

# **GROUP WORK: STUDENTS TEACH STUDENTS**

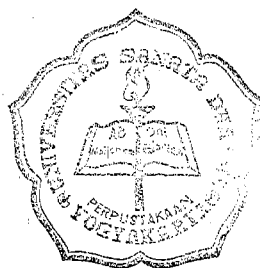
**A Motivating Factor in Developing  
Communicative Skills**



**A Thesis Presented to  
The Department of English  
The Faculty of Letters and Arts  
SANATA DHARMA  
Teachers' Training Institute**

**In Partial Fulfilment  
of the Requirements for  
Sarjana Degree**

**by  
Vincent Saragih  
I 1443**



**Yogyakarta  
July, 1981**

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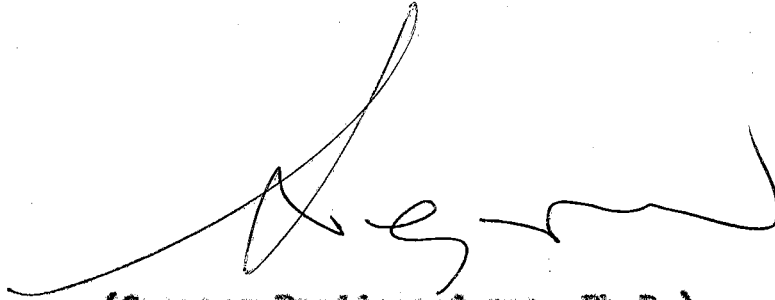
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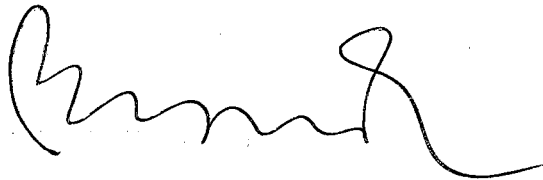
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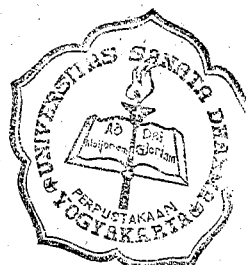
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## INTRODUCTION

One of the main functions of language is for communication, and the idea of learning a language is to use it. When the students speak or read a language, communication takes place. In Junior High Schools, where the emphasis of learning English is on speaking, the students are expected to be able to communicate in English. In Senior High Schools, where the emphasis is on reading, there is expected to be a flow of message from the writer to them whenever they read a book written in English. The same is true with students in the university level: reading English. What these students need is the ability to use the language. However, the situations we find in most English classrooms in our country are often far from being satisfactory as far as communication is concerned. His dissatisfaction to the present situations brings the writer the interests in discussing Group Work or the "Dynamic Group", or the "Buzz Group" as some people give the names. Through Group Work, the writer expects the students to be able to use the language for communication: They are able to listen, read, speak and write English, though not perfectly.

Group Work is an approach in which the students teach and learn from one another. A group of students meet to learn a certain subject, and share information. They carry out a conversation, state arguments or disagreements. The purpose of Group Work, therefore, is to exchange ideas, to reach an agreement, a consensus. This

approach is not new at all. However, it is very seldom used in the teaching of English in Indonesia. An English teacher usually uses the lockstep system in which the students are taught the same way. In other words, the lockstep system applies teacher-student interaction, whereas Group Work pays attention more to student-student interaction. Group Work, therefore, makes drastic changes to the lockstep system.

In this thesis we will see some situations in the teaching of English in our country which reveal the failures of teaching and learning processes, apart from the complexity of the language.

Since every approach has its demerits and merits, we will see the possible weaknesses and the advantages of Group Work so that we can judge objectively its effectiveness.

Then we come to the target groups. It seems that Group Work is good to teach advanced students only, and that beginners of English do not have enough knowledge to communicate in English. In this section we will see that Group Work is applicable to teach students of any level.

Besides, we will see the organization of a Group Work class, that is, how the teacher organizes the class in order to obtain good results. Poor organization will result in poor results. The teacher has to know what she and the students do in class. The organization of a Group Work class is quite different from that of a common class.

Moreover, the writer will talk about group evaluation. The students are also tested in their ability to use English in communication. Group evaluation is very rarely used in testing. Here we will consider the possibility of testing students in groups.

Furthermore, in the Appendix he will present some activities that can be used in a Group Work class.

The rationale why there is this sequence is that, in order to obtain good results, first, we should know the benefits of this approach, and, second, we should know how to use Group Work in our teaching. The third is that, by providing some activities in the Appendix, the writer wants to ensure that, through his experiments, Group Work really works.

The background information in writing this thesis is the writer's two years' experience in "Peer Teaching" at the English Department, IKIP Sanata Dharma Yogyakarta, his six months' experience in teaching English to the Vietnamese boat people in Galang Refugee Camp, some articles published in FORUM and English Language Teaching Journal, and books on the methodology of language teaching as we see in the bibliography.

## Chapter I

### The Existing Variables of Learning

The failures of learning and teaching a foreign language is determined by two major factors, namely, the complexity of the language itself, and the complexity of language learning and teaching processes. Here the writer will talk about the failures of teaching and learning English in connection to the discussions of Group Work. The followings are some variables which, to the writer's opinion, are the hindrances in teaching and learning English for communication. The variables cover (1). linguistic setting, (2). the curriculum, (3). methods, (4). the instructional material, (5). textbooks, (6). students, (7). the teacher, and (8). the class.

#### 1. Linguistic Setting

In Indonesia, English is a foreign language, not a second language as many people may think. English is 'strange' to the society, and is hardly ever used as a means of communication except on special occasions, i.e., when there are foreigners who cannot speak Indonesian. This is different from the situations in the Philippines, Malaysia, or Singapore, where English is largely used in the community. In Indonesia we cannot expect the students to use English when they are outside the classroom

since the surroundings do not help. They are even mocked if they try to use English. The only ideal time for them to practise English is, therefore, when they stay in class.

Group Work uses the very short time effectively. Within a forty five minute class, the students learn something, because it is they who do the work, not the teacher.

## 2. The Curriculum

In Curriculum '75 it is stated that the goal of teaching English in Junior High Schools is spoken English. This is perhaps because of the assumption that students can read more easily if they can speak the language. If spoken English is the goal at this level, we may ask a question: is that goal really reached? The answer is absolutely 'no'. On the other hand, the goal of teaching English in Senior High Schools is reading so that the students later, when they are in the university level, can read textbooks written in English. The same question occurs: is that goal reached? The answer is 'yes' and 'no'. There are students who can read English well. But we should not be so blind as not to see that there are a lot of students who complain for being unable to read even simple English.

We also find some other points stated in the curriculum contrary to the facts. It is said that Senior High School learners are supposed to master 4,000 English words when they have finished the course. If they are all word stems, this is completely impossible. Even a scholar of English may not have that large vocabulary. Another example, the time for every lesson unit has been decided in the curriculum. To teach colours and plurals in the first semester of the first year Junior High Schools, for example, the time given is six hours for each. In reality, many teachers and students need less time.

However, the teacher has to stick to the curriculum for administrative purpose, because there are visits from the government to inspect whether the class teacher does her job according to the curriculum or not. It is also because of the teacher's fear that her students cannot do the final exam well, if she does not fulfil the requirements of the curriculum. As a result, the teacher teaches everything hastily, but 'more haste, less speed'. The students may not learn anything.

Group Work does not object to the curricular goals stated in the curriculum. It helps for the realization of the goals. If the goals of teaching English in the Junior High Schools and Senior High Schools



are speaking and reading, Group Work can always be used to teach those two skills. It is not limited to the teaching of speaking only.

### 3. Methods

Drills seem to be widely accepted in most classroom situations to make the students 'master' grammatical patterns. After the introduction of some structural pattern, drill immediately follows.

Drills, however, lack contextualization or situationalization which is the basic frame of language use. They fail to bridge the gap between what the students learn in class and what is actually used in daily conversations. The following example might be illustrative. Suppose the teacher asks her students to repeat the pattern "Is this a pen?" They will chorally imitate "Is this a pen?" In real communication, people do not speak that way, unless the pen is extraordinarily large. Instead, they say "What do you call this in English?" Therefore, we see that the conversation in a drill class is not natural.

Besides, the students are treated like machines, whereas they have heads, they have the creativity of minds. They are not like cassette-records which record voices and produce exactly the

same things. We can repeat a pattern, but that does not mean we can produce it when we want to use it.

Moreover, drills allow the teacher to talk for at least fifty per cent of a lesson duration. This leaves a maximum of twenty five minutes out of forty five to the students. In fact, as five minutes are usually lost on administrative matters (getting students in and out of the classroom, roll call, etc.), the total available to them is twenty minutes. Or in a class of sixty students, an average of twenty seconds per student per lesson. It is obviously unrealistic to expect the students to achieve something within that small amount of time.

Peter Cole in his article "Some Techniques for Communication" writes something on the failures of drills for language acquisition as follows:

"The acquisition of language habits is in itself insufficient for the true mastery of a language. We must develop a methodology that will induce the students to communicate with others by employing the newly learned set of structures - for the ability to use a language can be acquired by the act of using the language."<sup>1</sup>

In connection to that, H.H. Stern in his article "Psycholinguistics and Second Language Teaching" states his opinions on drills,

"Psycholinguistics emphasizes the human being as a user of language and thus

1. FORUM, Number 1, Volume X, January - February 1972, p. 2.

can serve as a healthy antidote when we, as teachers, get too caught up in the formal aspects of the language which I have just discussed, and fall into the snares of drills for drills' sake. A language ~~comes~~ to reality in contexts, in wanting to say something, and in wanting to listen."<sup>2</sup>

Group Work can solve the problems faced by drills. In groups, the students learn to use English in 'real life' situations. There are no drills, no direct repetitions of patterns. They use English, that is all. As for the amount of practice, there is no doubt that the students get chance to practise their English. A group of four or five students at least get thirty minutes to use English in class.

