Articles

Small-Group Discussion in Actual ELT Speaking Classes of Minangkabau Context

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A B S T R A C T

Finding out aspects of learning in small group discussions that matched with the Indonesian Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) and aspects of local cultures that contradict small group discussion excellence is the purpose of this research. The method of this research is qualitative. Researchers use document analysis by collecting documents from various sources such as journals and articles, which are following the research that the researcher will do. The results of this research show that the implementation of HOTS instruction in teaching speaking skills investigated from students' small group discussions will be advantageous and beneficial. In essence, HOTS instructions give a positive effect on students speaking skills significantly.

I. INTRODUCTION

Implementing HOTS in teaching English is mandatory in Indonesia. The purpose of implementing HOTS is to allow students to perform analysis, evaluation, and creation on their knowledge (Newman, 1990; Zohar et al, 2001; Keshta and Seif, 2013; Antoni, 2014; Faravani and Atai, 2015; Eisenman and Payne, 2016; Nguyễn and Nguyễn, 2017; Ariyana et al., 2018). Theoretically, English teachers are encouraged to develop the HOTS in their teaching performance. HOTS itself is defined as a certain way of thinking that involves knowledge application, reflection examination, decision preference, solution-oriented act, and new things formulation in the sense of teaching and learning, (Seman et al., 2017).

English teachers are ought to develop the HOTS approach toward the students. HOTS helped the students to be adaptable toward new learning circumstances Heong et al., 2011. Additionally, HOTS is situated as the highest level of the cognitive taxonomy as proposed by Bloom (Brookhart, 2010). The ability to implement and develop new skills within the process of learning a new topic is one purpose of HOTS as a system. There are five stages to adjust the critical ability to think: 1) deciding the learning goals of reading class; 2) teaching through questioning; 3) requesting students to practice; 4) reviewing refining and improving the current understanding; 5) performing feedback and learning assessment. The five stages should be integrated to boost critical thinking (Limbach & Waugh, 2010).

In the context of EFL English, four language skills need to be mastered. The skills are categorized into: a) receptive skills; b) productive skills. The former skill is reading and listening; meanwhile, the latter skills are writing and speaking. Speaking skill needs further attention from English teachers. It relates to communication competence in English. Communication happens between people because of the need to share information that has facts, opinions, ideas, instruction, and the like). Class-based communication activity has the purpose to engage learners to use the language they are learning to interact in actual and meaningful ways. Typically, it involves information or opinion exchange. Speaking skill is regarded as an active skill because it demands learners to concentrate on achieving the communication activity.

In this research, the researchers chose the Small Group Discussion technique, which was later on

called SGD in this article, to promote the learners' performance and competence in oral English presentation. We assumed that the SGD technique triggers further involvement from the students' side compared to other techniques in teaching speaking. The SGD technique can reach the communicative activity because it highlights two needs of language learning 1) preparing learners with real-life language use; 2) encouraging the learners to actualize their knowledge of the language. The SGD technique provides wider opportunities for learners in terms of practicing their oral English presentation skill because, comparatively, a small group members make the presenter feels more confident in explaining the topics in comparison to a big group discussion.

Speaking is an active and interactive activity to mentally and vocally recreate the word and try to understand the content of the communication. We use language to communicate every day. In other words, language is crucial for social interaction to happen. The interaction exchange process possibly happens between two persons, at least, who have interactions, experiences, and knowledge that are different socially.

One of the ways to have social interaction is by conducting the SGD technique discussion in the classroom. In this research, we situated students into three people that had a different experience and social interaction in their environment. Then, we gave a topic for speaking and they understand the topic, eventually, they can collaborate to comprehend the topic with a calm attitude.

As has been mentioned earlier, the purpose of this research is to describe the SGD technique in an English-speaking classroom within the EFL English situation. We planned to describe the application of the SGD technique in the speaking class of English language teaching.

The problem of this research is formulated in these following questions:

1. What aspects of learning in small group discussions are matched with the Indonesian Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)?

2. What aspects of local cultures contradict small group discussion excellence?

Considering the background and formulation, this research aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1) To find out what aspects of learning in small group discussion matched with the Indonesian Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS); 2) To find out what aspects of local cultures contradict with small group discussion excellence.

The researcher hopes to give the result of this study as some theoretical and practical and theoretical. Theoretically, this study provides benefits as a general referential knowledge of the way to describe aspects of learning in small group discussion that matched with the Indonesian Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). In terms of the researchers, this research can provide an opportunity in developing our knowledge and skill in describing aspects of learning in the SGD technique discussion that is in line with the Indonesian Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) and aspects of local cultures that contradict with the SGD technique excellence. In terms of the English teachers, this study can be helpful as information in selecting aspects of learning in the SGD technique that is in line with the Indonesian Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) and aspects of local cultures that contradict with small group discussion excellence. Furthermore, this research can be considered as a reference and general knowledge about the next research that relates to the SGD discussion technique in current teaching of the English language, especially in speaking class.

