Small Group Discussion (SGD) Through Whatsapp Group In Teaching English For Nursing Students

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ABSTRACT

It cannot be denied that teaching English as a foreign language is very challenging because there are still many problems faces. Various responses can be found at class such as students' attitude toward learning, learning outcomes, and students' active involvement in carrying out group activities especially if it is categorized as a large class which consists of more than 30 students. Small group discussion (SGD) offers a solution in order to make students more active by interacting, exchanging information, maintaining opinion, and solving problems in a group. Meanwhile in 21st century era technological advances like social networks grow rapidly. Lately many students have accessed social media to find information and learning resources. One of social media which is popular among students and educators is WhatsApp. We can create WhatsApp group to share information and discuss the material, so it can optimize the smart phone function in education. This study aimed to observe the effectiveness of small group discussion incorporating with WhatsApp group in teaching English. The research design used was quasi experimental. Experimental class was treated by using small group discussion through WhatsApp group, while control class was taught through lecturing. The finding showed that the significance of t-count was 0.000. It was lower than 0.05. It revealed that there is significant effect on the use of small group discussion through WhatsApp group in teaching English as a foreign language. Through WhatsApp group students feel free to discuss everything, more confident and brave to express their ideas. So WhatsApp is effective to be implemented in learning process.
Keywords: *Small Group Discussion (SGD); Teaching English; WhatsApp*

INTRODUCTION

As a foreign language, there are still many problematic in teaching English. The students are commonly passive in English class due to their fear of being wrong, embarrassed, awkward, nervous, and not confident to share their ideas in mind. Moreover it is quite difficult to set and monitor a class consisting of 50 students. Besides the limited time of teaching in class and the different character of students becomes problem for teachers. It is hard to make all students feel free to speak and convey their argument especially for introvert

students. In order to achieve the competencies of expected learning outcomes quickly and efficiently, the appropriate learning method is badly needed.

Small Group Discussion (SGD) offers a solution for the problem so that students can be more actively in the learning process in which they can listen, ask questions, and discuss the material given by the lecturer/teacher. Brewer (1997: 22) defines small group discussion as a method to interchange idea or topic for discussion among participants in a group. SGD gives students the responsibility to study the material and describe its content in a small group discussion so that it can stimulate students' creativity in expressing their ideas and thought for problem solving. Ferreri & O'Connor (2013) state that small group discussion supports communication, interpersonal skills, and solving the problem. SGD offers more time for thinking and understanding the problem deeper.

While in the era of 21st century today, human life cannot longer be separated from technology. It is proven by the large number of Indonesian people in using modern telecommunications facilities like smart phones and the internet to access information, follow social networking and download materials needed. In classroom we often see the students are busy with their smart phone and enjoy chatting with their friends through mobile phone rather than pay attention on the teacher's explanation or do the assignment given by teacher in class. But it is hard to forbid students in bringing and using smart phones in school. Teacher must be able to educate and remind students to use smart phone wisely for learning such as for using digital dictionary, browsing sources needed or making group for sharing information and discuss certain material and assignment from teacher. The existence of mobile devices presents a big potential to assist students in getting information and sharing knowledge for learning through mobile gadget (Pence, 2007).

Social networking sites make users easier to interact with people from all over the world with lower cost than using a telephone. One of social media which is popular is WhatsApp (WA). It lets everyone to access lots of information and sources quickly, and facilitates easy communication among people (Sayan, 2016). WA is familiar among parents, traders, farmers, officials, students, as well as educators. Various features in WhatsApp which allow people in sending instant messages, files, pictures, video, audio, and links easier enable us to use it for learning media. Besides we can create WhatsApp group to share information and discuss the topic/material, so it can optimize the smart phone function in education. This will train students in the application of 21st century learning namely critical, creative, communicative, and collaborative.

The use of WA is proper to support learning process for students of university. So in this research, researchers used Small Group Discussion (SGD) method incorporated with technology that was using WhatsApp group in teaching English in order to enhance students' active participation, their

confident and bravery in expressing their ideas. La Hanisi, Risdiani, Utami, and Sulisworo (2018) confirm that group discussion through WA lets students to communicate, discuss everything, send images, voice, video, etc, and teacher can set activities in class to increase students' English ability.

Previous study conducted by Tabrizi, Hossein, Aslani, et.al (2016) revealed that small group discussion can improve learning ability of medical students. They were greater success in State Board Examination, written test and the OSCE (Objective Structural Clinical Examination) than the students who were taught by traditional methods. Aryani and Supriyadi (2018) did a research in Physic students of Universitas Negeri Semarang. The result showed that small group discussion could raise students' understanding on earth and space science field and can stimulate students' activeness. So far small group discussion is usually done in the classroom and guided by the teacher even it is in large class, so it makes the teacher difficult to control each group and SGD takes quite a long time which sometimes does not match with what has been planned whereas the lecturers have the limited time of teaching in class in which only 100 minutes/meeting. So the technological advances can accommodate the weaknesses of this method. We can integrate Small Group Discussion with WhatsApp group in order that the students have more and flexible time in discussing materials.

