

# IMPLEMENTATION OF CLASSROOM GROUPING IN TEACHING OF WRITING SKILL TO GRADE XI STUDENTS OF MAN 2 MODEL PALU

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## **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyajikan gambaran yang jelas tentang implementasi pengelompokan kelas pada pengajaran keterampilan menulis. Lebih spesifik, penelitian ini untuk memaparkan implementasi kerja kelompok dan pengaruhnya terhadap pencapaian siswa dalam pengajaran keterampilan menulis di MAN 2 Model Palu. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Sampelnya adalah 1 guru bahasa Inggris MAN 2 Model Palu dan 19 siswa kelas XI Religion 2. Datanya diperoleh dari kuisioner, wawancara, lembar pengamatan, dokumentasi, dan rekaman. Analisis data merupakan proses yang berkesinambungan untuk mengantisipasi adanya data yang berlebihan. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa guru menerapkan kerja kelompok dengan semestinya dan inovatif. Siswa mendapat nilai lebih tinggi ketika mereka menulis dalam kelompok daripada secara individu. Jadi, implementasi pengelompokan kelas dalam pengajaran keterampilan menulis memiliki pengaruh positif terhadap keberhasilan pencapaian nilai keterampilan menulis siswa.

**Kata Kunci:** Implementasi, Pengelompokan Kelas, Pengajaran, dan Keterampilan Menulis.

Teaching and learning processes are the activities which centered on the teacher and students' activities in the classroom. The main point in the teaching and learning processes is to guide the students to achieve successful learning goals. The students' success in learning is influenced by some factors, whether internal or external factor. One of the external factors that greatly affect the success of students' learning depends on the teachers' way in managing the teaching and learning activity in the classroom. The teachers are expected to create a creative, interesting and active learning environment to achieve those goals.

An effective learning environment has a significant contribution to gain students' successful in learning. In order to create such environment, the teachers are expected to have knowledge and skill in managing the classroom well. Managing the classroom well is one way to achieve effective and successful teaching and learning processes. Effective teaching and learning cannot take place in a poorly managed classroom. Calderon (2010)

states that students who study in the class with the effective classroom management have a higher achievement than that of the students do in the conventional classroom management. However, sometimes the phenomena occurring in the field are not relevant to our expectation to the teachers. There are some problems often faced by the teachers and the students in teaching English, especially in a whole class teaching. Teaching English in a whole class sometimes becomes a problem to the teachers. The teachers usually give theories all the time in the class in every meeting without giving the students a chance to practice the theory, which may limit the students' involvement and interaction with the teacher (Alwasilah and Alwasilah, 2005). This may lead the teaching and learning processes on teacher-centered and ignores student-centered learning.

Regarding the phenomena that happens in schools, a creative teacher is needed to create an effective classroom management. The classroom management covers a large area. One of them is grouping.

Grouping is a method often applied in a student centered learning, in order to activate students in the classroom. Jones (2007) states that the larger the class, the more necessary it is to have a student centered class. The only way to give all the students' times to speak and to share their ideas is by having them work together.

Grouping students is suitable for any skills. Generally, grouping is more often used to teach the speaking skill when compared to others. Another skill that can be applied with grouping is the writing skill. Through grouping, the students' writing skill will improve due to the intensive practice. They will not become good writer when the teacher gives them the theory continuously without any practice. The teachers have a responsibility to evaluate the students writing assignment in order to correct the students' mistake.

As the researcher expressed earlier, whole class teaching sometimes becomes one of the teachers' obstacles in the teaching and learning processes. The teacher will have a difficulty in revising plenty of the students' writing in a short time. To minimize the teachers' obstacle and to maximize the students' practice frequency in writing, the teacher can apply classroom grouping in teaching writing to the students.