In relationship to methods, furthermore, we often find that the teacher translates for her students. Whenever the students meet difficult words or expressions, the teacher tends to fall to the easiest way, that is, translating them into the native language of the students. It is very seldom that a teacher elicits the meanings from the students. As a result, the students make no efforts. They are spoilt. Since they get the meanings of the words very easily, they tend to forget them as well. Something obtained without any efforts tends to be regarded as worthless. Besides, it is not always

2. Oller, Jr., John W. and Richards, Jack C., Focus on the Learner: Pragmatic Perspectives for the Language Teacher, Newbury House Publishers, Inc., Massachusetts, 1978, p. 18.

possible to use translation. A word in language X does not always have the same translation in language Y. Consider, for example, the words house and home. In Indonesian they both mean rumah, but in English they have different meanings as far as connotation is concerned. Moreover, translation does not make the students use the language. Being able to translate does not mean the students can read or speak the language, because in translation, the students are usually dictionary thumbing.

Group Work does not say that translation is not important. It is important as a skill in itself, and it is good for advanced students who are supposed to have 'mastered' the language. However, its use in reading a passage is not effective at all. It takes too much time to translate a passage before the students come to the core of it. It can be given as an exercise to train the skill in translation, but not as a substitute for language acquisition. In reading a passage, for instance, the students have to try to think in the target language, not in their mother-tongue by the use of translation. In groups the students are not expected to be interpreters, but as the users of the target language.

#### 4. The Instructional Material

We often notice that teaching grammar seems to

be the most important task of the teacher's. This, of course, can easily be done without any competence of the teacher in English as occurs in a Latin classroom. A person who does not know English can teach its structure, and the teacher can easily test the students' knowledge. However, this causes some difficulties. The students tend to think that, when they learn English, they have to memorize the rules. They have a bad impression on English. Besides, learning its structure does not mean learning the target language. In fact, structure in itself is not important. It is important if it helps the students use the language. We do not expect them to be good at structure for intellectual purposes. Language does not constitute structure only. It is the expression of the living mind. The native speakers, just like children learning their mother-tongue, are often unaware of the rules, yet they are perfect native speakers. It is an irony in foreign language teaching that teaching a language is often equated with teaching its structure.

H.H. Stern says that the purpose of language teaching is to make the students able to use it in communication.

"Teachers are often preoccupied with the forms of language, the patterns of sentences, points of pronunciation, and so on, that they quite forget that the language is used by people for communication."<sup>3</sup>

3. Oller, Jr. John W. and Richards, Jack C., Focus on the Learner: Pragmatic Perspectives for the Language Teacher, Newbury House Publishers, Inc., Massachusetts, 1978, p. 48.

The students put into groups are taught to use the structure for communication, not to memorize the rules. The stress, therefore, is on the practical use of the rules, not the theoretical one. It is better to make mistakes in structure than to learn about the language but unable to use it. The students learn from their mistakes until finally they produce the correct constructions.

### 5. Textbooks

There is no textbook available which is felt to be the best to teach English, whereas many teachers lay their hopes on textbooks. To the writer's opinions, there is no textbook which best suit the needs of students. After all, what we find in the book is just language in print, recorded language. It is the role of the teacher and students to transform the bookish language into real language, to transform it into action, into dynamic language.

Group Work does not lay its hope on textbooks, but on the ability of the teacher and students to use the language in real communication, and, therefore, to make it into live language. No matter how hard the writer has worked to write a book, we cannot expect too much from it. A good book does not guarantee good performances of the students. If the students are

not successful in learning English as we would like them to be, the blame should not immediately lie on the textbooks simply because the latter are just one of the means of language learning.

#### 6. The Students

We cannot deny that students come to class with their uniqueness. They are different from one another: different in age, educational level, capacity, different in everything. They are individuals. However, we observe that they are taught the same way in class. The poor and bright students are treated the same, both in teaching and evaluation. There is no doubt that this situation does not benefit each student. Due to their uniqueness, they do not have the same rate of learning. To teach the students to reach the same level disregarding their personalities is a failure.

Besides, the students come to class with their native language in their heads. They, sure enough, do not have the same motivation in learning the target language as when they learn their mother-tongue. Their native language is already with them in which they can express their needs. Learning a foreign language is quite different from learning a native language. Also, there is always interference from their native language. This makes the students in a difficult position to learn the target language.



Moreover, the students do not learn English only. They have to learn other subjects as well. And they may not give the same attention to English as they do to mathematics, for instance. This is understandable since the students have established in their minds that English is not an important subject, but mathematics is. We observe how students struggle to be accepted in the I.P.A. class. We also get the impression that students do not like English, because to them English is difficult. Therefore, the only ideal time to study English with 'attention' is in class.

Group Work pays attention to the uniqueness of each student. All the instructions are individualized. The students work according to their rates. They make progress according to their capacities.

Group Work does not deny that there is interference with the native language of the students. However, it stresses the use of the target language which simultaneously tries to decrease interference. And, if the students make mistakes as a result of interference, which is reasonable, their friends and the teacher are always available and ready to help them. The writer remembers when his friends corrected his pronunciations of the words sheep and ship for he was unable to distinguish the /i:/ and /i/ sounds. Group Work also sees that learning a foreign language is not the same with learning the native language, for the students' motiva-



tion is different in learning those two languages. By providing them with clear goals of learning English, Group Work motivates the students to learn English, not to learn about it. The dynamic group makes the students realize that learning English is, in fact, enjoyable, not difficult as they often think.

Finally, Group Work also sees that the ideal time to study English is when the students are in class. Therefore, it emphasizes that the students do the work. They teach and learn from one another. They learn by doing. Only by this means does learning take place.

## 7. The Teacher

We observe that in most classroom situations, it is the teacher who almost always talks. She does most of the talking, and the students are just as passive as the desks, doing nothing. On the other hand, she is usually the central focal point of the students' attention. She is regarded as the one who knows everything, and the students know nothing. She is in the superior position, and the students are in the lower position. The class, as a result, is like a business meeting between the president director of a company and his staff where the decision is always taken by the director as the one responsible for the

company. The teacher proves herself as a 'dictator'. In other words, she dominates the class both verbally and physically.

By dominating the class, the students do not feel involved in the lesson. They do not feel responsible for the progress of the lesson. They just wait and wait until the teacher does something for them. By just remaining as listeners, the students tend to get bored, and wait till the bell rings. Moreover, by dictating everything to the students, the teacher cannot measure the achievements of her students. She cannot see the output. If she asks her students whether they have understood what she said or not, the usual answer from the students is 'yes', whereas they mean 'no'. When the bell rings, the students leave the class gladly because they have noted down everything the teacher has said which they will pile on their desks at home. The teacher also leaves the class happily because she thinks she has done her job quite well, and the students have listened to her 'lecture' silently the whole period long. It is one of the ironies of foreign language teaching that teaching is equated with talking and telling, and the students hardly ever take part in the talking.

In her teaching, she usually speaks Indonesian. This is perhaps because of her wisdom that, if she

speaks English, her students will not catch anything she says, or perhaps because of her inability to speak English. It is hardly believable how a teacher can teach her students to speak, if she herself never speaks it. She is like an irresponsible mother who asks her children to speak kindly, but she herself speaks roughly. How will the students know the model? It is not reasonable to expect the students to use the target language. Even if she speaks in English, the students may not speak English.

Group Work emphasizes the performance of the students since it is the students who come to school to learn. It opens her eyes to see how good and how bad the students show their linguistic performance and competence. Yet the class teacher must also use the target language.

As for English speaking atmosphere, Group work requires that English, and no other languages, is a means of communication. All the conversations are done in English. The teacher has to speak English, and so have the students. Any use of other 'strange' languages is a kind of distortion to the communication, and is, therefore, noise. The teacher should not feel pity for the students if they sometimes do not understand what she says, as long as she adapts her English to their level. They are reasonably

challenged. If they never start practising their English, when will the time come?

### 8. The Class

In Indonesia an English teacher is often afflicted with large classes. Forty to fifty students in one class is not uncommon. In the coming years, the number of students in a class will surely be larger due to the increasing number of students registered at schools from year to year. Especially in a foreign language classroom, a large class creates more problems than a smaller one. Teaching a class consisting of ten students is quite different from teaching a class consisting of forty. The noise produced by a large class is greater. The term noise is applied here, a term from the communication theory, for communication exists in class. The teacher communicates with the students, and the students communicate among themselves. Noise applies to all those random fluctuations of the system that cannot be controlled. Besides, the students in a large class do not have enough chance to practise their English. Each student may not have enough chance to expose himself in the target language. Moreover, it is difficult for the teacher to give attention to each

student.

Group Work enables the teacher to make the class smaller by dividing the students into several groups, and raise the number of 'teachers' for the group members function as the teachers to themselves. Group Work enables the teacher to handle the power of making noise into effective noise in communication. No doubt, the students will also get enough opportunity to express themselves in English, and every student gets the attention from his friends.

## Chapter II

### Possible Weaknesses of Group Work

The use of Group Work in foreign language teaching in Indonesia, as it has been mentioned, is extremely scarce. Whenever the possibility of Group Work is considered, all or some of the following arguments against this approach occur: (1). correction of mistakes becomes an almost impossible task of the teacher, (2). there are students who cannot work together in groups, (3). at an early stage, especially, students will not be able to communicate in the target language, (4). students tend to use their native language instead of the target language in groups, (5). Group Work hides and 'protects' slow learners, (6). activities in class become too noisy to control, (7). there is not enough time, and (8). it requires too much work of the teacher. Let us consider them one at a time, and see how they are solved in Group Work.

#### 1. Correction of Mistakes

Since there are several groups in class, it is impossible for the class teacher to correct all the mistakes of the students, for there is only one teacher. However, the problem of correcting mistakes is to a large extent solved by the group members, since they also function as 'teachers'. At least there is one good

student in each group who helps his 'peers'. In their group compositions - as we shall see in Chapter V - the groups are, therefore, well balanced. If possible, the students should sit facing one another as to be able to see what the other members are doing. If the students cannot find the solutions to their problems, they can always go to the class teacher. The teacher only helps them if her help is really needed. As long as the difficulties of the problems are reasonable to the level of the students, she lets them try to find the ways out of their problems.