In addition the research result carried out by Ali Ta'amneh (2017) explained that there is the difference of students' achievement between they who were taught by WhatsApp which is integrated with traditional method and they who were taught through face to face learning. Therefore this research is required to solve the problems of the limited time and the difficulty in monitoring the discussion process in classroom by utilizing the technology device which is widely used by learners and educators that is WhatsApp.

In the contrary Gon and Rawekar (2017) mention that there is no significant different between students who were taught by using WhatsApp and didactic lecturing in getting knowledge, in WhatsApp the messages are overflow and causes eyestrain. So the further research is necessary to reexamine the effectiveness of WhatsApp as a medium for teaching and learning activity. This research aims to observe the effectiveness of small group discussion integrated with WhatsApp group in teaching English as a foreign language. It is hoped that the result of this study can assist the teachers/lecturers to realize the impact of modern technology tools in education, present a potential contribution for educators to develop their teaching, and increase the students' English ability.

METHOD

This study used quantitative research with quasi experimental design because the researchers could not do randomization in taking the sample. Since it is impossible to choose sample randomly out all of the population, then quasi

experimental research design is used (Latief, 2013: 95). The purpose of the research was to know the effect of using small group discussion (SGD) through WhatsApp group in teaching English. This study was carried out at Banyuwangi Institute of Health Sciences (Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Kesehatan Banyuwangi), Jln. Letkol Istiqlah no.109 Banyuwangi. There were two variables in this research, Independent variable referred to small group discussion through WhatsApp group as a treatment that was given to the experimental group and students' English ability was the dependent variable. The instrument that the researchers used for collecting data was test (homogeneity test and post test). The hypothesis stated that students who are taught by small group discussion through WhatsApp group reach better achievement in English than the students who are taught through lecturing.

The subjects of this study were the students of bachelor in nursing (S1 Keperawatan) class A (50 students) and class B (50 students) in the 2019/2020 academic year. All subjects were taken as sample because the total number of students is only 100. Due to the researchers cannot do randomization in choosing the sample, they should make sure that both classes have equal ability. So homogeneity test was needed to know whether the subjects were homogeneous or not. Then the result of homogeneity test was analyzed statistically by using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). After that experimental and control group were determined by lottery. The lottery indicated that class B as experimental group and class A as control group.

After dividing experimental and control group, then the treatment was given. Experimental group was taught by small group discussion (SGD) through WhatsApp group, while control group was taught through lecturing. The research period was two months (September – October). At the end of meeting, post test was performed to experimental and control group and the result was analyzed statistically by independent sample t test with 0.05 significance level to investigate whether there is significant different of students' English achievement on both groups.

Post-Test Only Control Group Design was used in this is research to compare the mean score of the experimental and control group. The design of the study can be illustrated as follows:

Table 1. Post Test Only Control Group Design

R_1	X	O_1
R_2	No Treatment	O_2

R1 = Experimental group   O1 = Post Test Result of Experimental group
R2 = Control group   O2 = Post Test Result of Control group
X = Treatment
(Adapted from Sugiyono, 2012: 76)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study was carried out at Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Kesehatan Banyuwangi with the first semester students of bachelor in nursing in the 2019/2020 academic year as the subjects. This study was conducted within two months. Before giving the treatment, the researchers administered homogeneity test for the participants to identify that the sample was homogeneous. The result of homogeneity test can be seen in the following table:

Table 2. *The Result of Homogeneity Test*

Descriptives

Nilai

	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	Std.Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Kelompok A	50	60,400	11,2866	1,5962	57,192	63,608	30,0	85,0
Kelompok B	50	59,100	11,6886	1,6530	54,778	61,422	35,0	80,0
Total	100	59,250	11,4895	1,1489	56,970	61,530	30,0	85,0

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Nilai

Lavene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
,688	1	98	,409

ANOVA

Nilai

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	132,250	1	132,250	1,002	,319
Within Groups	12936,500	98	132,005		
Total	13068,750	99			

The ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) result on table 2 indicated that the significance was 0.409. It was higher than the value of 5% significance level. This means that the subject was homogeneous. There is no difference of both classes

in their English skill. Then deciding the experimental and control group by lottery. The result showed that class 1B (50 students) as experimental group and class 1A (50 students) as control group.

