



# Students' Opinion on English Group Discussion to Improve Collaboration Skill

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## ABSTRAK

*Keterampilan kolaborasi merupakan salah satu keterampilan yang ditekankan dalam pembelajaran abad 21, dimana siswa dituntut untuk dapat bekerja sama dengan baik dalam menghadapi dan mengatasi permasalahan yang muncul dalam pembelajaran, termasuk dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. Keterampilan kolaborasi dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris memungkinkan siswa untuk dapat bekerja sama membantu mengatasi masalah yang dihadapi ketika belajar bahasa Inggris. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pendapat siswa tentang diskusi kelompok bahasa Inggris untuk meningkatkan keterampilan kolaborasi dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah kualitatif melalui pendekatan deskriptif. Sampel yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini terdiri dari 36 siswa yang sedang belajar bahasa Inggris. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi dan wawancara untuk mengetahui persepsi siswa terhadap keefektifan metode diskusi kelompok bahasa Inggris dalam meningkatkan keterampilan kolaborasi. Setelah data terkumpul, kemudian dianalisis melalui tiga tahap yaitu reduksi data, display data, dan penarikan kesimpulan data. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sebagian siswa memiliki minat yang baik dan positif dalam meningkatkan keterampilan kerjasama dengan menggunakan metode diskusi kelompok bahasa Inggris. Bahkan, siswa cenderung dapat mengerjakan tugas bahasa Inggris dengan sebaik-baiknya dengan berkolaborasi dan belajar bersama, sehingga meningkatkan prestasi bahasa Inggris. Kesimpulannya, melalui pembelajaran diskusi kelompok mampu meningkatkan keterampilan kolaborasi dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris dan mampu menciptakan siswa yang lebih toleran, saling menghargai dan bertanggung jawab.*

## ABSTRACT

Collaboration skills are one of the skills that are emphasized in 21st century learning, where students are asked to be able to cooperate well in facing and overcoming problems that arise in learning, including when learning English. Collaboration skills in learning English enable students to be able to work together to help overcome problems encountered when learning English. Therefore, this study aims to find out students' opinions on English group discussions to improve collaboration skills in learning English. The method used in this research is qualitative through a descriptive approach. The sample used in this study consisted of 36 students who were learning English. Data was collected through observation and interviews to determine students' perceptions of the English group discussion method's effectiveness in improving collaboration skills. After the data is collected, it is analyzed through three stages: data reduction, data display, and data conclusion. The results showed that some students had a good and positive interest in increasing collaboration skills using the English group discussion method. In fact, students tend to be able to do their best work on English assignments by collaborating and studying together, resulting in an increase in English achievement. In conclusion, through group discussion learning it is able to increase collaboration skills in learning English and is able to create students who are more tolerant, respectful and responsible.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Learning English is a slightly difficult activity for some students. This is because English is not a second language or a language that is often spoken by most people in Indonesia. English is mostly used as a foreign language, where its use is very limited for certain purposes and in certain situations. Because of that, many Indonesians have low mastery of English, even though mastery of English as an international language has a very important role in being able to establish international interactions and certainly be able to build broad relations globally. Widyastuti (2022) said that understanding English critically can have a good impact on improving higher-order thinking skills. In addition, even though English in Indonesia is categorized as a foreign language, in everyday life we are often faced with the emergence of the use of English, for example, in the technology used, on social media, and in the products we use, there are also terms or words that use the Indonesian language. Actually, English is not a foreign thing in the life of

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Indonesian people because, basically, this language often appears in daily activities. The use of English is not a new thing in the life of Indonesian people because there are almost many English equivalents used in Indonesian (Prayudha, 2023). Given the importance of English in understanding a message, it really needs good learning for students in Indonesia. If someone does not have good English skills, it will be difficult to understand the meaning and intent of the message conveyed in the sentence. Therefore, it is very necessary to provide good teaching to students regarding the mastery of understanding English so that these students can understand and properly use afterbeat in interpreting a message or constructing an utterance using that language.