II. METHODS

The method of this research is qualitative. The qualitative research was relevant for exploring the process of understanding a current group or an emerging phenomenon. The outcome of such explorations is in the form of new theories. The unique thing about qualitative research is that it can help the researchers to find out answers to issues or questions and concerns that might not be answerable within the notion of the quantitative method.

Qualitative research focuses on the understanding of the concept of the research. Collecting the data is relevant in doing the research, it is used to conceptualize the method, material, and interpretation of the research (Flick, 2009). In this research, the researcher starts his analysis by using a checklist and data classification.

In this study, there are two variables: 1) learning

outcomes; 2) the student-centered learning method based on the SGD technique.

The subject of the research is aspects of learning of small group discussion are matched with the Indonesian higher-order thinking skill and aspects of local culture contradict with small group discussion excellence. In qualitative research, a researcher can use observation, interviews, or document analysis as instruments (Ary, 2010). The researcher uses document analysis as his instrument.

In this research, we used the documentation method in collecting data. Documentation technique is one of the techniques in finding data about things or variables that can be found in media like notes, books, transcripts, newspapers, magazines, agendas, and others (Arikunto, 2006: 231). Researchers use document analysis by collecting documents from various sources such as journals and articles, which are following the research that the researcher will do.

Three stages must be completed in analyzing qualitative research data, such as (1) data reduction ; (2) data exposure; (3) conclusion verification (Miles & Huberman, 1992).

Data Validation

Before the data is analyzed, first the validity and researchers take some results from research from other studies to the Student-Centered Learning method based on Small Group Discussion in the accuracy and stability or reliability of the instruments in this study and several journals related to local culture, specifically Minangkabau.

In terms of conducting this analytical research, the researcher used secondary data from the students' thesis which can be a reference or guide for the researchers. The first is Roni La'riban, a student from the Indonesian Christian University Toraja, who researches at SMPN 2 Saluputti in Tana Toraja. The second data are taken from the thesis of Sovenda Septa Hastoyo from the University of Sebelas Maret Surakarta, who researched at MI al Islam Grobagan, Surakarta.

From Roni La'riban's research, the result of the finding showed that there was a different percentage in pretest and post-test of the students' ability in speaking for the eighth year students of SMPN 2 Saluputti. In the pretest, there were 16 or 100% students classified as "very poor" score, and in the post-test, there were 2 students or 13% of the sample classified as very good in the post-test. There were 9 students or 56% of the sample classified as good. There were 4 students or 25% of the sample classified as fair. There was only 1 student or 6% of the sample classified as poor. The mean score of the students in the pre-test was 22.8 and the post-test was 78.2. The gain score was 55. 3 (78.2> 22.8). It shows that the mean score of the post-test is greater than the pretest.

From the data, it can be stated that using the SGD technique can improve students' speaking ability for the eighth-year students of SMPN 2 Saluputti. "The use of a small group discussion teaching strategy gives the students a lot of benefits, such as they have much opportunity to speak or express their ideas." (La'biran, 2017).

SGD technique can indeed improve students' speaking competence (Hastoyo, 2010). Further more, Orlich et.al (1985) mentioned there three reasons, including increasing classroom interaction, promote personal interaction, and increasing independent learning. The authors found that several aspects of the small group discussion match higher-order ranking skills. First, student-centered, in this case, students become the center of learning. Students are required to find and get learning materials. Second, the form is discussed in a limited group. After students read and understand the material students are asked to discuss it in groups. The groups can be formed in pairs or 3-4 students. Third, it is the purposed discussion. The discussion that occurs between students is a discussion that has the aim of achieving broader information and perspectives.

In this case, there are several aspects of the SGD technique that are compatible with higher-order thinking skills. First, it is the student-centered matches with higher-order thinking skills. In terms of student activity, it is more pointed out than the teacher. In higher-order, thinking skills students are required to have advanced reasoning and conclude the results of their reasoning. The second aspect of the discussion in a limited group is also under higher-order thinking skills in terms of argumentation skills because in discussions students can express their opinions based on their reasoning. The third is the purposed of discussion

in terms of the ability to make decisions about something. After students get a conclusion about the things they are discussing, students are required to apply it in the form of action.

