



## STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION AND WRITING SKILL IN ENGLISH CLASS

Paskalina Widiastuti Ratnaningsih<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Dinamika Bangsa

E-mail: [paskalina.widiastuti@unama.ac.id](mailto:paskalina.widiastuti@unama.ac.id)<sup>1</sup>

Accepted :

10 November 2024

Published :

10 January 2025

Corresponding Author:

Paskalina Widiastuti Ratnaningsih

Email Corresponding :

[paskalina.widiastuti@unama.ac.id](mailto:paskalina.widiastuti@unama.ac.id)

### ABSTRACT

This study explores university students' views on using small group discussions to enhance writing skills. Writing is often considered a challenging skill because it requires the ability to organize ideas, construct sentences, and develop coherent paragraphs. Therefore, effective teaching methods are essential to help students improve their writing abilities. The study investigates the role of small group discussions in the writing learning process. Using a survey method, the researchers distributed questionnaires, and the data were analyzed using percentages for each statement. The findings show that students were motivated to learn English writing through small group discussions and that these discussions helped them better understand the writing process. This study contributes to the understanding of how small group discussions can support writing instruction, as previous research has mainly focused on their use in teaching speaking and reading skills.

**Keywords:** *Students' Perceptions, Small Group Discussion, Writing Skill, English.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching-learning activities have several methods to enhance better learning for students. Small group discussion is one of the learning methods used in the classroom. Small group discussion consists of several groups in a class. One group consists of three or four students (Antoni, 2014).

Small group discussion is used for enhancing writing skill. The students learn writing collaboratively with other students. They work in a group and form writing as a group. In English learning, there are four skills need to be learned. They are writing, reading, listening, and speaking (Mardhiyah et al., 2023; Veto Mortini et al., 2023). There are also three components in English learning, namely vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Writing is one of difficult skills since students need to be able to express ideas in a good sentence and

paragraphs (Fitria, 2024; Merris & Sari, 2019). Writing also needs to have suitable vocabulary and good English grammar. Hence, collaborative learning for writing is needed to solve difficulties in writing.

There are ten advantages of using small group discussion for teaching-learning activities. The first is small group discussion enhances activeness. By having group discussion, the students get more active to discuss in a group (Ilahi & Ratmanida, 2024). The students who are reluctant to ask to the lecturer can ask to other students in a group. The second is small group discussion enhances students' thinking ability. When the students discuss in a group, each student tries to think about the topic given (Arrasul et al., 2023). The third is small group discussion enhances students to exchange information (Arrasul et al., 2023; Ilahi & Ratmanida, 2024). The students exchange information

**Vol 8, No 1 (2025): ESTEEM**

when they discuss a topic. The fourth is the students have chances to express their opinions (Mardhiyah et al., 2023). Not only exchange information, the students can also express opinions related to the topics being discussed. The fifth is small group discussion enhances problem solving skill (Mardhiyah et al., 2023). When there are problems need to be solved, each group member tries to solve problems by discussing the best solution of the problems. The sixth is small group discussion enhances students centred learning (Syafitri, 2023; Mardhiyah et al., 2023). Students are more independent in learning. They search by themselves related to the topic given and the lecturer is as the facilitator when the students have questions during the discussion. The seventh is small group discussion enhances interaction among students. Since the students need to discuss, each student needs to interact one another and it enhances interaction and collaboration in learning (Syafitri, 2023; Ratih & Arsih, 2024). The eighth is the students more understand the learning materials. Since the students interact one another, they try to comprehend the learning material together. Hence, it enhances students' understanding of the learning material given (Ilahi & Ratmanida, 2024; Putri et al., 2023). The ninth is the students get more motivated and interested in learning (Ningsih et al., 2021). Since the students can discuss with other students and they are active to learn, it enhances their motivation to learn. The tenth is the students support one another (Arisman & Haryanti, 2019). In the small group discussion, the students need to discuss together (Mogea & Oroh, 2022) and they support one another when they find difficulties in learning.