When writing is done through grouping, it has benefits the same as grouping in speaking. Grouping students in writing can help them to develop their communicative competence. When the students try to express their ideas to each other, they may clarify, rephrase and so on. The process should also help them to develop their ideas. Students will produce better work when they write fiction in groups than working alone. The students learn more through group work than when they interact only with their teacher (Hill, 2003). It can be conclude that the students have more time to spend with their friends when they work in groups, which can help

them to improve their communication each other in order to produce a good written paper.

The explanation above indicates that grouping the students is needed to facilitate students' activeness in the classroom. Considering the importance of classroom grouping in the teaching and learning processes, the researcher investigated the employment of classroom grouping at MAN 2 Model Palu. This is an Islamic High School emphasizing its learning process on active, creative, effective, and innovative learning in developing the students' intellectual and skill. This mission related to School Based Curriculum that promotes student centered learning. The students are expected to be active in each subject, including English. Basically, they are expected to not only learn the concepts and the theories, but also the application of those concepts and theories. The English teacher of MAN 2 Model Palu presents a syllabus for grade XI by separating four skills in teaching. Specifically in the writing skill, the syllabus for the second semester states that the students should express the meanings of the short functional text and simple essay in narrative, spoof and hortatory exposition in daily life context. The English teachers are expected to be able to have a good perspective about grouping in order to facilitate the students' activeness and creativity in teaching and learning process. This research is conducted to seek a clear description about implementation of classroom grouping during teaching and learning processes of the writing skill and its impact on the students' achievement in writing skill.

## **CLASSROOM GROUPING**

Grouping students in the classroom effectively relies on a working knowledge of students' strength, interest, thinking and learning style. Grouping is a generic term that covers a variety of techniques in which two or more students are involved and work together to complete the task (Brown, 2001). When

working in a group, students are able to develop ideas much more effectively than they work individually. Also, they can develop their interaction each other to ease them in completing the task.

### **Different Groups**

There are some types of group that often be used by the teachers in the classroom. The most common student groupings are whole class, individual study, pair work, and group work (Harmer, 2003); Whole class is where all the students are under the control of the teacher. They are all doing the same activity at the same rhythm and pace. Whole class is often adopted when the teacher is making a presentation, giving explanations and instructions. Differs from whole class, pair work is the students work in pairs. It could be a competition over a game or co-operation in a task or project between the two students, they could also practice language together. Pair work can increase the amount of speaking time, it is also allow the students to work and interact independently without the necessary guidance of the teacher. When the students are doing pairwork, the teacher usually circulates around the classroom, answering questions or providing help when necessary.

Whilst in group work, the students work in small groups. Each group has 3 or 4 students, depending on the activity. Group work gives students more chance to interact and use the target language more freely. Instead of just having a few seconds to talk in teacher-fronted classes, students can participate longer in a small group and feel more confident to give their opinions and even make mistakes when just three or four classmates are looking at them. What students do in groupwork is similar to pairwork, only there are more members in the group. Groupwork is most beneficial when the activity requires contributions from more than two students. The teacher can join each group for a while, but only as a participant not as a

leader or inspector. As a result, group work is used in this research.

The last type of group is individual study. It is the stage during the class where the students are left to work on their own and at their own speed. Some activities cannot be done in pairs or groups, for instance, reading and writing. People read at different speed, so they cannot read together, though two people might share one book. The best method is allow the students read privately and then answers questions individually.

### **Advantages and Disadvantages of Group Work**

When implementing group work in the classroom, it may come up with the advantages and disadvantages. According to Harmer (2003), there are some advantages of group work: First, group work gives students more chance to interact and use the target language freely. Second, Instead of just having a few seconds to talk in teacher-fronted classes, students can participate longer in a small group and feel more confident to give their opinions and even make mistakes when just three or four classmates are looking at them. Third, personal relationships are usually less problematic; there is a greater chance of different opinions and varied contributions. Forth, it encourages broader skills of cooperation and negotiation, and more private than work in front of the whole classroom. And last, it promotes learner autonomy by allowing students to make their own decisions in the group without being told what to do by the teacher. Besides the advantages, Harmer (2003) expresses that group work also has disadvantages: It is likely to be noisy and individuals may fall into group roles that become fossilized, so that some are passive whereas others may dominate. When compared between the advantages and disadvantages of group work that expressed by Harmer (2003), can be seen that the implementation of group work in the

classroom have a lot of advantages then disadvantages. It can promote the students' interaction each other in the classroom.

