

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In education, the dynamic interplay between instructors, students, and the curriculum forms the cornerstone of effective learning. In this context, English literature education is a crucible for cultivating critical thinking, analytical skills, and a deep appreciation for the written word. As the educational landscape continues to evolve, there is a crucial need to explore innovative methodologies that can augment the learning experience in English literature classes.

This thesis investigates the application of Focus Group Design within the framework of English learning instruction. Focus groups, as a qualitative research methodology, offer a unique platform for in-depth exploration of perceptions, opinions, and experiences. By integrating this approach into the pedagogical process, educators can gain valuable insights into students' diverse needs and preferences, paving the way for more tailored and effective teaching strategies.

Although FGD emphasizes the process as a means of enhancing student learning with the aim of promoting collaborative, critical, and participatory learning characteristics, it is sometimes overlooked by some educators. As a result, the assessment of FGD's success is often based on the outcomes rather than the process undertaken by the students. This is the motivation behind this research, which aims to evaluate the learning phenomenon in FGD as a process that measures student engagement in a subject matter, specifically their involvement in evaluating and deciding on the material, thus shifting the focus of assessment towards the aspect of activity rather than the results of the activity. Therefore, the objective of this research is to examine the success of the processes in each student's participation.



The structure of this thesis will be organized as follows: in the subsequent chapter, a review of the existing literature on Focus Group Design in education will be offering a foundational understanding of its applications and implications.

Following this, the methodology chapter will outline the specific procedures and protocols employed in conducting focus groups in the learning process.

The following chapters will discuss the empirical findings of this study, demonstrating the real-world implications of the entire process built into FGD Design as an activity of student engagement, comprehension, and retention. Similarly, it presents a challenge for the implementation of FGD itself if difficulties are encountered in its application, including a lack of participation in sharing ideas, opinions, and so on, which constitute the value of the process in FGD itself. These insights will be reinforced by an analysis of the data, addressing potential limitations, and suggesting directions for future research.

Ultimately, this research endeavors to contribute to the broader discourse on innovative pedagogical approaches to teaching improvement. By championing the integration of Focus Group Design, this thesis strives to empower educators to create more inclusive, dynamic, and effective learning environments, thus fostering a deeper appreciation for the richness and diversity of literary expression.

1.2 Scope of The Problem

This research focuses on the success aspects of applying the teaching method of Focus Group Discussion to English literature students in the discourse analysis course

1.3 Research Question

Based on the above background, the problem that is the objective of this research is

1.3.1. How do students collaborate and contribute to discussions within the focus group setting?

1.3.2. what challenges do the students face during Focus group discussions?

1.3.3. How Focus group discussion helps the students in the process of English Language



The Research

use of this research, based on the above research question, is:

1.4.1. To understand students' characteristics in collaborating and contributing to the group discussion process.

1.4.2. To understand the challenges students face during the Focus Group Discussion.

1.4.3. To understand how the group discussion process helps students in learning the English language.

1.5 Significance of the Research

The benefits of this research are:

1.5.1 For the student

The benefit of this research is that students are once again viewed as the focal point of learning by prioritizing their engagement as an integral part of the learning process itself. Thus, all student participation can be considered as a part of the learning success. Consequently, learning outcomes such as the enhancement of students' critical knowledge are not evaluated solely based on the final results, but on the student's involvement in the ongoing learning process.

1.5.2 For Teacher

This research aims to enhance the learning process using the FGD method, which is often overlooked by some educators. It addresses the lack of attention to the critical development of students through their engagement in the material outcomes and instead emphasizes the success of the material itself. Therefore, this study will greatly contribute to restoring the original purpose of implementing FGD in any teaching context.



CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Previous Studies

Previous research related to Focus Group Discussions (FGD) includes *The changes and challenges of participating in Focus Group Discussions* by Hadi and Junaedi. They employed design-based research (DBR) as the method of study. DBR involves solving educational problems and producing design principles of classroom instruction in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting. The simplified steps of DBR included: 1) analysis of practical problems by researchers and practitioners in collaboration; 2) development of solutions informed by existing design principles; 3) iterative cycles of testing and refinement of solutions in practice; and 4) reflection to produce design principles and enhance solution implementation. The sample for the study consisted of 6 students and 3 lecturers from the English Language Education program at the University of Nahdlatul Wathan Mataram in Indonesia. Data was collected through participant observation, participants' diaries, and group interviews. Thematic analysis steps were employed to analyze the data collected from the participants' experiences during the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).