Ruffino, Richard J. in his article "A Group-project to Free Communication" writes something on the correction of mistakes in groups of students:

"I found that students did not teach one another their mistakes (as some teachers might fear), but rather helped their fellow students by freely correcting one another's mistakes."<sup>4</sup>

In connection to this, Marianne Celce-Murcia also says something on the correction of mistakes in her article "Integrating Group Work with the Teaching of Grammar" as follows:

"Students often accept explanations, corrections, and suggestions from peers more readily than from the teacher."<sup>5</sup>

What Murcia says is true. If the teacher corrects

4. FORUM, Number 3, Volume XIV, July 1976, p. 44.

5. FORUM, Number 3, Volume XVIII, July 1980, p. 2.

the mistakes, the students tend to get discouraged, and too careful not to make mistakes. As a result, their confidence in using English gets lost. But in groups, they have the same interest in developing their English. They accept corrections of mistakes with dignity rather than as an attack, because they feel close to one another.

## 2. Students Unwilling to Work Together

Some students cannot study with other students. For this kind of students, studying together is just noisy, no good. They are not egoistic, anyhow. Yet they are 'sick', just like sick people in isolation. On the other hand, there are also students who are just egoistic. They do not want to study together, because they think they are better than other students, and would get nothing if they join the groups. They do not want to share experience, opinions, feelings and knowledge.

Fortunately, the purpose of Group Work is to communicate non-communication. It provides the 'sick' and egoistic students with remedy so that they can study together. Group Work makes the students aware that 'no man is an island', and that they cannot live separately from other people. In groups they co-operate



with one another, build a community, and their 'handicapes' will decline. It is difficult for the students to adapt themselves to the new 'society' for the first time. And, if some students cannot get along with other students in groups, the former will see that they make less progress in their studies, and finally will have self-introspection.

### 3. The Inability to Communicate

The fear that beginners cannot communicate in the target language is reasonable, since the students just start studying the target language. However, Group Work can still be used to teach students at an early stage. This will further be discussed in Chapter IV on the target groups.

### 4. Falling Back to the Use of the Native Language ✓

One may assume that the students in groups will not use the intended language as a means of communication since they are not good at the target language yet, and because they have their native language in their heads. We cannot deny that they tend to fall to the use of their mother-tongue, especially with those who feel uneasy to talk in a foreign language to his

close friends. However, this tendency can be decreased by the warning of the teacher early from the beginning of the formations of the groups that no other languages are used except English. To check whether the students really speak English or not, it is the role of the teacher to go from one group to the others to see their obedience. Another way of preventing the students from using their native language is by 'punishing' those who do not obey the rules. For example, a student who utters an Indonesian sentence is charged five rupiah. The money itself does not mean much, but the students will psychologically be ashamed if they are charged again and again. This situation worked with the fifth year students of the English Department, IKIP Sanata Dharma in 1980. The class decided that every student who uttered non-English sentences whenever they met one another during their stays in the campus would be charged ten rupiah for each sentence. As a result, everybody spoke English, no matter how uneasy he felt to talk in English with his close friends.

If the students still do not speak English, the teacher has to be more strict. She demands, for example, that those who do not speak English will be sent out of the class.

It is, of course, a long process until the students reach the level where they are aware of the needs to practise English. But, if they never start, they will

never get the ability to speak English. Step by step, they will finally realize that practising a lot is a must for the ability to use the language.

#### 5. The 'Protection' of Slow Learners

There is also an assumption that Group Work hides and 'protects' poor students. They feel safe when they are together with their friends. However, it is not always so with students in groups. The slow learners also make progress according to their capacities. They feel embarrassed if they contribute nothing to the groups. They are forced and force themselves to take part in the discussions. They will not feel discouraged whenever they make mistakes since they study together with their friends.

#### 6. Noise

It seems that the situation in a class of Group Work is too noisy to control. It is true that the students produce noise in their discussions. However, the noise generated by the chatter in each group presents no real problem. It does not break the communication down. All the students concentrate their minds on the topic given. The group members do not seem to be disturbed by other groups since they have their own



work to do. On the contrary, this will psychologically even encourage the students to participate in the discussion, because they feel that they are being watched by other members of other groups and the teacher. Here the teacher goes from one group to the others to make sure that the students produce the noise effectively in communication. Usually, just a glance at the students will make the students realize that they have to use their 'power of making noise' in communication. However, the teacher should not insist that the students may not laugh or make jokes. A little humour is all right, as long as they do not forget their main job. A variation is needed to overcome fatigue.

The noise produced by a Group Work class, to some extent, is not as much as the noise produced by a substitution drill class. The latter really disturbs other classes, especially if the walls as the borders between one class to the others are made of wood, as what we find in the country side.

## 7. Limited Time

The problem which causes the teacher ~~not~~ to use Group Work in her teaching may be that the time is not enough. The curriculum has limited the time for every lesson unit. Extra activities will make the teacher unable to fulfil her duty at the end of the course. The

teacher is chased by the fear of not finishing the course. On the other hand, it is true that Group Work takes time.

However, the purpose of education is not to save time, but to use it. In order to achieve something, the students need time, and there are students who learn quickly, but there are others who learn slowly. The teacher, therefore, has to be so wise as not to sacrifice the learning of her students for the sake of time.

The purpose of Group Work, moreover, is not to kill the time without any learning on the part of the students. It uses the time effectively and efficiently to make the students learn. And, if the teacher really teaches in Group Work, she needs not be worried about the final exam. The students will do well on the final exam, if they have learned thoroughly through Group Work.

### 8. Teacher's Workload

The role of the teacher in a Group Work class is not as what many teachers fear of. In class the teacher only functions as the chief tutor to the groups. Being the chief tutor, she is just an organizer like the chairman of a committee. Her main job is to find the new possible ways to vitalize and expand the activities in

groups. She will obtain help from the students who contribute suggestions and ideas of their own. As a tutor, she goes from one group to the others and help the students whenever they face problems which they cannot solve themselves.

However, Group Work really requires preparation time for the teacher. She has to prepare, plan everything well before she comes to class. She does not just come to class not knowing what to do. A good class teacher always prepares herself of the coming lesson.

Actually, the existence of a Group Work class teacher is not indispensable, if the students already know what they should do. The discussions can go without her presence, especially in a class of adults who are trusted to be responsible for themselves. The teacher, in a class of adult students, introduces what the students will do, and then leaves the class if, for example, she has something urgent to do. The writer has an experience with a Group Work class without the existence of the teacher. The teacher, for some reason, could not come to class. She asked one of the leaders to tell the students to split into groups and discuss the topic given. The class went on as usual. Discussions took place, and the leaders kept on leading their groups and grading the peers. Every student did his best in order to get a high mark for the lesson.

On purpose, though we have talked about the teacher, the writer did not talk about the quality of the teacher. This is simply because, as a human being, the teacher can easily see the weaknesses of an approach, but she forgets her own quality. We have talked about the possible weaknesses of Group Work. Now let us come to the last part of this chapter to look at the teacher's quality.

In our country, there is the policy of the government to produce more English teachers, that is, the candidates for teachers only take a one or two year course at Teachers' Training Institutes. This programme is called S01 or S02. When they have finished the course, they are expected to teach in the Junior High Schools.

It is true that we need a lot of English teachers nowadays. However, the government only considers the quantity of the teachers. With this programme, the writer feels doubt about their quality since the Diploma Programme is often regarded as 'program buangan', a programme good for those who are not accepted in the S1 Programme, and in reality it is often so. What will they, later, teach to their students? Will not this discourage their students or make them hate English? For sure, due to their quality, they will put the emphasis on structure in their teaching.

Group Work does not require the teacher to be

brilliant. Yet she should be able to use the language as she is going to teach the students to communicate in the target language. Especially in the Junior High Schools, the teachers have to be careful not to give bad impressions on English to the students. "Good start is half-done".

We can draw the conclusion, therefore, that those possible weaknesses many teachers fear of are just on the surface. They present no real problems to this approach. The more troublesome thing is the quality of the teacher which is often disregarded. If the students fail to learn English, the blame should not immediately lie on the students, or the setting, or the textbooks, but she should make a kind of self-introspection to see how good and how bad she has taught by looking at the outputs.



## Chapter III

### Advantages of Group Work

Despite the seemingly weak points of Group Work, this approach has some good features as excellencies which might not be possessed by other approaches. The advantages are: (1). ample amount of practice, (2). independence, creativity and responsibility, (3). student-student interaction, (4). motivation, (5). sociability and co-operation, (6). activity, (7). individualized instructions, (8). students' needs, (9). later learning, (10). economy, (11). traditional value, and (12). teacher's success.

#### 1. Ample Amount of Practice

Language is acquired through practice. No one can master a language without wide exposure in the target language. No one is born to be immediately a good listener, speaker, reader or writer, and there is no language in the world which does not require practice on the part of its users. Through difficulties in practising to use the language, human beings as users of language finally master the language. Having enough knowledge on the language is not enough. Learning a language is, therefore, a long process.

The main advantage of Group Work is that it provides the students with ample opportunity to prac-

tise English both in quantity and quality. In a forty-five minute class, each student gets much time to practise his English, whereas in a class of sixty students in the lockstep system each student gets a very small amount of time as mentioned in Chapter I. Whether there are eighty students in a Group Work class, every student gets enough chance to express himself in the intended language, whereas in the lockstep system, the larger the amount of students, the smaller the chance each student obtains. Therefore, in terms of quantity, the students get enough time to use English.

As for the quality, the students try to use the language in real situations which are far better than artificial situations we find in drill classes. Whenever they make mistakes, they correct the mistakes themselves. Yet we can never expect them to use the language perfectly. After all, language is so complex that it is impossible to master all its aspects.

The writer has an experience in teaching Vietnamese boat people on Pulau Galang. In the third cycle, the original students on the list were 56, but there were so many intruders that in his class there were 104 students. To his opinion, it was impossible to make them speak by using the lockstep system, and so he put the students into groups, and every student

tried to speak English as spoken English was the main stress there.