### **Procedures for Group Work**

The teachers play an important role in managing groups. Harmer (2003) expresses that the teachers have a responsibility to manage the students from the beginning of the activity till the end through three stages: before doing the activity, the teacher should give the clearest instructions to the students, otherwise they will not know for sure what they are supposed to do. When students work on their own groups, the teacher should control the activity that occurs by walking around the classroom and giving suggestions to the students. The teacher also could stand at the front of the class, or anywhere else in the classroom watching and listening on what is happening during they work. After the students finish their work in groups, the teacher should give feedback to the students. We can give them a chance to practice or demonstrate their work result in front of their classmates. The teacher also should asses their works, and make corrections if needed. In order to make the group work run smoothly, the teacher has to manage all the aspects of group work activity. He/she has to plan the activity, organize it, start it, monitor it, time it and conclude it.

### **WRITING SKILL**

Writing skill is one of the most effective tools of communication. It helps someone to develop imaginative and critical thinking abilities, and involves the ability to write something effectively and creatively. Writing is more permanent than speaking, and requires more careful organization. It is also less spontaneous because it involves a process, from organizing ideas in the mind to setting the final document on the paper. According to Meyers (2005) writing is the process of discovering and organizing the ideas, putting it on a written paper, and

reshaping it. Writing about the same as speaking, because it is a way to discover and communicate the ideas. However, unlike speaking, writing is more permanent and requires more careful organization. Other experts such as Murcia and Olshtain (2000) stated that, writing is the production of the written word that results in a text but the text must be read and comprehended in order for communication to take place. From the definitions above, it can be concluded that writing is a process of thinking to generate the idea which involves a process, from organizing or developing ideas in the mind and produce it into a good sentence and set it to the final document on a written paper in order to inform the messages to the reader.

### **Using Groups in Writing**

Group work can be a very effective way of motivating students to learn by encouraging them to think, communicate, exchange ideas and thoughts, and take decisions. In groups, students can both teach others and learn from each other. According to Hartley (2008), grouping the students in the writing class has some advantages: 1) It is more efficient, because different aspects of the task can be shared out. 2) It has better quality than work individually, because different individuals can contribute different expertise; and 3) lead to better written papers, because each individual contributor can assist in the writing and the editing of the paper, each seeing it from different perspectives. The students in their groups work together to solve a problem or reach a decision as an important part of their learning and personal development.

### **Procedures of Writing in Groups**

When writing is done through grouping, it quite different when it done individually. Mulligan and Garofalo (2011) offer some procedures in writing that is done by grouping: First, forming a group. The teacher divided students into some groups or

the students select their own group. Second, groups brainstormed the ideas about the target topic and organized the information into coherent parts. Third, the students arranged the meeting outside the class to gather the information to support their paper. Fourth, the students outline, plan, and craft the first draft in the classroom. Students are required to make a detailed outline before submitting the first draft to the teacher. Then, the teacher turns the outline draft back to the students with pertinent comment on it.

The fifth step, the students in each group will decide together who will write which part of the project related to the outline, and then gathering together to crosscheck their work if there are any mistakes in the draft. For the last step, the teacher checked the drafts, pointing out structural and organization errors, and providing comments and suggestions. Unlike writing individually, writing that is done through grouping should finished out of the class, because the students need more time to do the research that support their project.