Another study, Hiratsuka (2020), conducted a study focusing on team teachers in Japan participating in focus group discussions as a professional development opportunity. The study involved two pairs of team teachers from a vocational high school and a standard high school in the north of Japan. The team teachers consisted of two Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) and two foreign assistant language teachers (ALTs). The JTEs had 23-24 years of teaching experience and advanced English proficiency, while the ALTs were newly hired with varying levels of Japanese language skills. The data collection method involved observing team-teaching classes taught by each pair, selecting five-minute video clips from the classes, and conducting three focus group discussions on separate Saturdays.



Discussions were held in English, as it was the common language understood by all participants. Each discussion was recorded and transcribed for analysis. Additionally, interviews were conducted with each teacher after the focus group discussions.

The analysis of the data involved both qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative analysis focused on the meanings and patterns in the participants' experiences, while the quantitative analysis included counting instances of identified themes. The study aimed to track the professional development of team teachers over time through focus group discussions, examining the impact on their reflective practices, language use, and cultural awareness

Furthermore, a study conducted by Nurmasitah *et al.* in their research described in the document utilized a quasi-experimental design to investigate *The efficacy of focus group discussion in teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) speaking skills to prospective vocational school teachers*. The study involved thirty students from the Family Welfare Vocational Education Study Program, who were divided into two classes: an experimental class and a control class. In the experimental class, a communicative teaching method, specifically focus group discussion, was implemented for a half semester. The focus group discussions were conducted five times during the teaching-learning process, with students engaging in interactive discussions on specific topics related to their field of study. The lecturer provided material explanations at the beginning of each class, followed by group discussions lasting around thirty minutes. The focus group discussions aimed to create a comfortable environment for students to practice their English speaking skills, reducing anxiety and increasing confidence. On the other hand, the control class received traditional teaching methods, with the lecturer following the usual grammar-translation approach. The control class did not engage in focus group discussions but instead focused on textbook-centered activities emphasizing grammar rules, vocabulary, and reading. The research methodology included data collection through interviews, observations, and speaking assessments before and after the treatment. The speaking assessments involved interview questions and role-plays to evaluate students' speaking proficiency. The assessments were scored using a rubric adapted from the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) to determine the level of speaking proficiency.



s of the pre-test and post-test assessments in both the experimental and control re compared using statistical tests, including the t-test, normality test, and F-test. igs indicated a significant improvement in the students' speaking skills in the

experimental class, where focus group discussions were implemented, compared to the control class, which followed traditional teaching methods.

On the other hand, Dincer and Dariyemez (2020) in their study "*Proficient speakers of English as a foreign language: A focus-group study*" aims to examine what factors play an important role in the language development of proficient speakers of the English language.

In terms of methodology, the researchers employed a qualitative case-study approach, specifically adopting Yin's single-case design. This design allowed for an in-depth examination of a group of advanced learners of English, providing rich data on the influential factors related to speaking proficiency. Data was collected through focus-group interviews, with four groups of four participants each. The sessions were conducted in English, audio-recorded, and transcribed for analysis.

Through qualitative content analysis, the researchers identified patterns and themes that emerged from the focus group discussions. The study aimed to investigate both contextual factors, such as self-practice techniques and experiences abroad, and affective factors, including motivation and anxiety, that influence speaking proficiency in English language learners. The findings provided insights into the strategies and factors that contribute to the success of proficient speakers of English as a foreign language, offering implications for language teaching and learning practices.

Besides that, there are also, the paper titled "*The implementation of small group discussion in teaching writing recount text for the tenth-grade students of SMKN 1 Bendo*" by Lestari (2019) focuses on describing the implementation, advantages, disadvantages, and solutions of using Small Group Discussion in teaching writing Recount text. The research follows a descriptive qualitative approach, utilizing data from social situations, participants, and documents. Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, triangulation, with triangulation used for data validity. The analysis involves data on, display, conclusion, and verification.