## 2. Independence, Creativity and Responsibility

The goal of education in our present age cannot be only to transmit an amount of knowledge to the students and leave it at that. The main job of the teacher is to make the students learn. Group Work makes the students develop their individual talents and personality. It challenges them to make investigations and give suggestions. Only by this means will they become more and more independent. A genuine openness on the part of the students as regards their studies, and the courage to develop their own individual and independent approaches will help towards their maturity. When the students have reached this level, the role of the teacher gets lesser and lesser.

Maria Sticchi-Damiani in her article "Group Work: From Practice to Theory" says:

"Since all units seemed able to deal with their internal problems quite successfully, they became more independent of the teacher. A new commitment to the task ~~was~~ became apparent and learning improved."<sup>6</sup>

In "Peer Teaching", the writer has an experience where he clearly saw the independence, creativity and

6. Maria Sticchi-Damiani, "Group Work: From Theory to Theory", English Language Teaching Journal, Number 3, Volume XXIV, April 1981, p. 243.

responsibility of the peers. The class teacher assigned every group to talk about 'The International Year of the Child'. The groups were given one week to look for information on the topic. When they came to the discussions, every peer contributed lots of information which were good for the discussions. The peers had different information, and everybody tried to defend his opinions.

### 3. Student-Student Interaction

In a group, there are contacts among the peers, not only between the teacher and the students. Group Work gives the chance to everybody to be in a superior position, that is, he possesses information which the students need, but others may not know it. The other students have to listen carefully, and try to guess what he is going to convey to them. The one who possesses the information will have self-confidence in transmitting the message, not in order to 'victimize' other students. Being in a superior position, every student will try to search for information, and his friends will learn from him. In a Group Work class, it is not the teacher who only possesses the information, but all the students become the sources of information.

Marianne Celce-Murcia in her article "Integrating Group-Work with the Teaching of Grammar" writes something

on the good features of student-student interaction:

"With a congenial environment that encourages student-student interaction - not just teacher-student interaction - more learning takes place."<sup>7</sup>

#### 4. Motivation

There is no doubt that motivation plays a very important factor in the learning of a foreign language. Without motivation, the students will not have the intellectual curiosity. In Group Work, the students have to do the work themselves. It becomes something of an intellectual encouragement. The students only obtain help from the teacher if it is necessary. Besides, the atmosphere of friendship among the students lead to motivation in making progress. They do not get tense, and need not be afraid of the teacher since they deal with their fellow students. They will not be discouraged whenever they make mistakes. There is no feeling of inferiority among the students. Moreover, the students know clearly what they will achieve, that is, the ability to use the language. They do not study structure, vocabulary, speaking, reading, listening or writing as separate subjects. All these subjects lead to the real use of the target language. This is quite different from the common situations in many foreign language

7. FORUM, Number 3, July 1980, p. 2.

classroom where today the teacher gives structure which is followed by drills, tomorrow reading, and the day after tomorrow vocabulary and pronunciation without any integration.

In Indonesia, students, especially girls, are usually too shy to talk in class. But when they are among their friends, they become 'talkative'. Notice the students when they are having a break; a shy student also talks when she is sitting together with her friends.

Iacille Scheneider in her article "Buzz Groups Really Work" tells her experience how a shy girl in her class is motivated to contribute her opinions to the group.

"One of the girls whom I have taught at several lower levels rarely talked in class. She knew English patterns and did well on written tests, but she was too shy to speak. One day she arrived late, after the buzz was interrupted, the group leader resumed the discussion by asking for her opinions which she expressed in understandable English without being shy or embarrassed."<sup>8</sup>

Maria Sticchi-Damiani also mentions something about motivation in her article, "Group Work: From Practice to Theory":

"Such results strongly suggest that group dynamics can be closely related to EFL Learning. They may be interpreted to mean that, if a group functions well on a social level, it can develop adequate com-

8. FORUM, Number 1, Volume XI, January-February 1973, p. 30.

municative strategies and sustain motivation, thus leading to satisfactory progress in learning."<sup>9</sup>

The responsibility to take part in the discussions forces the students to learn. Being aware of the necessity to practise their English, students force themselves to learn. Therefore, the students obtain both primary and secondary motivations from the groups.

##### 5. Sociability and Co-operation

The students develop the sense of sociability in groups. The bond of friendship begins to develop among the students. They get acquainted with one another. They share experience, ideas and feelings which make them richer and richer. They learn to plan and work together and live together. They have a co-operation among themselves. The daily concentration on the new language enables them to feel 'at home' soon. A relaxed atmosphere which is of great importance in learning is the result of a basic sympathy among the students.

The importance of co-operation is unquestionable. Four 'heads' are better than one. If a group of students discuss a subject matter, the result is usually more satisfactory than if it is done by one student only.

9. English Language Teaching Journal, Number 3, Volume XXIV, April 1981, p. 243.

This is simply because everybody has inadequacies and excellencies.

Their friendship, moreover, does not end in class only. We will see how they develop the sense of sociability and co-operation and help one another whenever they face problems, not only in terms of their studies, but in life in general. If one of them falls sick, the others will come to see. They develop social virtues, and they become good members of the society. The sense of community, co-operation, therefore, is a key to success.

#### 6. Activity

Since full participation is required from each student, the group members undoubtedly will be active, busy doing their work. The sense of involvement makes them do their best to make progress. Being busy, they will not get bored. There is no place for a lazy student in Group Work. He will be isolated from his friends because of his laziness.

The writer remembers when his Poetry class teacher divided the class into several groups to explicate a poem. In explicating the poem, his group gave the job to each member to talk about a certain item, i.e., the background of the poet, the theme of the poem, and the explication stanza by stanza. This was a taken-home



assignment. In the next meeting, it turned out that a fellow student did not do his assignment, and the reason was that he forgot to do it. It was pitiful to see how he felt guilty and could not take part in the discussion. It is, therefore, not the teacher who gets angry with the student who is lazy, but his friends are.

### 7. Individualized Instructions

Every student is an individual, unique from the others. Since the students know that they are different from one another - for they know one another quite well - they will pay attention to one another's capacity. They say what they know, and know what they say, till finally they come to a consensus. The final achievement is the result of each individual student's contribution.

In "Peer Teaching" the writer found that some of the peers were bright, but some others were really poor. He expected much from the bright ones, and less from the poor students. To help the poor students, he gave some guiding questions, but not with the bright students. It is not reasonable to expect the same thing from every peer. After all, the students are different from one another in everything.

### 8. Students' Needs

The students learn the target language because they need it; they want to use it. Yet students' needs are different from one another's. Some want to speak the language, and some others want to read books written in it. In Group Work the students are taught to use the language for communicative purposes, for uses. Whether the teacher wants to emphasize a certain skill, that is another matter. Being able to use the target language, the students get the benefits from Group Work.

In Indonesia, there is no reason why Group Work is not used. In the Junior High Schools, the goal of teaching English is to make the students speak English so that they can read more easily when they are in the Senior High Schools or university level later. Group Work fulfills the needs of the students. The students need to learn to use English, and the dynamic group gives them ample opportunity to achieve their needs.

### 9. Later Learning

Being independent, creative and responsible, having the sense of sociability, the sense of satisfaction for having reached their needs, in other words, having found the correct form of learning, the students will continue their present way of learning in the

future. Once they are successful in their studies, they will develop their way of learning in order to gain more success. On the contrary, once they hate English, they may hate it forever. Group Work provides the students with the feelings of success, not failure, though they make mistakes. They feel that they have learned something. It also gives them the proper way to study. In their future studies, they will apply the same approach as provided by Group Work.

#### 10. Economy

Group Work can prove less costly in terms of money. It does not require luxurious and expensive machinery. Group Work can go without all kinds of extremely expensive teaching aids. In a country where a school cannot afford to buy the aids, Group Work is still applicable. The discussions can also take place under the trees which make the situation less formal and tense. They need not stay in class. If we want to be extreme, the presence of the class teacher in an advanced class of Group Work is not necessary, as long as the students are fully aware of their roles.

#### 11. Traditional Value

The students come to class with their previous

experience. It is a custom of Indonesian people's that a solution to a problem is usually reached through musyawarah ('a compromise') or gotong royong ('co-operation'). Group Work applies that value in the teaching of English. In their groups, the students reach a consensus which every member agrees on. There is no reason why the norms or values of the society are not brought into class as long as they help the students learn. We bring the Indonesian atmosphere to class to give the Indonesian colour to the system of education, and not just borrow it from abroad.

## 12. Teacher's Success

Group Work brings the teacher the sense of satisfaction and pride to see the good results of her students. She feels that the energy and time she has spent to prepare the discussions and to vitalize the activities are not worthless. The success of the students is also the success of the teacher. Besides, her role in class has changed, not really a teacher in a common sense, but a partner as far as sociability and co-operation are concerned.

After discussing the good features of Group Work, we see how this approach makes drastic changes

to the classical system of education in general, and the teaching of English in particular. Group Work emphasizes that the purpose of language learning is for the students to use it in communication. The students, besides, build a community in their groups, and they learn to tolerate and compromise with one another. Group Work, moreover, provides the students with the opportunity to develop the values of education in general, not necessarily be limited to their studies only.

## Chapter IV

### Target Groups

When we talk about an approach, we also have to talk about whom we are going to teach using that approach. The more specific the target group is, the better, since we can focus our attention to it. However, since the general goal of learning English through Group Work is for communication, this approach can always be used to teach English to any level of learners. Yet we have to remember that the kinds of activities are adapted to the students' capacity. Teaching English to elementary students is absolutely different from teaching it to intermediate or advanced students. Let us see how Group Work is used to teach elementary, intermediate and advanced students.

#### 1. Elementary Students

One of the fears of using Group Work to teach beginners is that they cannot communicate in English due to their very little knowledge of English. They cannot carry on meaningful communication in the target language, and the textbooks that do contain exercises are generally intended for intermediate and advanced students. Therefore, the problem with Group Work is that its application seems to be limited to intermediate and advanced students only.

