Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter consists of the general information of the study and the reasons as to why the researcher chose the topic of study. This chapter discusses the background of the study, which describes the reasons of selecting the topic selected. The following part is the identification of the problem, which explains the current issue or learning gap based on in this research. Then, the delimitation of the research explains the focus of the research, followed by the research question. Lastly, the significance of the research and the organization of the research are included in this chapter, it reveals the benefits of the research for several parties and it shows the structure of the research.

Background of the Study

Group discussion is one of the classroom activities in teaching and learning language. Group discussion is a teaching technique used by the teacher to facilitate students' interaction in the classroom. According to Rahman, "Group discussion is where two or more students declare, present, explain and refuse their knowledge, experience, opinions and feelings" (as cited in Mutrifin, Degeng, Ardhana, & Setyosari, 2017, p.204). Group discussion facilitates students to exchange their knowledge and experience together. Group discussion can be done through an online class and offline class. However, group discussion in online discussion has limited interaction which makes students hardly develop interaction skills with other students. This evidence is in line with Baskoro (2018)

who argues that online discussion makes students barely experience the ambience of the classroom discussion during learning.

Offline group discussion is important because it can help students socialize with other students in in real-life. Offline group discussion requires students to interact face-to-face with other students when discussing particular topics. By training students in face-to-face interactions, the teacher provides opportunities for the students to build interaction among other students in learning time. This means that the teacher needs to make sure that group discussion does not only focus on the topic, but also focus on how the students discuss it in their social interaction. This practice helps the students perform discussion skill in real life (Tevdovska, 2015).

In the group discussion, there are many types of individual differences of students. Learning in a discussion requires the students to discuss a topic (Cheruvelil, Soranno, Weathers, Hanson, Simon, Filstrup, & Read, 2014). It makes them connect with other students in learning together as a team. They mention interpersonal skill as a skill where students connect with other students using emotional engagement as human beings.

Some scholars had previously analyzed this topic. A study by Taqi and Al-Nouh (2014) reported that group discussions improve their attitude in communication skill, self-confidence and respect. In addition, Tyler (2017) mentions that group discussions make the students more tolerant in learning diversity. For example, students in one private university in Yogyakarta came from various places. The students should deal with diversity in order to interact

with other students who come from different backgrounds and build the relationship among students by developing interpersonal skills in their learning. If the students are aware of the benefits of group discussions, they might develop their interpersonal skills, thus would be more willing to participate in group discussions.

However, based on the researcher's preliminary observation, there were students who barely participate in a group discussion. Septaviana (2016) stated that students in English Language Education Department (ELED) in one private university in Yogyakarta have a lack of confidence in speaking during the group discussion. Based on the researcher's observation, there were students who have more confidence who express their opinion more often and dominate the discussion, while some of them who were less confident stayed silent during the discussion. The reason is that they do not know the importance of active participation in a group discussion. They do not get actively involved in it and it makes it difficult for the students to cooperate and get the benefits of group discussion for their interpersonal skill. Based on the explanation, the researcher wants to explore the benefits of group discussion for students' interpersonal skill. The researcher wanted to see if group discussion might increase the students' confidence, communication skill, and knowledge of a particular topic.

Identification of the Problem

There are several problems regarding group discussions in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. Firstly, some of the students tend to dominate during the group discussion. It makes the other students have limited

chance to involve and give their opinion in a group discussion. Secondly, some students are shy and afraid to express their opinions in a group discussion. As a result, the students are unable to develop a relationship with other friends or the teacher in a group discussion. They decide to keep their opinion for themselves. The researcher sees both problems of group discussions among ELED students at one private university in Yogyakarta.

Delimitation of the Research

This research focused on offline discussions in the classroom where the students meet face-to-face directly. The reason of this limitation is that offline discussion contains human atmosphere in learning. This is called as the traditional discussion.

Research Question

The researcher attempts to explore the benefits of group discussion. The problem of this study is formulated into "What are the benefits of group discussion for students' interpersonal skills"?

Objective of the Research

The objective of the research is to explore the benefits of group discussion for the students' interpersonal skills based on their perception.

Significance of the Research

This research is expected to give benefits and positive contributions for teachers, students, and future researchers.

Students. After the students find out about the benefits of group discussions, they can be aware of it and take part in participating in group

discussions. When they discover that group discussions provide benefits for their interpersonal skill development, they would have more willingness to join group discussions.

Teachers. This research gives benefits for the teachers. Teachers can use these findings as the consideration to design group discussion as a teaching technique and apply it in the classroom. After the teacher knows the result, teacher can understand about the positive effects of group discussions especially for the students' interpersonal skills.

Future researchers. By conducting this research, future researchers can use this research as an additional source for the same topic. Therefore, this research can encourage other researchers to update the quality of this analysis and to make this research better.

Organization of the Chapters

This research organizes the analysis into five chapters, namely chapter one, chapter two, chapter three, chapter four and chapter five. This chapter provides the general overview of the information about this research.

Chapter one is the introduction. It discusses background of the study, the identification of the problem, the research question, the objectives of the research, the delimitation of the research, the significances of the research, and the outline of the study. It covers the researcher's reasons in choosing the topic of research.

Chapter two is the literature review. It provides the theories as the foundation of the research related to group discussions and interpersonal skills. It

compiles various books, journal articles and online sources in order to support this research.

Chapter three is the research methodology. It explains the methodology of the research. This method includes the research design, research setting, research participants, data collection method, research instrument, and data collection procedure and data analysis.

Chapter four consists of the findings and discussions of this research. This chapter shows the findings gained from the participants of this research. This chapter provides a discussion of every finding and relate them to other theories which shares the same idea. The researcher explains the benefits of group discussion for students' interpersonal skill.

Chapter five of this research provides the conclusion and recommendation. In the conclusion, all the summaries of every result of this research are provided. The conclusion provides students' perception on the benefits group discussion for students' interpersonal skill, and the general conclusion of this research. Lastly, the researcher also puts some recommendations to several people that relate to this study.