The implementation of Small Group Discussion is detailed in three main steps: Pre-Activities, Whilst-Activities, and Post-Activities. The advantages highlighted include the ease of implementation, increased student participation, effectiveness in teaching Recount text, and fostering intimacy among students. However, the disadvantages identified are the need for more time to write, difficulties in translation, lack of correct structure implementation leading to some students not participating, low motivation in writing, and the time-consuming nature of the process.

To address these disadvantages, the researcher suggests solutions such as providing clear explanations, asking students to bring dictionaries, explaining group roles clearly, simplifying activities, giving additional time, promoting student awareness of each other, and incorporating humor and motivation in the learning process. The conclusion emphasizes the alignment of the research findings with the lesson plan and teaching process, with recommendations for teachers to diversify teaching strategies, students to enhance their vocabulary, and other researchers to explore different perspectives.

The paper's methodological rigor is evident through the detailed description of the research approach, data sources, collection techniques, analysis procedures, and triangulation for data validation. The study provides valuable insights into the practical application of Small Group Discussion in teaching writing, offering a comprehensive overview of the implementation process, advantages, disadvantages, and solutions.

Another study also by Chamaipak *et al.* (2019) in their study namely *In-service secondary school English language teachers' instructional practices, challenges, and their training needs: A focus group interview study*. This study reveals that English teachers in Thailand, particularly in Narathiwat Province, face various challenges in their teaching practices. They require professional development through training programs that emphasize active engagement and trainer qualifications. The integration of local and global issues in the classroom is considered essential for enhancing students' understanding as well as their learning outcomes. English teachers also face problems such as a lack of classroom facilities and an increasing number of students each academic year. Therefore, there is a need for



greater attention to the professional development of English teachers to improve the quality of education.

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach through focus group interviews with eight female secondary school English teachers from Narathiwat Province. Data were collected through interviews and analyzed to identify the teachers' educational backgrounds, teaching practices, challenges faced, and training needs. The participants have between 5 and over 20 years of experience teaching English. The findings highlight the importance of ongoing training for English teachers to enhance teaching quality and student learning outcomes.

Rahmawati *et al.* (2019) discuss *The use of Focus Group Discussion (FGD) techniques to improve students' speaking skills*. Research shows that FGD can boost students' confidence and make them more enthusiastic about learning English. Through the implementation of FGD, researchers successfully improved the speaking skills of students at SMK Ahlu Suffah Muhammadiyah Bantaeng. This method helps students become more confident, active, and interested in learning English.

The research method used in this research is Classroom Action Research (CAR). The population in this study consists of students from SMK Ahlu Suffah Muhammadiyah Bantaeng, while the selected sample is class X A, which consists of 19 students. The study employs Purposive Sampling for sample selection. By using the FGD technique, the researchers successfully improved the students' speaking abilities, particularly in terms of fluency.

Another research by Mkumbo (2012), explores the commitment and experiences of teachers in Tanzania towards the teaching profession. The method used was focus group discussions as a data collection tool. The findings indicate that teachers' commitment to the profession is low; many chose teaching not out of passion but because it was an easily job. They also expressed that poor working conditions and negative societal re teaching profession adversely affect students' academic performance.



To enhance teacher commitment, the study recommends improving working conditions, increasing salaries, timely promotions, and continuous training. These measures are expected to boost teacher motivation and overall educational quality. For example, similar to how a gardener needs proper tools and resources to nurture plants effectively, teachers require supportive environments to cultivate student success. By addressing these factors, the study aims to foster a more motivated and dedicated teaching workforce, ultimately leading to better educational outcomes for students.

Anabel and Simanjuntak (2020), in their study *Obtaining Preferences from a Hybrid Learning System to Promote English Speaking Ability through focus group discussions*, revealed that students faced challenges in improving their speaking fluency during hybrid learning and identified emerging themes related to use of multifaceted learning, digital resources, and communication tools by lecturers to enhance students' speaking fluency. Additionally, the study highlighted the importance of technical support and mental readiness for hybrid learning in influencing students' speaking fluency. The research involved participants from various groups, such as students and lecturers, to explore their views on hybrid learning and English speaking skills.

The research method used was Focus Group Discussion (FGD), a qualitative method for collecting data. The researchers used thematic analysis to analyze the data obtained from the focus group discussions. This method helps explore the perspectives of various participants, revealing similarities and differences, and uncovering unexpected findings.