However, beginners with a vocabulary of only a few hundred words, and a small knowledge on grammatical pattern can perfectly carry on communication which is greatly interesting to them and to the teacher. For example, after the introduction of the present tense forms of a few verbs such as go, sit, drink, eat, sleep, write, get up, etc., the students can talk among themselves such topics as "What do you do in the morning?" "What do you do in the afternoon?" "What do you do in the evening?" "When do you eat breakfast?" "What do you eat for breakfast/lunch/dinner?" The students are very interested in knowing about the classmates because many of them have met each other for the first time at the beginning of the course. After the introduction of each new tense and/or vocabulary item, the beginning students become able to communicate with one another using the totally new kinds of topics. The introduction of the past tense and a few more adverbs of time enables them to discuss with little difficulty such topics as "What did you do yesterday?" The introduction of future tense enables them to discuss their plans for a specific date in the future, for example, "What will you do next week-end?" "Where will you go during your vacation?" Thus, the introduction of new grammatical patterns or vocabulary is not followed by drills, but by meaningful communication through Group Work.

Besides, one of the good features of introducing beginning students with Group Work early from the beginning is that it gives them experience in using the language and build up their confidence in their speaking ability. Moreover, they, early from the beginning, are trained to work together, to co-operate with one another, rather than set up hostility and competition in a negative sense which will lead to the destruction of the class.

The writer taught beginners of English in Ga-lang Camp for three cycles. He got three A classes successively. After the introduction of an item, he always put the students into groups and asked them to talk in groups. If it did not work, he would not use it. The students had been so accustomed to Group Work that they knew already what was expected from them. They knew that they had to speak English, not Vietnamese.

However, if our objective is to make the students understand the content of a reading passage, it is not reasonable to ask the beginning students to discuss the passage in English. We put more burdens on their shoulders, and they tend to get discouraged.

## 2. Intermediate Students

Intermediate students, undoubtedly, have better



English than elementary ones. Yet we cannot say that their English is good already. First and Second Year students of the English Department, IKIP Sanata Dharma, would be good examples of intermediate students. Group Work was carried out under another name, that was, "Peer Teaching". This was a good opportunity for the students to use English under the guidance of the graduate students. Yet the topics were still adapted to the students' interests and level. The writer remembers when he was still in the second year. The teacher gave a topic on politics. The students were not interested at all in discussing such a topic. Then another topic was given by a student which everybody agreed on.

The writer also taught intermediate students in Galang Camp. He got two A classes successively. His classes were marked by Group Work. Besides, he has also made experiments on Group Work in teaching writing and speaking to the second year students at the English Department, IKIP Sanata Dharma resulting in his satisfaction.

### 3. Advanced Students

Advanced students are supposed to have mastered the target language, though not perfectly. They can listen, speak, read and write English well. Advanced

students would be like the graduate students at the English Department, IKIP Sanata Dharma. The writer had lots of experience in discussing things with his classmates in the graduate division. To the writer's observations, the results were usually satisfactory for both the students and the teachers.

It is clear, therefore, that there is no difficulty in putting advanced students into groups since they have better English, broader knowledge, and better logic than intermediate students. There is still a little difficulty with intermediate students since they still have to struggle with the language, though it is not impossible to teach them through Group Work. The great complaint of using Group Work to teach English seems to be to use it to teach beginners. Yet, as we have seen, they can still communicate using their very little knowledge of English in groups. The writer's experiments and experience both in teaching and learning English give strong proves that Group Work is applicable to teach the three levels of students. He taught elementary and intermediate students in Galang Refugee Camp using the dynamic groups. He made experiments in the second year of the English Department, IKIP Sanata Dharma in August 1980, and he has the experience in working together in groups with his fellow students of the graduate division, English Department, IKIP Sanata Dharma.

## Chapter V

### The Organization of a Group Work Class

A Group Work class teacher prepares herself well before she comes to class, otherwise it would be a wasteful expenditure of time and energy without any good results. The following is a list of points she asks to herself before she divides the students into groups:

- (1). Which students will work together?
- (2). How many students will work in every group, and how many groups are there in class?
- (3). How is the structure of the groups?
- (4). How to make the students take part properly in the discussions?
- (5). What are my roles and the roles of the students?
- (6). What kinds of work will the students do in their groups?
- (7). How often do I use Group Work?

#### 1. Group Composition

Group Work is a matter of co-operation, a matter of taking and giving. Yet some students cannot work together in groups as we have seen in Chapter II. There are the feelings of like and dislike among the students. In order to obtain good results, the teacher has to consider the factors concerning the students such as their friendship, respect, or like and dislike seriously.

Those who are more friendly, more respectful and closer to one another are to be put in one group since they already have the sense of community. On the contrary, those who are in hostility are not to be put in one group, because they cannot build a community. Their hostility will be brought to the discussions which will bring troubles to the group.

Another consideration is the well-balance of each group. The groups are balanced in terms of student's capacity. There is at least one good student in each group who is expected to be the leader of the group. As a leader, he should be intelligent enough to correct the mistakes produced by his 'peers'. Besides, he should be wise enough to pacify the group members whenever there is a long debate which might bring hostility to the group.

Maria Sticchi-Damiani says something about group composition in her article, "Group Work: From Practice to Theory" as follows:

"Only later on did I pay attention to factors such as old friendship, common birthplaces, similar political ideas, or even seating arrangements, which could have been a clue to the number, size and membership of the sub-groups in that class."<sup>10</sup>



In terms of leadership in group discussions, the writer sees that "Peer Teaching" at the English Department, IKIP Sanata Dharma, has good prospects. To some extent, the peers respect their leaders from the graduate

10. English Language Teaching Journal, Number 3, Volume XXV, April 1981, p. 243.

division due to the latter's better English and their authorities. Besides, he completely agrees to the policy of the department to give the chance to graduate students to teach and learn from the undergraduate students and to the undergraduate students to get more practice.

However, he cannot accept the decision made by the class teacher who divides the students into groups easily, that is, just based on the sequences of names on the students' list. Grouping is not as simple as that. If the teacher does not consider the conditions of her students, the results can be fatal. The following example might be illustrative. The writer had a group of five students from the third year 1980 of the English Department. He was lucky to be their tutor since they knew him well, and he knew them well, too. Accidentally, they were close friends of his. He knew that two of them were enemies. One was a girl, and the other was a boy. It turned out that their hostility was brought into the group. On the surface they seemed to communicate with each other. They talked and put ideas forward. However, it was clear that actually they attacked each other. They tried to compete with each other, and tried to sort of showing off to give the impression that he was better than she. As usual, the boy was the aggressor, and the girl was the victim. Fortunately, the writer understood that there was a smoke screen which made the situation very absurd. The boy talked and talked, but

he meant something else. By asking questions to the girl and telling the boy to keep quiet, Group Work communicated non-communication.

The illustration above reveals that even adult students bring their enmity into groups. The situation with young learners will be more serious since they are not emotionally balanced yet. The teacher has to be careful not to put enemies in one group.

## 2. The Size and Number of Groups

The size of a group has a great influence on the productivity and performance of the students. The larger the group is, the lesser the students get the chance to practise their English, and the more problems arise in terms of noise. It is true that the greater the number of students in a group, the more ideas and suggestions there will be. Due to the intention of Group Work to give students a lot opportunity to use the language, however, it is recommended that the group is to be made small consisting of four or five students. In a big group, there tends to be sub-group divisions. This will disturb the flow of message in their communication. The students tend to lose discipline. When a student talks, the others will also talk, forming another discussion. As a result, the information does not reach its destination.

The writer has an experience with a large group consisting of ten students in his "Peer Teaching". One of the graduate students was absent. The peers who belonged to her group joined the writer's group. It was really difficult to control the distribution of language practice since there were many people. Moreover, since there were 'newcomers' to the group, the students did not feel involved in the discussion. They were like guests who did not do anything.

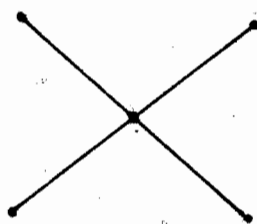
On the contrary, the size of the group should not be limited to two students only. There is the danger that the students cannot tolerate each other and cannot reach a compromise. Each of them wants to defend his ideas and does not want to be the loser. It can happen that the group becomes a field of quarrel which results in enmity. The existence of the third person(s) will be of great advantage to pacify them to reach a consensus. At least the third person(s) can show the good and bad points so that they can come to the solution. Another danger is that the two students may not be able to give necessary information to the discussion. They may forget important facts needed.

Therefore, there is no reason that the number of students in each group should be the same. The size of the group is also determined by the conditions of the students as we have seen in the previous

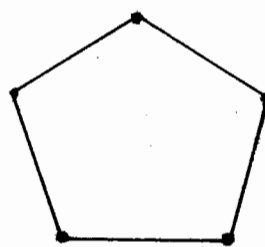
section. The problem on how many groups will be there has automatically been answered. If the teacher has decided who will work together and how many students there are in each group, she knows already the number of groups in that class. There is no reason that a class of forty students are neatly divided into ten groups each of which consists of four students.

### 3. Sitting Structure

Shaw M.E.<sup>11</sup> suggests two communicative networks in five person groups, namely: the Centralized and Decentralized networks. An example of the centralized network is the Wheel as illustrated below. The leader sits in the centre of the group to distribute language practice among the members. An example of the Decentralized pattern is the Circle. The students sit in such a way as to form a circle. Shaw calls the latter a leaderless diffuse network.



Wheel



Circle

11. Shaw M.E., "Communicative Networks", in (ed) L. Berkowitz, Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, Academic Press, 1964.



The centralized network has some good points. The students get equal distribution of practice. This is possible because there is the leader who controls the distribution. Moreover, the errors can easily be corrected by the leader or by other members.

The decentralized, on the other hand, having no leader, makes it difficult for the students to correct their mistakes, and the distribution of language practice tends to be unequal for the group members. It seems that the great hope lies in the centralized pattern.

However, the writer chooses the combination of these two networks. The form he chooses is Circle, but it should have a leader. The students in a circle sit facing one another as to be able to talk easily and see what the other members are doing. Moreover, the structure of a circle makes the situation less formal, whereas the existence of the leader in the middle of the Wheel network puts him as the central attention of the students, and he cannot see all his peers. The decentralized system needs not result in difficulties to correct mistakes. Since they sit close to one another, the leader can always correct the mistakes. Furthermore, it needs not result in unequal distribution of language practice because the leader can always ask the shy students to talk, and the 'talkative' ones to stop talking.