In learning English situations in class, it is very common to find students with a low understanding of English; sometimes there are even students who do not have good English comprehension skills at all, even though learning English has started to be taught starting from the lowest level, namely elementary school (but there are also those from kindergarten), their mastery and understanding are very low. Prayudha (2023) added that many students still experience problems learning English; this is evidenced by the low scores students get when learning English. This needs to be a big consideration for all English teachers to provide appropriate learning management so that students are able to move and have a good understanding of English. If it is not immediately addressed and given a solution related to this problem, students will continue to be stuck in situations where they cannot improve their English proficiency. Teachers need to think about solutions to problems that occur during learning (Arsyad et al., 2021). It is very necessary for English teachers to determine and find appropriate language teaching solutions in accordance with the conditions and characteristics of students so that when learning is carried out, it will have a good influence on increasing their scientific mastery of English.

Here, the teacher's role as the key role in the class is to be able to determine the right teaching that suits the interests and learning styles of students so that they can follow the learning process properly and minimize the obstacles that occur during learning. Prayudha (2023) in his research that teachers can use a variety of interesting learning methods and media to attract student interest and create a fun learning environment. If a teacher can build a learning atmosphere that is in accordance with the conditions of students, they will also provide good feedback while participating in learning. Teachers have good competence in building and determining appropriate learning, and which can increase students' interest in participating in class learning, so the teacher's role is very useful in developing good learning for students. Teachers can take advantage of various learning resources, media, strategies, and methods that can build student interest in learning so that students can achieve the learning objectives provided by the teacher. On the other hand, 21st century learning emphasizes students' ability to develop competencies that are in line with current developments. These competencies are commonly referred to as 4C skills. These abilities are skills that must be mastered by students in 21<sup>st</sup>- century learning. The 4C capabilities include critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration. In learning English, students must be able to build good communication that can be received, understood, and understood by listeners in order to understand the meaning of the utterances delivered. Gusta, Christina, & Zakirman (2020) said that good collaboration skills can increase the sense of solving problems that are more serious and precise. Apart from that, in learning languages, especially foreign languages that are rarely used in everyday life, there is a need for continuous habituation learning to be carried out so that these language skills can improve properly so that they can be use with the right intention in building a sentence that has a good meaning. This learning can be carried out by means of collaborative learning in solving a problem; in this case, learning English can be carried out jointly to support the implementation of activities to speak English well. Collaboration in learning English is also very necessary to solve problems and assist in overcoming them. Sari, Prasetyo, & Wibowo (2017) added that having good collaboration skills can form good student characteristics in finding solutions to a task. Collaborative skills will also train students to work together in solving problems more easily (Rosadi et al., 2020). By carrying out good collaboration on learning issues faced by students, this will form a good enthusiasm for learning in order to improve good English language skills as well. Therefore, it is necessary for teachers to make learning English cooperative or group-based to improve students' understanding and use of English.

In the implementation of learning in class, collaborative activities carried out by students also vary; students usually carry out learning through question –and- answer activities, discussions, or groups solving a problem. One way to improve collaboration skills is through discussion (Jung et al., 2019) Learning activities that encourage students to be able to exchange ideas, opinions, and creativity in learning English can be categorized as collaborative learning. Students can also work together on an assignment or project given by the teacher to support problem solving in learning English This kind of thing is very useful so that students can provide their ideas and opinions in overcoming the problems they face while learning English. In addition, an English teacher also really needs to form learning activities that can provoke students to cooperate in solving a problem so that while they are learning English, they can also improve their

collaboration skills. Many problems experienced by students can be overcome with more comprehensive learning, one of which is discussion (Prayudha 2023). This collaborative learning aims to allow students to solve a problem together with the principle of deliberation in determining ideas and solutions to what they face. This collaborative learning can also increase the value of caring, solidarity, and mutual respect among students, so that when they are able to work well together, they will use their creative ideas together to overcome a problem.

Therefore, this study aims to examine students' opinions on the application of the English group discussion strategy in improving collaboration skills in learning English. By knowing how students work together to overcome a problem, the teacher can determine what kind of learning should be done in order to improve students' English skills. Teachers need to determine appropriate media and teaching strategies to be able to develop students' abilities, including collaboration (Ainun et al., 2020). In addition, knowing students' perceptions of learning English through English group discussions can also provide an overview of students' sense of cooperation in overcoming a problem so that teachers can further improve collaboration-based learning so that students can improve their English communication skills.