There are six points in writing skill. The first is brainstorming. Brainstorming is needed before writing. Brainstorming is to have several ideas and choose the suitable ideas to be written in each paragraph (Dhananjaya et al., 2024). The second is vocabulary. In order to form a sentence, the

students need to select proper vocabularies (Fahmi & Rachmijati, 2021) in order to form a good sentence with appropriate meaning. One vocabulary can have more than one meaning. Hence, it is needed to choose the suitable vocabulary in a sentence. The third is delivering ideas. In order to form a good paragraph, each sentence in the paragraph must be delivered well (Isgiarno et al., 2020). The fourth is expressing ideas. The students need to think on how to express ideas well in both sentences and paragraphs. The fifth is grammar (Siregar, 2024). After the students brainstorm ideas and choose the suitable vocabularies, they need to form the sentence with correct grammar so that it conveys the appropriate meaning based on the grammar. The sixth is revision. After the students form the sentences and paragraphs, the students need to revise writing (Isgiarno et al., 2020; Langan & Winstanley, 2013). Hence, it can be a good writing.

There are five previous studies. The first is students had high engagement in small group discussion for English learning (Ilahi & Ratmanida, 2024). The second is small group discussion increased speaking skill for junior high school students (Rosadi et al., 2020) and for university students (Antoni, 2014). The third is small group discussion gave good learning experiences to the students (Syafitri, 2023). The fourth is small group discussion improved understanding on nature of light (Sobirin & Suryani, 2022). The fifth is small group discussion improved reading skill (Arrasul et al., 2023).

From those previous studies, there are no studies yet that focus on small group discussion in the process of learning writing. Hence, this study would like to focus on this area. The research question of this study: What are students' perceptions on small group discussion and writing skill in English class? This study would like to discover university students' perceptions on small group discussion and writing skill in English class.

**Vol 8, No 1 (2025): ESTEEM**

However, there is a gap in research on the use of small group discussions for improving writing skills. Existing studies have mainly focused on speaking, reading, and other aspects of learning. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by exploring university students' perceptions of small group discussions and their impact on writing skills in English classes. The research question guiding this study is: What are students' perceptions of small group discussions and writing skills in English class? This study is significant because it will provide insights into how small group discussions can be applied effectively to enhance writing skills, which has been underexplored in previous research. By understanding students' perspectives, the study can inform teaching practices and contribute to improving writing instruction in English classrooms.

**2. METHODS**

This study used survey method. Survey method is "procedures in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or to the entire population of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviours, or characteristics of the population" (Creswell, 2012; Fraenkel et al., 2014; Sugiyono, 2021). The respondents of this study were semester 1 students of English class in Management study program. There were 131 respondents that filled in the questionnaire. The respondents were chosen based on the students who implemented small group discussion for writing skill in English class that were Management students in semester 1. The steps of conducting this research were as follows: the questionnaire was made by using Google Form, then it was distributed and filled by the students, and the results were analyzed. The questionnaire consisted of twenty closed-ended statements by using Likert scale and two open-ended questions. Likert scale consisted of 5 (Strongly Agree), 4 (Agree), 3 (Neutral), 2 (Disagree), 1 (Strongly Disagree). The result

was analyzed by using percentage for closed-ended questions.

**3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This part consists of results and discussion. The results consist of the results of questionnaire. Discussion consists of the results and the relations with the theory and previous studies.

The result of this study was divided into two parts. The first was the result of closed-ended questionnaire. The result was in the form of percentage in each statement. The second was the result of open-ended questions. Table 1 below showed the results of closed-ended questionnaire.

**Table 1. The Results of Closed-Ended Questionnaire**

No.	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Small Group Discussion improves my thinking skill about the topic being studied.	0%	1%	8%	<b>51%</b>	40%
2.	Small Group Discussion makes me more enthusiastic in learning.	0%	0%	27%	<b>44%</b>	28%
3.	Small Group Discussion provides a space to support one another in learning between group members.	0%	0%	12%	<b>47%</b>	40%
4.	Small Group Discussion provides a space for me to exchange information.	0%	0%	13%	<b>50%</b>	37%
5.	Small Group Discussion gives me opportunity to express my opinion.	0%	0%	14%	<b>52%</b>	34%
6.	Small Group Discussion makes me actively participate in group discussions.	0%	0%	15%	<b>52%</b>	33%
7.	Small Group Discussion provides a space for me to solve problems together.	0%	0%	14%	<b>53%</b>	33%
8.	Small Group Discussion	0%	2%	21%	<b>54%</b>	23%