There may occur a problem in some schools where the furniture is unmoveable. In this case, the teacher asks the students to turn around so that they are able to sit facing one another. For example, ten students occupying two benches can be divided into two groups.

#### 4. Group Involvement

The success of a group discussion depends on its organization by the teacher and the participation of the group members. Before the students start the activities, the teacher's guidance is necessary in order to obtain good results. The guidance includes: (a). the direction and stimulation of the discussion, (b). the evaluation of opinions, (c). when and how to take part in the discussion.

##### a. Direction and Stimulation

This step consists of three parts: warning-up activity, real start, and closing activity. The first activity is to open the discussion. A short introduction to the subject matter to be discussed is important. This will give the students the picture of

what they are going to do. In connection to this, the teacher also shows the importance of the topic so that the students are stimulated to take part in the discussion. This activity strikes the students' attention to the subject matter.

The second step is that the group members make an outline or planning on what they are going to discuss. The outline is needed so that the students will not talk out of the topic which will waste time. Everybody in the group knows the programme. If possible, each member writes the outline on a piece of paper. If a student talks out of the topic, the rest can remind him.

The third step is to close the discussion. The group leader or one of the group members summarizes the results of the discussion by bringing the points which everybody agrees on.

We see that a group discussion also has a system for good results. Though the students communicate like when people talk in daily conversations, they have to follow the steps above for better achievement.

#### b. Evaluation of Opinions

This section is intended for the group members to evaluate what a group member says or contribute to

them. There are four things to consider:

(1). In judging one's opinions, the students ask to themselves whether he is qualified enough to state his opinions, whether he is an expert in that field or not.

(2). They ask whether those opinions are originally from the speaker, whether he can give the evidence or not. This requires the speaker to be honest. He has to be fair as not to say other people's work as his. If a student becomes a plagiarist, his value of education gets lost.

(3). They ask whether the speaker is objective in his presentation of ideas, whether or not he says that right is right and wrong is never right. In judging a problem, he has to avoid personal opinions or interests, unless he is asked to. In addition, they have to ask whether he points out all the facts, or just some facts favourable to him, and leave out those which are unfavourable to him. This invites the students' responsibility towards themselves.

(4). The group members have to be critical as to see whether there are contradictory points in the speaker's ideas. In order to see them, the students have to follow the whole speech, they have to ask questions, and not just immediately accept what the speaker says. Therefore, the group members have to be alert and critical.

### c. Taking Part in the Discussion

There are some points the group members pay attention to for proper participation. They are as follows:

- (1). The students keep silent if they do not have anything to say, but speak when they have something to report, comment, suggest, or correct. There is often the prejudice that a student who does not distribute anything to the group is regarded as a poor student. That can be true, anyhow, but not always. If a student is forced to speak, the results are usually not satisfactory.
- (2). They have to speak if they are asked questions. Whether they can answer or not, it is another matter. It is simply impolite not to answer questions.
- (3). They have to ask questions if there is something unclear to them. But they may not ask questions if they know the answers already.
- (4). If there is a student who can make jokes to avoid tenseness, boredom or fatigue, a little humour is justified as long as the group members do not forget their main job. It is interesting to have a warm discussion, not a dry one.
- (5). When a person speaks, he has to speak clearly and loudly so that everybody can hear what he says. If he speaks unclearly, there is the tendency that the

the rest will ask questions to their neighbours, and this brings noise to the communication.

(6). When a person speaks, he has to speak to the point, not beating about the bush.

(7). As a human being, it is reasonably difficult to bear criticism, disagreements, or comments. A statement of disagreement is often regarded as an attack to the person speaking, not his ideas. But in Group Work, the group members have to be open-minded as not to get annoyed or discouraged when they are criticized, but accept criticism with dignity.

##### 5. The Teacher's and Students' Roles

It has been said in the previous discussion that the role of the teacher is mainly as the chief tutor to the groups. She does not dominate the class either verbally or physically. Even in correcting mistakes, she only helps the students if her help is strictly needed. It is the role of the students to find the 'correct' answers. It is the role of the students to do the work. By interfering too much, the teacher undermines the confidence of the group to seek the right answers. She has to keep in mind that 'speech is silver, and silence is golden'. She has to know when

to talk, and when to remain silent.

However, some problems need the flexibility on the part of the teacher and students. The problems concerning the noise level, the non-movability of furniture, seating arrangements depend on both parties to develop a mental flexibility.

Furthermore, the teacher can also prepare for self-help and co-operation, as we have seen in the previous section on taking part in the discussion.

## 6. Activities

In this section we will discuss the order of communicative skills, then we also see how Group Work is applied in teaching those skills, vocabulary and structure.

### The Order

Which skill is taught first, and which comes later? The students, first, have to listen to the correct models: the speed and pronunciation. Then they have to practise what they have listened. If they can speak, they can read and write more easily. This does not mean, however, that for the first few months

they are taught listening all the time, or speaking all the time. The lessons are somewhat integrated. In listening, reading and writing, the students also speak, and for speaking exercises the teacher can give a reading passage to talk about.

Now let us see how Group Work is used to teach listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary, and structure as parts of the work done in groups.

#### a. Listening

Just like when the group members get ample time to speak, they also get time to listen. As for the quantity, there is no doubt that they get enough practice. However, there is a problem in terms of quality, especially for beginners. The students do not have good pronunciation, and, therefore, cannot give the good models to their friends. The results can be fatal if the students establish wrong pronunciation early from the beginning.

Gurrey, P. says something about the wrong pronunciation early from the beginning:

"It is easier to teach new material than to eradicate old faults. And having to unlearn bad pronunciations and other usages is troublesome and retarding even to the best students. And it is much more difficult to learn correct usages when incorrect forms and structure have been acquired,



than to learn the correct usage at the start."<sup>12</sup>

Once the students stick to a pattern, it is difficult for them not to stick to it in their future learning.

Group Work insists that beginners are taught by the best teacher available in the school. The students have to learn the correct basic pronunciations in order to avoid further failures. Besides, the teacher can provide the students with cassette-recorders so that they can listen to good models before they start practising them. Furthermore, it has been said that Group Work is not an end in itself. As for the teaching of listening, the teacher can give initial exposure to the students, and she may also give them drills to train their ears. Only when the teacher is sure that the students' pronunciation will not bring serious problems in the future then she lets them work in groups. Unless there is a leader who can control the pronunciation, it is very risky to let the students learn from one another's pronunciation. When the students have had the correct pronunciation, they will correct their mistakes whenever they mispronounce words. In groups the students want to understand and to be understood. We will notice that the group members often say "What?",

12. Gurrey, P., Teaching English as a Foreign Language, Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1961, p. 12 - 13.

or "Would you repeat once again?"

The problems concerning pronunciation in "Peer Teaching" are much easier for two reasons: the leaders are supposed to be able to give correct pronunciation to the peers, and the peers have studied Pronunciation in the first year and Phonetics in the second year. However, having learned those two subjects does not mean that they automatically have good pronunciations. We cannot expect them to be perfect at pronunciation.

For further research, see Appendix I.

#### b. Speaking

Perhaps the best skill to be taught through Group Work is speaking since in groups the students speak, interchange ideas, and give comments. They get plenty of time and many exercises to speak English. Yet we can never expect them to be perfect at speaking English. They still make mistakes, even glaring mistakes.

To make the students speak, the teacher can give them topics to discuss, or to make reports. In putting ideas forward, questioning, telling experience, and arguing with one another, the students practise their speaking ability.

However, the teacher should be careful in selecting a topic before assigning the students to discuss it. The topic should be challenging. It should not be too easy, nor too difficult. If it is too easy, the students will not make efforts. If it is too difficult, the students will get discouraged. Besides, the topic should invite pros and cons among the students. After all, the idea of discussing something is not to answer yes/no questions but a matter of reasoning. Moreover, it should be something that the students can reach, not something beyond their ability to discuss. A topic like "A boy-student is more intelligent than a girl-student" would be interesting to the students.

See Appendix II.

### c. Reading

Reading can be given for two purposes: reading comprehension and reading aloud. The main purpose of reading comprehension is to get the content of the passage. To measure whether the students understand the reading material, the teacher gives comprehension question. Before she comes to class, she prepares some questions. While the group members are reading the passage, the teacher puts the questions on the

blackboard. When they have finished reading it, they start discussing it by answering the questions on the blackboard. Or the teacher can also ask the group members to retell the passage using their own words when they have finished reading it. These two activities can be very interesting since they invite pros and cons among the students. The ten minutes before the class is over is devoted to be a general discussion as a closing activity of the whole class.

On the other hand, the purpose of reading aloud is for the students to train their pronunciation. Reading aloud is also a good exercise to train the students' listening skill. The students have to read well so that the listeners can understand what they have read. Listening is also an active process of communication, for the listeners have to decode the message being transmitted. If the students mispronounce words, the rest will correct the mistakes. Correction comes after the reading, since interference during the reading process is really disturbing the concentration of both the reader and the listeners.

In selecting the reading material for reading aloud, the teacher chooses a passage which is short and easy in terms of content. The passage is short so that each student gets the chance to read the same material and listen to the same material. It is easy so that they can grasp the content while they are reading

and listening to the reading material. The ideas in the passage should not be complicated so that the students need not think too hard on the content. An anecdote would be a good passage for reading aloud.

See Appendix III.

#### d. Writing

Writing is not an easy job. The students have to keep the composition interesting, and they also have to struggle with the language. There are some problems in writing. The students tend to think that they can write well without any planning. The use of an outline is usually ignored. As a result, the organization is poor. As for the language, the common problems are laziness, carelessness, interference, or their combination. There are lazy students, and their laziness is reflected in their compositions. This type of students will not re-read what they have written. There are also careless students. They are so careless that they make mistakes which we think are foolish for their level. Interference is faced by everyone learning a foreign language. The native language is so influential that students often transfer its system into the target language.