## 2. METHODS

This study uses a type of qualitative research by examining students' opinions and perspectives on improving collaboration skills through learning English through group discussions. English learning is carried out by forming small student study groups where students will jointly carry out projects or make assignments given by the English teacher in order to improve collaboration skills when learning English. Qualitative research is very useful to be able to find out data in the form of perspectives, opinions about the object under study. Cresswell (2013) said that in qualitative research, researchers can study phenomena in the form of opinions, or perspectives from the object studied. Therefore, in this study, the data collected and studied were in the form of students' perspectives and opinions when learning English through the group discussion method to improve collaboration skills. The approach used in this research is a descriptive approach. According to Sugiyono (2014) a descriptive approach can be used to explain in detail what is being studied in the research. The descriptive approach was chosen because it is useful to be able to describe and explain the data in the form of opinions and perspectives in a narrative form that can be understood by readers.

This research was conducted for two months by providing English teaching through the small group discussion method to increase students' collaboration skills and overcome problems that occur during learning. The participants in this research was 36 students who learn English at school. The assignments given to students can be in the form of group assignments for making projects, solving problems, practical critical thinking, and exploring their understanding of the material. Participants in this study were 25 students who were learning English. Data were obtained through learning observations and interviews related to students' opinions and perceptions when learning to use group discussions to improve collaboration skills. After the data is collected, it is analyzed through the three stages proposed by Miles, Huberman, & Saldana (2013) they are data reduction, data display, and data conclusion.

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Learning English by applying the group discussion method is used so that students can develop collaboration skills and overcome the problems they face when learning English in class. This learning activity is intended so that students can show good cooperation in determining solutions and can develop ideas and creative thinking in solving learning problems. During the observations that were made before the students used the group discussion method, it showed that the students' ability to improve their English proficiency was very low. There are still many students who have low abilities when learning foreign languages (Fahmi et al., 2021). The majority of students, when asked to come to the front of the class and explain something in English, were considered not very good. This could be due to low English skills, a lack of self-confidence, a fear of conveying something, or a lack of encouragement, interest, and motivation to learn, which tend to make it difficult for students to develop their English skills. Therefore, in situations like this, the teacher uses the group discussion method with the intention that students can collectively improve and find solutions to overcome the problems they face.

The group discussion method is one way that teachers can get students involved together in overcoming the problems they face. Through discussion, can encourage students to think creatively (Arja et al., 2020). This group discussion is made with 4-5 students in a group where they will jointly determine and develop lesson plans for working on projects or assignments given by the teacher. Group discussions can also train students to be able to share ideas and opinions as creatively as possible in solving problems

faced by students in accordance with the learning themes or material they are studying, so that when studying, students can determine ideas, find solutions, and think critically to solve these problems.

Then, after the students were given taught through group discussions, it showed positive results in developing their English language skills. Students tend to be able to respect the opinions and ideas of their group mates and maintain an attitude of tolerance when sharing information or explaining the ideas they have in a group. Students are also very open to suggestions and input from other students when learning English. On the other hand, by improving language skills, students tend to be more confident in working in groups (Hussin et al., 2020). Students are also able to practice together constructing sentences and project plans given by their teacher. Learning through English group discussions provides opportunities for students to practice collaboration skills in finding solutions and solving learning problems encountered in language classes. Students can carry out learning English through the exchange of ideas, opinions related to how they work on projects and assignments and answer questions given by the teacher when studying, so that students are able to jointly develop their potential to work on assignments or projects given with full mutual cooperation or collaboration.

The purpose of collaborative learning is to be able to provide opportunities for all students to closer and more able to appreciate the opinions, input, and ideas given by other friends so that when the implementation of English learning can be followed properly and students can also practice together, they will improve their ability to communicate in English. Based on the results of observations made when students learn English through English group discussions to develop collaboration skills, it shows good results where students are able to jointly develop good cooperative skills, are more confident, and are able to share their ideas and opinions. In group learning, students are able to accept differences of opinion and are certain to be fair, tolerant, and accepting of differences that occur in carrying out assignments (Prayudha, 2022). Through activities that can require students to share knowledge, students will be actively involved in problem solving (Williams & Svensson, 2020). Thus, good learning in developing collaboration skills, especially in learning English, can occur when the teacher forms appropriate learning through the division of small study groups so that students can train and familiarize themselves with learning together to do assignments and complete a given English learning project.