Monduhoglu *et al.* (2017) investigate the impact of focus group discussions on the teaching experiences and practices of pre-service teachers (PSTs). The study was conducted with 12 PSTs over 12 weeks in two different schools. It employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data analysis to assess the effectiveness of focus group discussions in enhancing PSTs' self-efficacy perceptions and ; the challenges they encounter during teaching practice.



Quantitative data were analyzed using non-parametric statistics, while qualitative data were subjected to descriptive analyses. The study involved a pre-test post-test control

group design, with one group receiving the intervention (focus group discussions) and the other serving as a control. The intervention group engaged in diary-keeping and focus group discussions, while the control group did not.

Data collection tools included the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale, diaries, semi-structured observation forms, and semi-structured interviews. The Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale adapted to Turkish, measured PSTs' self-efficacy across three dimensions: student participation, classroom management, and instructional strategies.

The study's findings indicated that focus group discussions had a significant positive impact on the self-efficacy perceptions of PSTs in the experimental group. Qualitative data revealed that PSTs found the discussions beneficial in improving their teaching skills, such as lesson planning, classroom management, and teaching strategies.

From several previous studies, "Focus Group Discussion as a Professional Development for Team Teachers in Japan" by Takaaki Hiratsuka is a methodology that the author sees as quite closely related to the one that will be used in this research. This is because he conducted observations that were quite good in recording the process during focus group discussion activities.

Therefore, this research will emphasize the processes, the involvement of all components of FGD, and the planning needed to achieve success in FGD, with a goal of participatory acceptance of the instructional material.

2.2 Theoretical Background Of Constructivist Learning Theory

The Constructivist Learning Theory is a prominent framework in educational psychology that emphasizes the active role of learners in constructing their understanding and knowledge. This theory posits that learners actively engage with information, integrate it with their prior knowledge, and construct new knowledge through cognitive processes.



ture review provides an overview of key concepts, principles, and applications of Constructivist Learning Theory.

The Constructivist Learning Theory emerged in the early 20th century, with roots in the works of Piaget, Vygotsky, and Dewey. Jean Piaget's cognitive development theory proposed that learners actively construct their knowledge through stages of development. Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory emphasized the role of social interaction and cultural context in learning. John Dewey's progressive education philosophy advocated for experiential and inquiry-based learning.

Here are some key concepts that characterize the Constructivist Theory:

2.2.1. Active Engagement

Active engagement emphasizes the process of student activity, where students take an active role in the learning process. They are encouraged to directly experience tasks or activities that enhance their knowledge based on firsthand experiences rather than merely receiving information from the teacher. This aligns with the essence of Constructivist Theory, which suggests that learning is always active and continuously reconstructed through students' experiences and activities. In this context, active engagement can be observed through students' active participation in collaborative work, discussions, problem-solving, and hands-on practices, all of which serve as forms of direct experiential learning.

2.2.2 Prior Knowledge and Schema

Prior knowledge plays a crucial role in constructivist learning. Learners build on existing mental frameworks or schemas to assimilate new information. These schemas are continually refined and expanded.

2.2.3 Social Interaction

Social interaction is considered fundamental in constructivist learning. Vygotsky's (cited in Mcleod: 2025) of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) suggests learners benefit from interactions with more knowledgeable peers or adults.



ontexts

Constructivist learning encourages learning in authentic, real-world contexts. This approach aims to make learning relevant and applicable to learners' lives.

2.2.5 Cognitive Processes in Constructivist Learning

Cognitive processes are not viewed as purely individual activities but are deeply influenced by social and cultural interactions. In constructivist learning, cognitive processes involve skills such as critical thinking, analysis, evaluation, and reflection. Learning methods like Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) can serve as effective platforms for stimulating these processes. As students share ideas, respond to others' thoughts, and collaboratively build understanding, they are not only gaining new information but also restructuring their knowledge through active and social experiences.

There are three important elements of Cognitive Processes in Constructivist learning, Namely:

2.2.5.1. Assimilation and Accommodation

Piaget's theory of assimilation involves fitting new information into existing mental frameworks, while accommodation involves modifying existing schemas to accommodate new information.

2.2.5.2. Reflection and Metacognition

Constructivist learning places emphasis on metacognition - the awareness and control of one's cognitive processes. Reflection on learning experiences helps learners make connections and adapt their understanding.