**Vol 8, No 1 (2025): ESTEEM**

	makes me understand learning material better.					
9.	Small Group Discussion makes me interact more with friends during discussions.	0%	1%	8%	<b>53%</b>	39%
10.	Small Group Discussion motivates me to learn.	0%	2%	28%	<b>49%</b>	21%
11.	Small Group Discussion makes me more independent to study with friends in a group.	0%	1%	23%	<b>54%</b>	22%
12.	Small Group Discussion improves my English vocabulary.	0%	2%	30%	<b>47%</b>	22%
13.	Small Group Discussion makes me and my friends in the group think together to determine the right writing ideas.	0%	1%	6%	<b>59%</b>	34%
14.	Small Group Discussion improves my ability to write sentences in English.	0%	0%	18%	<b>56%</b>	26%
15.	Small Group Discussion improves my ability to structure sentences in paragraphs in English.	0%	0%	21%	<b>56%</b>	23%
16.	Small Group Discussion makes me be able to express my ideas in English.	0%	0%	24%	<b>50%</b>	26%
17.	Small Group Discussion makes me be able to write with proper English grammar.	0%	1%	21%	<b>63%</b>	15%
18.	Small Group Discussion makes me fluent in English writing.	0%	2%	31%	<b>51%</b>	16%
19.	Small Group Discussion makes me and my friends in the group think together to revise	0%	2%	17%	<b>53%</b>	29%

	inappropriate writing in English.					
20.	Small Group Discussion makes me happy to learn to write in English.	0%	2%	30%	<b>50%</b>	19%

Based on the table above, the results can be summarized as follows. First, 51% of respondents agreed that small group discussions helped improve their thinking skills regarding the topic being studied. Second, 44% of respondents felt that small group discussions increased their enthusiasm for learning. Third, 47% of respondents agreed that small group discussions provided opportunities for group members to support one another in learning. Fourth, 50% of respondents believed that small group discussions offered a platform for exchanging information. Fifth, 52% of respondents felt that small group discussions allowed them to express their opinions. Sixth, 52% agreed that small group discussions made them more active participants. Seventh, 53% of respondents believed that small group discussions offered opportunities for collaborative problem-solving. Eighth, 54% of respondents agreed that small group discussions helped them better understand the learning material. Ninth, 53% of respondents stated that small group discussions led to more interaction with peers during discussions. Tenth, 49% of respondents felt that small group discussions motivated them to learn. Eleventh, 54% of respondents agreed that small group discussions made them more independent in studying with their peers. Twelfth, 47% of respondents believed that small group discussions helped improve their English vocabulary. Thirteenth, 59% of respondents felt that small group discussions helped them and their peers collectively decide on appropriate writing ideas. Fourteenth, 56% agreed that small group discussions enhanced their ability to write sentences in English. Fifteenth, 56% agreed that small group discussions improved their ability to structure sentences into paragraphs. Sixteenth, 50% of respondents believed that

**STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION AND WRITING SKILL IN ENGLISH CLASS**

**Vol 8, No 1 (2025): ESTEEM**

small group discussions helped them express their ideas in English. Seventeenth, 63% of respondents agreed that small group discussions helped them write with proper English grammar. Eighteenth, 51% felt that small group discussions helped them become more fluent in English writing. Nineteenth, 53% of respondents agreed that small group discussions enabled them to work together with their peers to revise inappropriate writing. Twentieth, 50% of respondents said that small group discussions made them enjoy learning to write in English.

Additionally, there were two open-ended questions. The first asked about students' experiences with small group discussions in English class. Students shared that small group discussions helped them better understand the learning material, complete tasks faster, improve communication skills, exchange opinions, enhance collaboration, boost thinking ability, develop writing skills, finish tasks on time, gain knowledge, and foster teamwork. The second question asked about students' experiences with small group discussions for writing in English. Students indicated that small group discussions improved their understanding of writing, enhanced their writing skills, assisted them in writing in English, helped them express ideas in sentences, improved sentence structure, enhanced grammar while revising writing, expanded vocabulary, allowed them to give and receive feedback, increased self-confidence in writing, improved problem-solving in writing, and made writing easier.