However, by working together in groups, the students can overcome those difficulties. Before the students start writing, they talk about the outline first, and plan how to organize the thoughts. This is easily done in groups for the group members are the sources of information. Laziness, carelessness, and interference can at least be decreased.

Another way of composing an article through Group Work is the strip story. A strip story makes the students busy finding the possible ways to organize the sentences to produce a story. The teacher selects a story or an anecdote. The sentences are typed, and cut into strips. Two or three sentences are cut into one strip, and they are given to each student. He has to memorize them. After the memorization, the strips are thrown away, and the students are not allowed to write the sentences on a piece of paper. Then the group members try to find the ways to organize the sentences into a story. Every student becomes the sole source of information. Everybody contributes information and asks questions. When they have finished the work, there is the comparison of products of the groups. Each group is represented by one member to read the result of his group in front of the class.

See Appendix IV.

### c. Vocabulary

Group Work can be used to test the students on vocabulary items which they have been taught. This is illustrated below:

The teacher, first, gives an example:

Grass is green.  
Grass grows on the ground.  
Animals like to eat grass.  
What is it?

Then she provides each student with a set of vocabulary items she is going to test to the students. She asks the group members to do the same as she did in the example. But, before start, the teacher tells the students that the first sentence of the descriptions do not provide too much information about the meanings of the vocabulary item. In this way, the students get the opportunity to meet the word several times before they come to the meaning. This will help the students know the forms of the words. Experiments show that recalling the forms is more difficult than recalling the meanings.

This activity also involves speaking and listening practices. Besides, it makes it possible for everybody to be in a superior position. The 'examiner' knows the meanings of the words, and the others may not. Moreover, since everybody is unique, this activity enables him to work according to his

own rate and ability. Furthermore, the students learn vocabulary items in contexts.

#### f. Structure

Group Work can also be used to teach grammatical constructions. Every group is given an exercise which can be different from other groups'. Every group member takes the exercise home, and does it at home. Then when the group members gather the next day, they discuss their exercises. They compare their work and then give the consensus to the class teacher. Finally, discussion as a class activity follows. The teacher corrects the mistakes on the papers.

One of the good features of this activity is that every student works. Everybody has to do the work before he comes to class and compares his work to other members'. The class can also save time since the main work of the students' is already done at home.

The following is an example of exercises on structure. It is taken from Danielson and Hayden (1973), p. 131.

Fill in the blanks with a/an/some/the.  
If an article is not needed, leave the space blank.

I have saved ... money, and I am  
now planning to buy ... new car. ... car



must meet the following qualifications: (a). it must be ... compact model; (b). it must get at least twenty miles to ... gallon of ... gas; (c). it must have ... automatic shift. ... color isn't so important, but I would prefer ... blue or beige to other colours.

Bangkok, ... capital of Thailand, is ... city of more than ... million inhabitants. It is ... headquarters of many international business and ... popular city for ... conventions. It is also one of ... favourite stop-over points in .....  
 .....

## 7. The Place of Group Work in School

The writer does not say that an English teacher should always use Group Work in her teaching. He does not say that she uses this approach four or five times a week either. What he stresses is to use it whenever it is possible for student-student interaction. Therefore, the teacher should be wise to see whether an item is better taught by using a teacher-student interaction or by a student-student interaction.

Though Group Work is best to teach communicative

skills, we have seen that it can also be used to teach vocabulary and structure.

## Chapter VI

### Group Evaluation

If the students are kept as members of the same 'community', there is no reason why a group test is not used. In this section we will see the advantages of a group oral test, its validity, practicality, reliability, form, and its application.

#### 1. The Advantages

The position of the examiner is greatly changed. She is not really as an examiner, but as an observer. As an observer, she does not interfere with the discussion; she does not put ideas. The discussion is done by the students, and she is there to evaluate them according to their ability in interchanging ideas, arguing and giving suggestions. By not interfering too much, the examiner gives the testees more time to use the language, to communicate and to work hard in order to get good grades. Therefore, in group evaluation, the students learn to use the language while they are tested.

The situation creates a good atmosphere for the students to feel more at ease, more relaxed. They are not under the pressure of the teacher as when they have individual interviews. It is often the problem with oral tests that the students cannot answer correctly because they get nervous.

The teacher can evaluate the students objectively. She tests them as what they are. They are tested according to their ability to use the language as it is used by people in daily conversations.

## 2. Validity

It is clear from the previous discussions that the needs of the students in learning English are to be able to use it. It happens that a student can do very well in a written test, but fails at an oral exam. Therefore, the teacher provides a test which is a valid assessment of the students' ability to use the language, and which is realistic for their needs.

The aspects measured are the students' linguistic competence and performance with the stress on the latter. The testees are judged according to their future needs, the language aspects are tested as integrated skills, especially because the students are tested in their linguistic behaviour in a natural situation. The teacher pays attention to their language problems, fluency and correct answers.

Maria Sticchi-Damiani in her article "Group Work: from Practice to Theory" says that her students did very well at oral tests though her general goals were reading and writing.

"Although I was expecting some progress in reading and writing, I did not expect

much improvement in spoken English. But, to my surprise, at the end of the year the class performed very well both at the written and at the oral examinations."<sup>13</sup>

### 3. Practicality

#### (a). Economy

A group evaluation is less costly than a written test. The teacher needs not put the examination on the stencil sheet which takes money. She needs not spend much time correcting the papers for there are no papers. Besides, a group oral test saves the teacher's energy because she just observes the testees.

#### (b). Scorability

The teacher notes down the major and minor errors. A student who makes major mistakes is not evaluated the same with the one who makes minor mistakes. She has to keep in mind that the students are conducting a communication though they are being tested. As long as they can understand one another, communication takes place. Minor mistakes are those which do not really disturb the communication, yet they are faults. Major mistakes are those which make the students unable to understand one another, or cause mis-



13. English Language Teaching Journal, Number 3, Volume XXV, April 1981, p. 243.

understanding, or, because the utterances are unusual, which cause the listeners to miss the whole utterance, and those incorrect answers or false ideas. In short, major mistakes are those errors which cause the communication to stop. For example, the sentence "I go to the beach yesterday" contains a minor mistake, and the group members can still understand what the speaker means. But the sentence "He is asking her father" contains a major mistake since the listeners do not know whether her refers to he or to someone else. And if the students cannot give the correct answers to the questions of other members, their inability to give the correct answers to the questions is a major mistake. Actually, with a common sense the teacher can decide whether the mistakes are major or minor ones, and, therefore, can give objective grades. The scores of the students depend on the mistakes they make, fluency and the ability to give the correct answers.

When the discussion is over, now it is the role of the teacher to give comments. He points out all the minuses and pluses, and discuss them with the group. By doing so, the students know how good and how bad they are in the discussion, and they will not get surprised when they get failing marks whereas they think they have done the test quite well. They will know themselves.

However, in order to be objective, the teacher

should not limit her evaluation on the final test only. She also considers the daily performances of her students. It is not the 'monopoly' of the teacher to give the final judgement to the students. The students are also involved in scoring. They know one another well. The teacher gets the help from the students in scoring themselves. Each student evaluates his friends, and put the scores on a piece of paper, and submits it to the teacher. Nevertheless, it is not wise to give the final grades based on the marks from the students only. There is a great danger that their evaluation is just based on the feelings of like and dislike. After all, they are also human beings. In order to come to more objective evaluation, the teacher combines the grades from the students and her own grades based on her observation.

#### 4. Reliability

Since the purpose of group evaluation is to measure the ability of the students to use the language, there is no problem in terms of reliability. The students will show their ability to use the language whether they are tested by a different examiner. As far as communication is concerned, there will be a good correlation of scores of examiners. This is possible because the examiner notes all the errors and pluses, and it is hardly believable that students

show drastic changes in their ability to use the language. Moreover, there is no problem whether the students are tested on different days. Whether they are tested on Monday or Friday, they will show how good and how bad they are in speaking, reading or writing the language.

#### 5. The Form of the Test

Groups of students who have attended the same discussion groups are tested in a free discussion for about thirty minutes. If there are many groups, the evaluation needs not necessarily be finished in one day. The students can be tested on different days. The teacher gives a topic, a reading passage, or a strip story to discuss. Before the evaluation takes place, the teacher gives the students a few minutes to prepare themselves. When they have prepared themselves, discussion takes place, and simultaneously evaluation starts.

It is reasonable that the students 'fight' with one another and do not want to get low scores. The poor ones are usually the victims. Yet, just like when they are in ordinary groups, there is the leader who controls the distribution of language practice so that no one dominates the discussion. The students are given the same opportunity to ex-



press themselves. Whether they use the chance effectively or not is another matter. If some students are just silent, they do not deserve passing scores. The teacher only listens to their conversations, and she has to be fair as to give high scores to those who are really good at the discussion. Therefore, the place of the examiner is outside the circle.

If possible, the room is unlike the usual classroom in order to create a good atmosphere where they can show their practical ability in using the language in real situation. They form a circle, sit close to one another as to be able to talk at ease.

Group evaluation is very rarely used, or perhaps never. We have seen that group evaluation is also valid, practical, and reliable. The students are tested in free discussion in which they can show their ability to communicate. They also learn English in groups while they are being tested. There is no reason why this kind of test is not used in grading the students.

#### 6. Its Application

In weekly and final tests, the writer used group oral tests during his six months' teaching in

Galang Refugee Camp. He gave the students topics and let them discuss the topics. He just observed them talk and gave the grades. By listening to their conversations, it was clear whether some students tried to memorize the dialogues in the books or they conversed at ease, and so he could easily give the grades. This saved his energy and gave the students more practice. Moreover, it was not as boring as individual interviews where the examiner gave the same questions again and again.

It used to be that for each test situation, a teacher or assistant had a conversation with a student. But the writer used group oral evaluation. Now this kind of test is largely used in the programme.

See Appendix V.

## Conclusion

So far we have talked about the background why the writer is interested in writing this thesis, that is, common situations in the teaching of English in our country. Those situations bring serious problems to the students in learning English for communication, one of the main functions of language. He is not satisfied with those situations, and, therefore, he talks about Group Work which contributes changes to the classical system of education.