The next activity was giving treatment to experimental group that was teaching the students by using small group discussion through WhatsApp group, while control group was taught throughout lecturing in classroom. In small group discussion the experimental group was divided into 10 groups, each group consisted of 5 students, and there was 1 big group which consisted of all students in a class. English lecturer also joined in every group to monitor and become facilitator. Every group was given material or problem to be discussed in WhatsApp group. Each student was required to contribute and share their arguments actively in group. Each group leader has responsibility for mobilizing his/her group members to participate actively in the discussion. If there were some members did not take part in discussion, the group score was reduced. But if all group members were very active, the group score was increased. Group assessment could be seen from the activeness of members in discussion, the way of conveying ideas, and how can the group provide the best solution for the problem given.

Then the result of each small group discussion in WhatsApp group was discussed together in the large classroom. Each leader of group presented the discussion result from the small group in WhatsApp. This learning method made the students became more independent and creative to look for and read the sources they need to be the material reference for discussion in group. Besides, in learning by small group discussion through WhatsApp group students feel free bringing up their thought and share their argument. It is in accordance with Westwood (2008) who said that group work can improve students' contribution in class, stimulate social skill expansion, enlarge communication, and enhance students' independence.

WhatsApp group can cover the learning of four language skills. In teaching listening, the lecturer can send audio or record his/her voice in WA group. For teaching Speaking, the lecturer can ask the students in small group to record his/her voice and send it to the group. For teaching Writing, the students can freely express their mind by writing the ideas in the group. Then for reading, students can read their friends idea and also the teacher can give any reading text by uploading or sending the text in WhatsApp group.

At the end of meeting, post test was established to both experimental and control group to know the success level of the treatment given. Then the post test result was analyzed statistically by using independent sample t-test. The result of independent sample t-test can be seen in table 3 below.

Table 3. *The Result of Independent Sample T-Test*
 T-Test

Group Statistics

Kelompok	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	Std.Error Mean
NIL.Al A	50	63,15	11,982	1,3948
B	50	74,70	9,044	1,3573

Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std.Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
NIL.Al Equal variances assumed	3,817	0,54	-5,440	98	,000	-11,550	2,,123	-15,763	-7,337
Equal variances not assumed			-5,440	91,151	,000	-11,550	2,,123	-15,763	-7,337

The table 3 indicated that the 2-tailed significance value was 0.000 which was less than 0.05. it signified that analysis of independent sample t-test was significant. The alternative hypothesis (Ha) of this study was accepted and null hypothesis (Ho) was rejected. It implied that there is significant effect of small group discussion (SGD) through WhatsApp group on the students' English ability. This finding is in accordance with the previous study carried out by Tabrizi, Hossein, Aslani, et.al (2016) that small group discussion can improve students' learning ability and get greater success in State Board Examination and written test than the students who were taught by traditional methods. It also supported the research finding by Ali Ta'amneh (2017) that there is the difference of students' achievement between they who were taught by WhatsApp which is

integrated with traditional method and they who were taught through face to face learning.

This finding declined the study performed by Gon and Rawekar (2017) in which there is no significant different between students who were taught by using WhatsApp and didactic lecturing in gaining knowledge. Precisely by using WhatsApp group students can be more independent learners, actively take part in the discussion, and feel more comfortable to utter their thought.

Then, the researchers designed and gave a questionnaire to discover students' perspectives of the experimental group toward the use of Whatsapp group in learning English combined in lecturing which consisted of 10 questions. Here are the questions, the percentage and the result of students' perspectives on the use of Whatsapp Group in learning English.

Table 4. Distribution of students' perspectives on the use of Whatsapp Group in learning English

No	Questions	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Easy to use	19 (38%)	27 (54%)	1 (2%)	3 (6%)	-
2	No charge	3 (6%)	10 (20%)	-	16 (32%)	21 (42%)
3	Good way to convey ideas	12 (24%)	26 (52%)	6 (12%)	4 (8%)	2 (4%)
4	Give extra information about the lesson	13 (26%)	30 (60%)	2 (4%)	5 (10%)	-
5	High interaction with lecturers & friends	24 (48%)	21 (42%)	3 (6%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)
6	Better understanding of the subject	9 (18%)	24 (48%)	-	11 (22%)	6 (12%)
7	Learning every time & everywhere	11 (22%)	29 (58%)	3 (6%)	7 (14%)	-
8	The easy access of learning material	9 (18%)	20 (40%)	5 (10%)	14 (28%)	2 (4%)
9	Provide Conducive & secure environment	14 (28%)	12 (24%)	7 (14%)	11 (22%)	6 (12%)
10	Instruction	6 (12%)	23	2 (4%)	8 (16%)	11 (22%)

&Information received are complete & clear	(46%)	

Table 4 described the students' perspective of experimental group (n=50) on the use of Whatsapp group as a learning media in English Small Group Discussion. It was measured on the 1 to 5 scale with the explanation 1 is strongly disagree, 2 is disagree, 3 is neutral, 4 is agree, and 5 is strongly disagree. The table showed that 19 students (38%) and 27 students (54%) agreed if Whatsapp is easy to use, it is friendly user because most of them has already used Whatsapp and Whatsapp group in their daily communication with friends and family. But 37 students (74%) disagreed if Whatsapp is no charge, although free Wi-fi is available in the campus, but if they are at home they still need their own internet quota.