Based on the results above, it could be seen as follows. The first was the results from closed-ended questionnaire. All respondents agreed in twenty statements given in closed-ended questionnaire. Small group discussion enhanced thinking skill (Arrasul et al., 2023), supported one another among students in the group (Arisman & Haryanti, 2019), gave opportunity to express opinions (Mardhiyah et al., 2023), encouraged the students to be active during discussion (Ilahi & Ratmanida, 2024), enhanced problem (Mardhiyah et al., 2023), made the students more understand the learning material (Ilahi & Ratmanida,

2024), enhanced interaction during discussion (Syafitri, 2023), and made the students more independent in learning and enhanced students centred learning (Syafitri, 2023; Wismath & Orr, 2015).

Small group discussion also enhanced the students in the process of brainstorming before writing (Dhananjaya et al., 2024), enhanced vocabulary (Fahmi & Rachmijati, 2021; Isgiarno et al., 2020) and English grammar (Siregar, 2024), increased the process of delivering ideas into writing sentences and paragraphs (Isgiarno et al., 2020), and made the students be able to revise writing (Isgiarno et al., 2020)

Small group discussion also gave good learning experiences. Those experiences relate to using small group discussion for English writing. The students had positive responses related to their experiences.

Based on the previous studies, small group discussion enhanced speaking skill for university students (Antoni, 2014) and enhanced reading skill (Arrasul et al., 2023; Purnomo et al., 2024). This study added the previous studies that small group discussion can also enhance English writing skill for university students.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Based on the results and discussion above, it can be concluded that small group discussion has motivated the students to learn writing in English class. Students get many advantages to learn by using small group discussion for writing. Students' ability to write also increases. Future researcher can focus to study small group discussion and the relation with listening skill since it is slightly explored.

#### **5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The researcher would like to thank to the respondents who participate in this research. The researcher would like also thank to all that cannot be mentioned one by one.

**6. REFERENCES**

- Antoni, R. (2014). Teaching Speaking Skill through Small Group Discussion Technique at the Accounting Study Program. *Al-Manar: Journal of Education and Islamic Studies*, 5(1), 55–64.
- Arisman, R., & Haryanti, I. S. (2019). Using Small Group Discussion To Improve Students' Reading Achievement on Narrative Text. *English Community Journal*, 3(1), 325–334. <https://doi.org/10.32502/ecj.v3i1.1698>
- Arrasul, A. R., Rahmawati, L., Sabata, Y. N., Hardianti, S., & Haluti, A. (2023). Small Group Discussion in Teaching Reading Comprehension at SMA Negeri 2 Toili. *Bee Journal: BABASAL English Education Journal*, 4(2), 94–103.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*. Pearson Education, Inc.
- Dhananjaya, P. A., Karima, F. H., & Egar, N. (2024). Improving Students' Writing Skill in Writing Descriptive Text using Brainstorming Plus Webbing Techniques. *Journal of Nusantara Education*, 3(2), 69–78. <https://doi.org/10.57176/jn.v3i2.100>
- Fahmi, S., & Rachmijati, C. (2021). Improving Students' Writing Skill Using Grammary Application for Second Grade in Senior High School. *PROJECT (Professional Journal of English Education)*, 4(1), 69–74. <https://doi.org/10.22460/project.v4i1.p69-74>
- Fitria, T. N. (2024). Creative Writing Skills in English: Develop Students' Potential and Creativity. *EBONY: Journal of English Language Teaching, Linguistics, and Literature*, 4(1), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.37304/ebony.v4i1.10908>
- Fraenkel, J. R., Wallen, N. E., & Hyun, H. h. (2014). *How To Design And Evaluate Research In Education* (Eighth Edi). McGraw-Hill Education.
- Ilahi, P. R., & Ratmanida. (2024). Student Engagement in Small Group Discussion for English Language Learning at SMAN 1 Salimpaung. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 13(1), 137–143.
- Isgiarno, Y. C., Cahyono, B. Y., & Rahmanningtyas, H. (2020). Increasing EFL Students' Writing Skill Using Jigsaw and Online Searching Strategy. *IJEE (Indonesian Journal of English Education)*, 7(1), 95–110. <https://doi.org/10.15408/ijee.v7i1.16383>
- Langan, J., & Winstanley, S. (2013). *College Writing Skills with Readings*. Langara Collage.
- Mardhiyah, A., Jaya, A., & Uzer, Y. (2023). Students' Speaking Ability Through Small Group Discussion. *Esteem: Journal of English Education Study Programme*, 6(1), 81–86. <https://doi.org/10.31851/esteem.v6i1.10216>
- Merris, D., & Sari, M. (2019). An overview of genre based approach in Efl writing class. *JournE*, 1(1), 31–40.
- Mogea, T., & Oroh, E. Z. (2022). Applying Small Group Discussion To Enhance Students' Speaking Ability At SMAN 1 Poigar. *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Sastra Inggris*, 2(2), 101–107. <https://doi.org/10.55606/jupensi.v2i2.499>
- Ningsih, S., Amin, B., & Muhsin, M. A. (2021). The Use of Small Group Discussion in Teaching Reading Comprehension at Junior High School. *FOSTER JELT: Journal of English Language Teaching*, 2(4), 515–526. <https://doi.org/10.24256/foster-jelt.v2i4.63>
- Purnomo, E., Jermaina, N., Marheni, E.,