Table 1. Aspect Small Group Discussion are matched with HOTS

Aspects of the SGD Technique	Higher-Order Thinking Skill
Student-centered	Students are more active and do their reasoning
Discussion in a limited group	Ability to argue in groups
Purposed of discussion	Decision-making ability

III. RESULTS

The Aspect of Local Culture Contradicted with the Small Group Discussion

The democratic system of the Minangkabau people is marked by the custom of deliberation to reach an agreement or consensus this has been around for a long time, remembering many archaeological remains associated with these activities. The mention of *Kursi Salapan* (eight seats) or *Medan nan Bapaneh* (a field place hot/open space) itself is associated with the customs of the Minangkabau people in their social life. Everything related to the interests of the community is decided by deliberation. The discussion was possibly already known by the Minangkabau community when they were still living with megalithic culture. As is known, the megalithic culture developed in society has lived a sedentary life. Sedentary life marks the development of life social development, as well as the development of the social strata of society.

The construction of megalithic buildings and the holding of traditional ceremonies, for example, are not only done by working together with the possibility of also being discussed in deliberations by members of the people. An indication of the existence of places that indicate deliberation as well mentioned in Tambo, the old manuscript of the Minangkabau people. Among them mention that after traveling across the sea, finally, the King of Kings appeared as a king around Lagundi nan Baselo, the name of a field on the slopes of Mount Marapi, also where the leaders sit in meetings (Nopriyasman, 2008: 122).

This explains that in a place that is spacious and open, deliberation has existed before the entry of Hindu-Buddhist teachings. In general *Kurisi Salapan* or *Medan nan Bapaneh* is located in a different place that tends to be spacious. This spacious location is then possible to implement court in the vicinity, so that then society connects the function of the throne the stone throne for the congregation. Physically, the stone throne cannot be connected directly as a place to gather or meet, but used the location where the stone throne is located is based more on the idea that the place has magical value. The use of a wide and open area as a place for deliberation to take place until the time of Hindu-Buddhist development in the Minangkabau realm. Inside the Tambo too mentioned when the government of Datuk Suri Dirajo, founded Balai nan Saruang with the roofed sky, walled with wind, and floor of stone. The hall is the place consensus on royal officials (Nopriyasman, 2008:123).

Selection in a large area and openness are intended so that decisions are taken by the ruler can be heard directly by the public. The use of a wide and spacious area is also known by the Minangkabau community now. Activities that involve community members are carried out on the spot. In the Minang realm, there is a center of activity called *pemedanan* and arena. *Pemedanan* is a large field located outside the village, used to resolve disputes between individuals, between clans, and between Nagari that are not probably completed the respective headers. The arena is used as a place for folk games and competitions (Navis, 1984:189).

The life of deliberation then developed until later times, namely Islamic and Colonial times. Increasingly complex community life also causes many problems in society that must be decided through deliberation. When life is increasingly complex society then entrusts affairs to the headman as the leader. It is these traditional leaders or stakeholders who then convened to discuss various matters such as village government affairs, resolve and try cases, and others.

One of the special features of the Minangkabau community is the *nan sakato* community. Inside forming a *nan sakato* society four elements must be adhered to by each member of society, namely (Amir, 2003:111–115):

a. *Saiyo sakato*, differences of opinion between individuals are recognized in community life but sought a way out with deliberation for consensus. Results can be round (acclamation), but can also be flat or blind (via voting). Anyway, the decision process is taken, if there is a consensus then the decision must be implemented by all parties.

b. *Sahino samalu*, tribal group life is very close. The intimacy of deep relationship this group of tribes makes individual self-esteem melt into one self-esteem tribal groups

c. *Anggo tanggo*, created an orderly and disciplined association in society. Every member of society is required to abide by the rules and laws as well as disregard the guidelines and instructions given by the customary authorities

d. *Sapikue Sajinjiang*, in a communal society, all tasks become a responsibility together. The nature of gotong-royong is a must. Help and support each other is an obligation.

These four elements, if applied properly, can fulfill the purpose of living in a peaceful, peaceful, prosperous, and blessed society. Apart from that, the Minangkabau community in its cultural system also applies democratic values marked by tradition deliberate to reach a consensus in solving existing problems.

At this point, the researcher found that local culture and small group discussion are closely connected because Minangkabau culture is very egalitarian; thus, having criticism in conversation is not seen as a problem and it is open to new elements such as the SGD.

In Minangkabau, the principle of deliberation applies in reaching an agreement. Deliberation is necessary because truth does not come from individuals but a collection of individuals in a group. The Minangkabau community is known as a religious and hard-working community; and upholds cultural customs, as well as lives in harmony with nature. In addition, it also applies the concept of a safe and peaceful life. Another special feature is the *Sakato* community. *Sakato* means "even", agree, and agree. Four elements must be followed by every member of society to be able to form a society and *sakato*, namely: *saiyo*

is clearer than the position of leader/chief is also more important because at hand those leaders are various problems solved and solutions are sought.