38 students (76%) agreed if Whatsapp group is a good way to convey ideas moreover for introvert students who do not have the courage to express their opinion and feeling because we have many students with different characteristic in the classroom. More than 80% of students agreed through Whatsapp group the students can get more information about the lesson and have high interaction with lecturers and friends to ask about difficult material and discuss the lesson. While 33 students (66%) got better understanding of the subject on small group discussion through whatsapp group but the rest 17 students (34%) did not get better understanding because they were confused with message flooding.

Most of students (80%) absolutely agreed if they can learn every time and everywhere through whatsapp group, they can learn while lying down on the bed. So they will be motivated to learn more about English without ignoring their mobile phone. It proves that Whatsapp can motivate students. It is in accordance with the study conducted by Maria (2016) and the result revealed that Whatsapp can motivate the students to increase their reading and writing skill because today's students will be highly motivated if involving technology in their learning.

There were 9 students (18%) and 20 students (40%) agreed through whatsapp group it is easier for them to access learning material, but the other 21 students (42%) disagreed because it caused eye strain and lost information of learning material due to message flooding. Then for half of students thought if learning through whatsapp group provide conducive and secure environment, but for half of other students did not provide conducive and secure environment due to other personal message notification and others group disturbed their concentration. 29 students (58%) agreed if instruction and information received from Whatsapp group are complete and clear, 2 students (4%) had no opinion or neutral and 19 students (38%) disagreed.

Along with the students' perspectives on the use of Whatsapp group as a media in English small group discussion and many benefits they got, there were some problems and challenges faced by lecturers and students in teaching and learning English through Whatsapp group such as: 1) Time consuming, 2) Message flooding, 3) Eye strain, 4) Internet connection. Although the campus enabled free wi-fi but if the students are already in home, they did not have internet quota, so they missed some information; 5) Some students' residents are in suburb area and difficult area signal, so it made them difficult to respond the discussion; 6) Easy copy & paste, so it was difficult to distinguish the original answers of students' thoughts/opinions or those who copy paste, 7) The lecturer cannot control and know for certain students who really follow the discussion, 8) Notification of personal messages and from other groups disturbed students' concentration when having small group discussion, 9) Slow responds from the students, 10) Sometimes students 'question and opinion were out of topic discussion, 11) Some students only heed without responding in discussions, 12) Not all students committed in the rules of group discussion.

CONCLUSION

Although there were some problems faced in teaching and learning English through Whatsapp group but this research result revealed that experimental group which used small group discussion (SGD) through WhatsApp group achieved better score in English lesson than the control group which was taught through lecturing. The conclusion is small group discussion can run more efficiently if it is integrated with the advances of technological application like WhatsApp in learning English for it is not relevant anymore to avoid students bringing mobile phone in school or campus. So, utilizing smart phone in English language learning can be a solution of students' dependence on smart phone.

By using small group (SGD) discussion through WhatsApp group the students have more time to discuss everything in learning English and make students to be independent learners because they are more active and creative to search any information and sources related to the material being discussed and they also have nonstop communication process with the teacher/lecturer.

Besides, by having small group discussion (SGD) using Whatsapp group in learning English, the students get extra information about the lesson, easily to access learning material, the instruction and information received clearly and they get better understanding of the subject because they have high interaction with lecturers and friends, so they can ask questions and difficult material to the lecturers in whatsapp group. They have more time to discuss the material every time and everywhere. They also get conducive and secure environment in learning through Whatsapp group. This result is in line with the research done by Hamad (2017) which stated that Whatsapp can enhance the students' learning of English and their enthusiasm; students have good communication,

help each other, create useful discussion, improve their vocabularies, and develop their English although the lecturer must spend more time out of working hours to be a facilitator in Whatsapp discussions.

The rapid development of information technology must be utilized maximally and wisely. Using WhatsApp application as a media in teaching is recommended because most of students have used it. It makes the teacher and students easier to discuss the material not only in the classroom, but also outside the classroom because Whatsapp can be accessed anytime and anywhere. Whatsapp application can be used as blended learning to support face-to-face learning in class.

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