2.2.5.3. Scaffolding

Vygotsky's concept of scaffolding involves providing support to learners as they undertake tasks just beyond their current level of competence. This support is gradually removed as learners gain proficiency.



Applications in Educational Settings

2.2.6.1 Inquiry-Based Learning

Constructivist principles underpin inquiry-based learning approaches, where learners actively investigate and explore topics of interest, fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

2.2.6.2. Problem-Based Learning

In problem-based learning, students grapple with real-world issues, collaborating to find solutions. This approach promotes self-directed learning, teamwork, and application of knowledge.

2.2.6.3. Authentic Assessment

Constructivist learning aligns well with authentic assessment methods, which evaluate students' ability to apply knowledge in real-world contexts, rather than rote memorization.

2.3 Definition of Focus Group Discussions:

In general, FGD is often used as a research method. Focus group discussion is a technique where a researcher assembles a group of individuals to discuss a specific topic, aiming to draw from the complex personal experiences, beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes of the participants through a moderated interaction (Nyumba, Willson, derrick, and Mukherjee, 2017). Besides that, according to Powell and Single (1996), a focus Group is a group of individuals selected and assembled by researchers to discuss and comment on, from Personal experience, the topic that is the subject of the research technique, the focus group employs guided, interactional discussion as a means of generating “the rich details of complex experiences and the reasoning behind actions, beliefs, perceptions and attitudes”.



its development, this method has been widely applied in the learning process in of involving students' expression in elaborating thoughts, and actions, and perienicing learning activities.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) constitute a qualitative research technique characterized by the interaction between a moderator and a group of participants. Typically, FGDs involve a small, carefully selected group of individuals who share common characteristics or experiences. The discussions are structured around specific topics or research questions, enabling participants to express their perspectives, attitudes, and experiences in a collaborative and dynamic setting.

2.3.1. Components of Focus Group Discussions

2.3.1.1 Moderator Role:

A skilled moderator plays a crucial role in guiding the discussion, ensuring it remains focused on the research objectives, and encouraging all participants to contribute.

2.3.1.2. Participant Selection:

Participants are selected based on specific criteria relevant to the research goals, such as demographics, experiences, or expertise. A diverse yet cohesive group is typically preferred to capture a wide range of perspectives.

2.3.1.3. Discussion Guide or Protocol:

A carefully designed discussion guide outlines the topics, questions, and prompts that will be addressed during the FGD. This serves as a roadmap for the moderator and helps maintain focus.

2.3.1.4. Duration and Setting:

FGDs are conducted in a controlled setting conducive to open discussion. The duration is typically one to two hours, allowing for in-depth exploration of the chosen topics.



Focus Group Discussions

nsights

FGDs allow for a rich, detailed exploration of participants' experiences, perceptions, and attitudes. The interactive nature of the discussions often reveals nuanced perspectives that may not emerge in other research methods.

2.3.2.2. Group Dynamics and Interaction:

The group setting encourages participants to interact with one another, leading to the emergence of collective insights, consensus, or divergence of opinions. This dynamic interaction provides a deeper understanding of social norms and shared beliefs.

2.3.2.3. Exploration of Complex Issues

FGDs are particularly effective in investigating complex or sensitive topics that benefit from group dialogue and peer validation. They enable participants to build on each other's responses, offering a comprehensive view of the subject matter.

2.3.2.4. Preliminary Data for Survey Design:

FGDs can serve as a preliminary step in survey design, helping researchers identify key themes, terminology, and issues that may be incorporated into structured surveys for larger-scale studies.

2.3.2.5. Participant Empowerment:

FGDs empower participants by providing a platform to voice their opinions and contribute to the research process. This can lead to increased participant engagement and a sense of ownership in the study.

2.3.2.6. Flexibility and Adaptability:

FGDs offer the flexibility to adapt the discussion guide in real-time based on emerging themes, allowing researchers to explore unexpected insights and refine their research



Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) constitute a valuable qualitative research method for the in-depth exploration of participants' perspectives, attitudes, and experiences.

Through careful selection of participants, skilled moderation, and a well-structured discussion guide, FGDs yield valuable insights that may not be attainable through other research approaches. Researchers across disciplines continue to leverage FGDs to inform and enhance their understanding of complex social phenomena, making them an indispensable tool in qualitative research methodologies.