Decisions that have gone through stages of deliberation to obtain consensus are the real truth. That decision is a unanimous decision and fully supported by all individuals participating in the deliberation. Deliberation is an element of democracy modern culture has long been cultured in society Minang. We can see to this day in every nagari or villages addda balai balai as ninik mamak pemangku traditional meeting place (Kasim, 1995).

The tradition of deliberation to reach a consensus has existed since ancient times, even long before Islam entered the Minangkabau region. Democratic values contained in the Minangkabau customary system have been going on for a long time, meaning far away before Indonesian independence, the Minangkabau people practiced democratic values. Various archaeological remains, old manuscripts, and traditions to this day illustrate that the Minangkabau community in completing various problems that occur in social life tends to prioritize the method of deliberation.

Differences of opinion in the deliberation process are highly valued because differences in opinion will enrich the decision. Recognizing principles differences of opinion and deliberation is always the essence of democratic values being grown. The nature of openness in deliberation activities is indicated by the selection of deliberation locations that tend to be open, and also in the form of a traditional hall building which is deliberately made without walls, doors, and windows. The public trusts the leader to solve the various problems at hand, but the way is that there is no secret deliberation or trial so that it can be heard by the general public. Although there are differences in the shape of the traditional hall building, or there is a difference in the position of the rulers, the two alignments are fixed prioritizing the deliberation system to reach consensus. Democratic values are have become a tradition in the life of the Minangkabau people, apart from being the wrong form of local wisdom in social life, can also inspire progress democratic life in Indonesia.

Therefore, in Minangkabau small group discussions can be used very well because Minangkabau

has democratic customs, which always hold deliberations in large or small groups to solve problems.

IV. DISCUSSION

Local Culture (Minangkabau) in the Small Group Discussion (SGD)

The tradition of deliberation to reach a consensus has existed since ancient times, even long before Islam entered the Minangkabau region. Democratic values contained in the Minangkabau customary system had existed until today since a long time ago, even far away before Indonesian independence, the Minangkabau people practiced democratic values. Various archaeological remains, old manuscripts, and traditions to this day illustrate that the Minangkabau community in completing various problems that occur in social life tends to prioritize the method of deliberation.

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Table 2. Characteristic of Cooperative Learning In Small Group Discussion and Cultural Characteristics of Deliberation in Minangkabau

Characteristic of Cooperative Learning in Small Group Discussion	Cultural Characteristics of Deliberation in Minangkabau
Positive interdependence	*Saiyo sakato*
Individual and group accountability	*Sahino samalu*
Interpersonal and small group skills	*Anggo tango*
Face-to-face promotive interaction	*Sapikue Sajinjiang*
Group processing	

In the discussion above that the characteristics of the small group discussion, especially cooperative learning, are very suitable for the characteristics of deliberation in Minangkabau culture.

The characteristics of *Saiyo Sakato* are very compatible with positive independence and group processing because in the discussion what is sought is the result and consensus, and interdependence with each other to solve problems. Group members need to feel free to communicate openly with each other to express concerns and celebrate achievements.

While *Anggo Tanggo* also relates to Individual and group accountability because the Group is responsible for achieving its goals and each member must be responsible for making a fair contribution from his work to achieve group goals. Likewise, each member is required to comply with the rules and invite and heed the guidelines and instructions given.

For next characteristic, *sapikue sajinjiang* is also suitable for face-to-face promotive interaction because in *sapikue sajinjiang* there is an element of *'gotong royong',* helping and supporting each other is an obligation as well as Face-to-face promotive interaction. They help, support, encourage, and applaud each other's efforts to learn. Academic and personal supports are part of this common goal.

However, there is one characteristic in the deliberation in Minangkabau that does not match the characteristics of cooperative learning, namely *Sahino Samalu*, because in Minangkabau the closeness of the relationship is very close while in cooperative learning sometimes we have individuality problems with group-mate.

V. CONCLUSION

The point to be made in this article is that decision-making in the Minangkabau community is performed by implementing deliberation and consensus and in-process decision making is led by *Mamak, penghulu.* As such, in the Minangkabau context, as it relates to the actual ELT speaking classes of Indonesian EFL English, the Small Group Discussion technique is worthy application. The reason is that no elements of Minangkabau culture that are against the advantages of the SGD technique. Briefly, almost all of the characteristics of the SGD technique match with the Minangkabau culture of deliberation.

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