In addition, to strengthen the observation results obtained, random interviews were given to several students related to their perceptions or opinions about the use of the English group discussion method in improving collaboration skills in learning English. The interview questions consisted of five open-ended questions where students were given the opportunity to freely convey answers according to the questions given. The results of the interview are as follows:

**What do you know about a collaboration?**

"Collaboration is the ability to work together in carrying out a task or project where each member will carry out and find solutions in carrying out the task. Collaboration is also the concept of working on a project to find solutions and be able to solve these problems together."

**What do you think about learning English through group discussions?**

"Learning English through group discussions has really helped me in increasing my understanding, especially when I can collaborate with friends in sharing information, views, and ideas about assignments given by the teacher so that I can define and carry out these assignments without confusion. Besides that, through group discussions, I can also be more encouraged or motivated to study well because my group mates tend to be very supportive of good learning, so I also have good courage when conveying a message in front of the class."

**What do you feel when learning English through group discussions in improving collaboration skills?**

"As already explained, learning English through group discussions provides an opportunity for us to be able to share ideas, opinions, and perceptions together when given an assignment or project where we can mutually respect, support, respect, and encourage group mates. We are doing the job. Learning English becomes more fun, and for sure, we are more confident when delivering a statement in front of the class, even though sometimes we still feel nervous. Then, I became more aware of the material given by the teacher when discussing it with my group mates."

**Are there any difficulties you face when learning English through group discussions in developing your collaboration skills?**

"There is. Maybe the difficulty is in making a definite decision regarding the work on a project or assignment because, when in a group, there will definitely be differences of opinion or ideas, so we must be able to

comprehensively determine the right answers in accordance with the abilities of our group. In addition, another difficulty encountered is time management, which is considered a little difficult, because in group learning there is definitely more "talking" than focusing on the task given by the teacher, so it takes a lot of time to be able to determine the right answer or solution when the time given is insufficient".

#### **Do you think the ability to collaborate is important in improving the ability to live in the current century?**

"Very important. The ability to collaborate is very important in establishing a social life. With good cooperation, we can find solutions together to overcome problems. Through collaboration, we can also share ideas, opinions, and suggestions on how we can find solutions, even innovations for the survival of society. Therefore, learning English by means of group discussion is able to improve and develop my collaboration skills well."

Learning English by utilizing the group discussion method can be an alternative for English teachers to be able to improve their ability to communicate in English while still improving students' collaboration skills in dealing with learning problems in the classroom. Interesting learning will make students more interested in carrying out their learning (Rahmi, 2019). Thus, learning through group discussions can not only improve English proficiency but also support and develop collaboration skills in learning English. Learning with the group discussion method will also foster good cooperation among students, students will also become more tolerant, trust each other, respect each other for any differences that exist in the group (Prayudha, J. & Solihah, 2023). In practice, English teachers need to emphasize activities that involve students to be able to work together to overcome learning problems so that they can encourage students to develop a good sense of caring and problem solving.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Collaboration skills are one of the skills needed in today's world. By having good collaboration skills, students can carry out a collaboration that can help them deal with a problem situation in learning. Collaboration skills can also foster the values of unity, tolerance, and mutual respect, and what is certain is that students can openly share and express their creative ideas and thoughts in determining and solving English learning problems. In this study, it is shown that learning English through the use of group discussion methods can grow and improve students' collaboration skills in dealing with English learning situations. Students can share their knowledge and competence when faced with a learning problem so that they can determine the best way to solve the problem. Furthermore, students also have positive learning experience and can become more confident when expressing opinions or speaking in front of the class. The support of group mates can also provide good motivation for growing self-confidence when explaining something in English. In addition, students are more able to appreciate the ideas and opinions of other friends when conducting deliberations to determine solutions to a problem. Thus, learning through group discussions can increase a sense of brotherhood, and support and uphold the values of respect and tolerance when expressing an opinion.

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