## **METHOD**

This research used descriptive qualitative method. It is under a naturalistic approach to its subject matter. Qualitative research takes place in natural setting and fundamentally interpretive. In other words, the researcher makes an interpretation of data. This method develop a description of an individual or setting, analyze data for themes or categories, and conclude its meaning personally and theoretically, state the lessons learned, and offer further questions to be asked (Creswell, 2003). Descriptive research is used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena to describe "what exists" with respect to variables or conditions in a situation (Key, 1997). A descriptive approach in data collection in qualitative research gives the ability to collect accurate data on and

provides a clear picture of the phenomenon that occurred in the field (Mouton and Marais, 1996). In this research the researcher investigated actual setting as the direct source of the data and would be the key instrument. She focused on the process of the implementation of classroom grouping that is conducted by one of the English teachers at MAN 2 Model Palu, and followed by the students' achievement.

The samples of this research were 1 English teacher of MAN 2 Model Palu and 19 students of grade XI Religion 2. MAN 2 Model Palu was chosen because that school has a big attention in developing the students' ability in mastering three languages: English, French, and Arabic. To obtain the data, the researcher was the main instrument in the field. In obtaining the data, she employed the data from six resources: the researcher (as the main instrument), questionnaire, interview, observation, recording and documentation.

In collecting the data, the researcher used some procedures as follows: (1) She distributed the quistionnaire to the students. It is aimed at gaining information related to the implementation of classroom grouping especially group work. (2) She did an in-depth interview to one of the English teachers of grade XI and the students of grade XI Religion 2. (3) She conducted an observation toward the teacher's performance, teacher's way in implementing group work and the student's response. In this matter, she used observation checklist and recorder to ease the observation and to record the ongoing process of teaching and learning activity. (4) To measure the students' achievement, she took the documentation of students' score when they wrote individually, and collected the students' writing score after completing the project in groups that assigned to them and showed the percentage of students' score.

In this research, the data were analyzed during the research: when the researcher was gathering the data and after collecting the data. The data analysis

activities comprised of data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion and verification (Miles and Huberman, 1994). In order to reduce the personal exaggeration and bias, it is important to verify the trustworthiness of the data analysis. To check the trustworthiness of the data, the researcher crosschecked the data through the concept of triangulation. Triangulation is crossed validation throughout of the data gained from instruments of data collection. It is consist of three stages, data collection, data reduction and data display.

## **DATA AND DISCUSSION**

### **Questionnaire**

After calculating the students responses toward the questionnaire, the researcher found that all of the students (100%) agreed that group work was implemented by their teacher in teaching and learning process especially in developing writing skill and giving effect in improving their ability in writing. Nevertheless, almost half of students grade XI Religion 2 (47.36%) had difficulty in expressing their ideas to their friends. Some of them (36.84) also found difficulty to respond the ideas or messages from their friends. These indicate that the students still confused how they should express their ideas to their friends. Although some of students found such difficulties, but most of them (94.73%) liked writing done in groups, since group work has a great number of advantages. In contrast, there was one student who disliked doing the task through group work, since he used to do the task individually; the class is too noisy; and not all the group member participated in groups.

### **Interview**

Through this instrument, the researcher interviewed both the teacher and the students. From the interviewee students' point of view, the obstacle that they often experience during working in groups is the

group members often break their promise to their friends. In other words, some students sometime do not attend the meeting that they have arranged before, which indicated they were less responsibility and less attention to their task. While one student stated that when coming into the group evaluation, some group members often maintain with their opinions. Besides the obstacle, the interviewee students also expressed the benefit of working in groups. Although they felt disappointed to their less responsible group members, they expressed the benefit of group work more than its obstacle. The second interviewee student realized that sometime they as students need groups in their learning activity, because they cannot stand alone forever, sometime they also need a help from their friends.

While from the teacher's point of view, the students like help, and of course they like group work, because they help each other in group work. They like to work in groups but the biggest obstacle that often occurred when they work in groups is the group members' participation. The teacher also revealed that the obstacle that often occurred in her classroom is some of the students are unconfident. In this situation, it will hard to them to express their ideas to others, even though they have a lot of ideas in their minds.