**Vol 8, No 1 (2025): ESTEEM**

- Gumilar, A., Widarsa, A. H., Elpatsa, A., & Abidin, N. E. Z. (2024). Enhancing Problem-Solving Skills Through Physical Education Learning: A Comprehensive Analysis. *Retos*, 58, 435–444.  
<https://doi.org/10.47197/retos.v58.106838>
- Putri, A. D., Jaya, A., & Marleni, M. (2023). Exploring the Students' Speaking Ability Based on Their Different Personalities. *Esteem Journal of English Education Study Programme*, 6(1), 10–16.  
<https://doi.org/10.31851/esteem.v6i1.10203>
- Ratih, A., & Arsih, F. (2024). Implementation of Project-Based Learning in 21st Century Learning in Science Learning: A Systematic Literature Review. *International Conference on Education and Innovation*, 15–24.
- Rosadi, F. S., Nuraeni, C., & Priadi, A. (2020). The Use of Small Group Discussion Strategy in Teaching English Speaking. *Jurnal Pujangga*, 6(2), 134–146.  
<https://doi.org/10.47313/pujangga.v6i2.992>
- Siregar, K. I. (2024). Improving Students' Writing Skill on Recount Text Through Diary Writing at Eighth Grade of MTS Pondok Pesantren Ulumul Qur'an Medan. *Bright Vision: Journal of Language and Education*, 1(I), 78–91.  
<https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4841848>
- Sobirin, M., & Suryani, E. (2022). Small Group Discussion (SGD) Learning Model on Understanding the Concept of the Nature of Light in SD Negeri 1 Puguh. *Widyagogik: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran Sekolah Dasar*, 10(1), 63–75.  
<https://doi.org/10.21107/widyagogik.v10i1.15716>
- Sugiyono. (2021). *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan (Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Kombinasi, R&D dan Penelitian Pendidikan)* (A. Nuryanto (ed.); Kedua). ALFABETA, CV.
- Syafitri, W. (2023). Learning Experiences in Small Group Discussions in the Third Semester of English Education Students. *Journal of Languages and Language Teaching*, 11(1), 27–38.  
<https://doi.org/10.33394/jollt.v11i1.6339>
- Veto Mortini, A., Jaya, A., & Akbar Zam, M. A. (2023). the Effect of Map Libs Technique on Students' English Learning Achievement in Learning Personal Pronoun. *Esteem Journal of English Education Study Programme*, 6(2), 216–225.  
<https://doi.org/10.31851/esteem.v6i2.12316>
- Wismath, S. L., & Orr, D. (2015). Collaborative Learning in Problem Solving: A Case Study in Metacognitive Learning. *The Canadian Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 6(3).  
<https://doi.org/10.5206/CJSOTL-RCACEA.2015.3.10>