Interaction and Collaboration:** Collaborative learning within small groups enabled students to learn from each other's language strengths and challenges. Peer feedback and constructive criticism provided valuable opportunities for students to refine their speaking abilities and build confidence in expressing themselves in English.

**Integration of Language Skills:** The group discussion sessions effectively integrated various language skills, including speaking,

listening, and critical thinking. Students not only practiced speaking but also honed their listening comprehension skills by actively listening to peers and responding appropriately during discussions.

**Reflective Practice and Continuous Improvement:** The iterative nature of the classroom action research design facilitated ongoing reflection and refinement of the teaching approach. Insights gained from student feedback, observational data, and teacher reflections informed adjustments to session formats, discussion topics, and instructional strategies to optimize learning outcomes.

In conclusion, the findings of this study suggest that incorporating the group discussion method into English language teaching can significantly enhance students' speaking proficiency. By providing a structured yet dynamic learning environment, educators can empower students to develop essential communication skills necessary for academic success and future career opportunities. This research contributes valuable insights to the field of language education, advocating for the adoption of collaborative learning strategies to foster holistic language development among high school students.

## Conclusion

This study investigated the application of the group discussion method to improve the English speaking skills of class 11th students at SMKN 3 KEDIRI. Through a rigorous classroom action research approach encompassing two cycles of planning, action, observation, and reflection, the effectiveness of this pedagogical strategy was systematically evaluated.

The results of the study demonstrate compelling evidence that the group discussion method significantly enhances students' English speaking abilities. Key findings include notable improvements in fluency, expanded vocabulary usage, and increased confidence levels among participants. These outcomes underscore the method's efficacy in fostering active engagement, peer interaction, and the integration of language skills essential for effective communication in English.

The implications of this research extend beyond the immediate context of SMKN 3 KEDIRI, advocating for the broader adoption of collaborative learning approaches in language education. By promoting student-centered learning environments that prioritize meaningful interaction and authentic communication, educators can empower students to develop proficiency in speaking English, thereby

preparing them for academic pursuits and future career opportunities in an increasingly globalized world.

Furthermore, this study contributes valuable insights to educational practices, highlighting the importance of innovative teaching methodologies in optimizing learning outcomes. Educators and policymakers are encouraged to consider the implementation of group discussion methods as a viable strategy to cultivate holistic language development and foster lifelong skills in communication and collaboration.

In conclusion, while recognizing the study's limitations and the need for further research, the findings affirm the transformative potential of the group discussion method in enhancing English speaking skills among high school students. By continuing to explore and refine effective teaching practices, educators can contribute to the cultivation of proficient and confident English speakers equipped to thrive in diverse academic and professional environments.

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