To solve the problems that often occurred in groups, the teacher used two ways, directly and indirectly. Directly: telling the students right in front of them when they did mistake or when they did not listen to their friends' explanation. Indirectly: noting situation in classroom and assessing it in home. This was the end of our interview.

### **Classroom Observation**

Through the observation, the researcher found that writing class is divided into three stages; prewriting, whilewriting, and postwriting. The students were grouped from the beginning of the activity till the end

of it. Before starting to write, the students were introduced to the hortatory text. They did not allow to write before they understood the hortatory text in detail. When the students were familiar with the hortatory text, the teacher instructed them to write a hortatory text collaboratively with their group members. The teacher gave clear instruction to the students about the way they write collaboratively. The teacher provided the topics and gave the students the freedom to choose, whether they choose the topic which has been provided or they provide their own topic.

After deciding the topic, the students made the draft of the topic, and all of group members have to contribute the ideas in this stage. Through this, the teacher knew the students who were understood the material and who did not. When the groups finished with the drafts, they submitted it to the teacher and asked for evaluation. The topic draft determines the number of paragraph that they wrote. They arranged the paragraph as the same number of the group members, so each student would contribute one paragraph in each text. The writing project is given as homework, so they can do in long time. After finishing it outside the classroom, each group submits it to the teacher in the next meeting, and brings the evidence to avoid the plagiarism from internet. .

In grade XI Religion 2, the researcher found that the group work activity was clearly implemented in writing skill. It can be seen from the students' familiarity toward the activity, they seemed enjoy in completing the project that assigned to them. From the researcher point of view, whether the students realize or not, through this activity they can share their ideas with others freely and enjoyable. They also have more time to practice their writing skill ability with the help from their group members if they need it, or they can reevaluate their writing among them. When the activity was in progress, the teacher often walks around the class to

provide helps if the students needed, to monitor the progress of group work, and to motivate the students so they can write a good paragraph.

### **Documentation of Students' Achievement**

To measure the students' achievement in writing, the researcher took the students' individual writing score from the teacher's documentation of students' score during semester two. While the students' writing scores through grouping, was taken from the students' writing score when the research was on a progress and was taken from the teacher's documentation of students' score during semester two. The scores were taken as documentation in order to compare it to know the students' percentage of success when they write in groups.

When the students write individually, there were 6 students who got the average score less than 80 point; 7 students got the average score between 80 and 90 point; and 7 students got the score more than 90 point. Their score increase significantly when they write in groups. No student got the average score less than 80 point; 10 students got the average score between 80 and 90 point; and 9 students got the score more than 90 point. Each student has an improvement in their score. The higher percentage of success is 11.6% and the lower one is 1.5%. The data above prove that the implementation of group work in writing skill has given an effect to the students' writing achievement.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

### **Conclusion**

The way the teacher implemented group work in writing class is quiet interesting and innovative. The group work is not too often applied in writing class; it is related to the material that will give to the students. The material is not always taken from learning module, but almost of the material was designed by the teacher. Writing

class activity divided into three stages: pre, while, and post-writing. The students are grouped from the beginning of the activity till the end of it.

The teacher gives clear instruction to the students about the way they write collaboratively, and when the activity was in progress, the teacher often walks around the class to provide helps if the students need it, to monitor the progress of group work, and to motivate the students so they can write a good paragraph. Unfortunately, the teacher still find it difficult to use English language in explaining the instruction to the students. The implementation of group work in writing skill has an impact on the students' writing achievement. Their higher score is higher in groups then individually.

### Suggestions

1. The teacher should communicate more with the leader of the group to control the students' participation in groups when they worked out of the class. This is to avoid the students' less participation in finishing the project.
2. The teacher should vary the consideration in forming the group, to avoid the students' boredom when they meet the same students at a different group.
3. Other researchers should consider conducting next research to measure the effect of group work in a different skill, since the researcher only focus on writing skill.

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