In discussing Group Work, the writer finds some possible weaknesses. However, those weaknesses do not bring serious problems to the activities in Group Work. They are just the fears of the teacher towards this approach. The more serious problem is the quality of the teacher which is often ignored.

Beside the possible weaknesses, we have seen that Group Work has a lot of advantages, not only in terms of learning process, but also in the personality of the students and in their later learning.

The fear that Group Work is good for intermediate and advanced students only has been overcome. Group Work is also applicable to teach English to beginners.

We also have seen the organization of Group Work. The teacher has to know the students well. The students in groups are those who can co-operate with one another, and at least there is one good student in each group as

its leader. When she has decided the members of each group, she has to state also what they will do in groups, and what her roles and the roles of the students are. In addition, we have seen that Group Work is best used to teach speaking or communicative skills in general. Yet it can also be used to teach vocabulary and structure.

Finally, we come to the group evaluation as a general repetition and checking to the whole activities that have been done during the course. The students are also tested in groups. While the teacher is evaluating, the students communicate using their ability to practise their English.

The writer has done some experiments on Group Work with the intermediate students at the English Department, IKIP Sanata Dharma Yogyakarta. He has also made experiments on this approach during his teaching to beginners and intermediate students on Pulau Galang. Besides, he has lots of experience in group discussions with his fellow students, and he has two years' experience in leading the undergraduate students in "Peer Teaching". Some articles in FORUM, English Language Teaching Journal and information from books on methodology of teaching combined with the writer's experiments and experience give him the strong belief that Group Work is an effective approach in teaching and learning English for uses.

However, we can never expect the students to be immediately able to communicate in English on the first few classes of Group Work since the students need to adapt themselves to the situations required by Group Work. It is a long process until the students can use the target language. The students should be made familiar with this approach. They are taught through Group Work, and also tested through it. On the other hand, it is not an end in itself. There is no indication that the teacher should use this approach in all of her classes.

For further research, the writer suggests to try this approach in teaching the items presented in the Appendix.

Group Work is an approach to make the teacher stop talking and telling, but start teaching.

## Appendix

### I. Listening

(a). After the introduction of hours, half hours, a quarter past and a quarter to, each group of five students is given a cardboard clock. The teacher gives the time and the students put the correct time on the cardboard clocks.

In case there are no cardboard clocks available, the teacher can ask the students to make them at home. They should also be involved in providing visual aids as long as they can manage.

(b). After the introduction of cardinal numbers, the teacher can play a trick. She divides the class into groups, and asks the students to guess the answers to the tricks. The followings are two examples:

"Listen! I have twenty sick sheep. Five of them are dead. How many sheep do I have now?"

"Listen again! I have twenty nice cats. Five of them are dead. How many cats do I have now?"

Due to the students' carelessness in listening, they often cannot distinguish the difference between six and sick, and nine and nice. Therefore, when the

teacher says twenty sick, the students may think twenty six. When she says twenty nice, they may think twenty nine.

(c). The teacher divides the class into groups. After the introduction of thirsty and lazy, she can play 'whisper'. The teacher whispers a sentence to a student in each group, and that student will whisper the same sentence to his friend, and his friend will whisper the sentence to his neighbour, and so on. For example:

I am thirty.

Are you crazy?

When the teacher whispers thirty, the students may think thirsty. When she whispers crazy, they may think lazy. One student from each group writes the sentence on the blackboard, and the teacher will judge. The sentences written by the students on the blackboard might completely be different from what the teacher has whispered to them.

These activities are very interesting to the students. They will laugh to see their 'stupidity'. Besides, they train the students' ears. They simultaneously become Group Work games which are important to 'awake' the students.

## II. Speaking

There are many topics to help the students develop their ability in spoken English. The followings are examples taken from the writer's experience in teaching Vietnamese boat people in Galang, and his experiment in the Second Year students of the English Department, IKIP Sanata Dharma.

(a). He wrote on the blackboard:

### Group Work

- greetings
- full/first/middle/last name
- spelling
- age
- occupations
- family
- food, fruits
- daily activities

He explained what the students were going to do with those items on the blackboard. Then he asked them to start. He heard them greet and ask questions to one another like: "Good morning! How are you? What's your full/first/middle/last name? How do you spell your full name? How old are you? What did you do in Vietnam? How many brothers do you have? Is your family with you in Galang? How long have you been here? What's your favourite food/fruit? Do you like Chinese food? What do you



de in the morning/afternoon/evening?"

(b). On August 20, 1980, the writer made an experiment on speaking. He taught the Second Year students of the English Department, IKIP Sanata Dharma for two periods successively. He asked the students to suggest some topics to be discussed. The followings were some topics from them:

- How to be a good English teacher?
- A woman's place is in the house.
- The Advantages and Disadvantages of SI Programme
- IKIP graduates should become teachers.

The groups were free to choose which topics they liked to discuss. He gave them forty five minutes for group discussions.

In the second period, there were panel discussions. Each group presented their consensus in front of the class, and the audience gave their comments and asked questions.

### III. Reading

The teacher can give a short passage on a flip chart or blackboard, and asks the students to discuss

and answer the questions. The following is an example from the writer's experience in teaching beginners in Galang Camp.

"Maria is Joko's mother. She is cleaning the bedroom. Joko is in the kitchen with his sister, Endang. They are cooking. Mr. Farouk, Joko's father, is in the living-room. He is reading newspaper.

He gave the students questions:

- Who is Maria?
- What is she doing? Is she cleaning the bathroom?
- Where is Joko? What is she doing?
- Where is Mr. Farouk? What is he doing?

#### IV. Writing

A group of five students are asked to interview one of its members. Every student gets the chance to interview and to be interviewed. The interviewer writes down the answers, and so do the other three students. Accordingly, each student has four kinds of information about his fellow students' daily activities. This is an example:

"Nguyen Van Thanh gets up at 6 o'clock. He goes to the bathroom. He brushes his teeth. He takes a bath. He goes to the bedroom. He puts on his clothes. He goes

to the dining-room, and he eats  
breakfast at 7 o'clock. He goes  
to the market at 8 o'clock. ...  
.....  
.....

On August 20, 1980, he made an experiment on Writing to the Second Year students of the English Department, IKIP Sanata Dharma. First, he gave an introduction of how to write a good paragraph. He gave them some examples. Then he divided the students into groups and asked each group to write a paragraph on anything they liked. The following was an example from one of the groups:

"We have a new teacher this afternoon to replace Mr. Purba. The new teacher's name is Mr. Moustache. He is about 25 years old, but he looks like a teenager. He looks so young and so handsome that all of the students try to pay attention to him, especially the girls. They admire him very much. Actually, he is not a kind man. There are no smiles on his face. It is a surprise to see him smile. He often gets angry. Although he is like that, we all like him very much because he helps us learn English. We hope that he will change his characters so that we will like him more. In our opinions, he is a good teacher."

#### V. Group Evaluation

There is nothing special about group oral test. The procedures are just the same with ordinary group discussions. The following is an example from the

writer's experience in teaching intermediate students on Pulau Galang. In the final test, he asked each group to interview its members. They were free to ask any questions. The followings were some questions from one of the groups:

- Where did you go last Sunday?
- What did you see there?
- Are there any interesting places in your country?
- What are the seasons in your country?
- How long have you been in Galang?
- Do you like Galang? Why?
- Which country are you going to?
- Do you have any relatives there?

Enclosed, on pages 91 and 92, is a Xerox copy of a recommendation letter from "Save the Children" to which the writer was employed for six months. This letter mentions that the writer used Group Work in teaching and testing students in large classes.

# Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Anak

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ALAMAT TELEGRAM :  
SAVCHILD TANJUNG PINANG.

February 21, 1981

To Whom It May Concern:

Mr. Vincent Saragih has been employed as an English teacher for six months by the Save the Children / Experiment in International Living's English Language Program for Vietnamese Refugees on Pulau Galang, Riau, Indonesia. The goal of our program is to provide "Survival English" to adults in order to enable them to cope with everyday needs in their resettlement countries.

As a teacher Mr. Saragih has been responsible for 2 classes each day: each class consisting of 2 hours aural/oral English and 1½ hours of listening class. He supervised Vietnamese listening class teachers and when necessary conducted the listening class himself. In his teaching, Mr. Saragih used primarily the direct method with translation by Vietnamese assistants. He used a great deal of group-work, both in daily lessons and in evaluation and testing, and found it successful even in large classes. Mr. Saragih is an excellent teacher. He has had very good rapport with his students, and has interesting lively lessons. He is very creative in his teaching, always searching for the best materials and way to motivate and teach his students.

In addition to his teaching, Mr. Saragih has gained experience in supervision and in curriculum development. During each 5 week cycle, he has worked with a team of 3 Vietnamese assistants for each class. He has been responsible for establishing a good rapport with his assistants, assigning them duties in his class and writing recommendation for them when they leave for resettlement. His success in this area is shown by the loyalty of two assistants who stayed with him through 3 cycles.



**Save the Children**

VIETNAM BOAT REFUGEE PROGRAM  
P.O. BOX. 21 TELP. 21659  
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# Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Anak

ALAMAT SURAT :  
KOTAK POS 21  
TANJUNG PINANG-RIAU  
INDONESIA.  
ALAMAT TELEGRAM :  
SAVCHILD TANJUNG PINANG.

During the past 3 months, Mr. Saragih has improved our 3 week curriculum and has expanded it to 5 weeks: selecting material, developing drills, writing dialogues and testing the curriculum in his class. He eagerly accepted this major responsibility and has worked long hours himself and with colleagues he has directed in working on certain areas of the curriculum and material reproduction. Thanks to Vincent, the full 5 week curriculum is now ready to use.

Since Galang Refugee Camp is an international setting with both Khmer and Vietnamese refugees as well as staff from many different countries, Vincent has gained valuable experience working and living with people of various backgrounds and cultures. His outgoing, bouyant personality has endeared him to many students and colleagues alike. His thoughtfulness and inquiring mind have made him a welcome member of our community.

It is with pleasure that I recommend him to any organization to which he applies.

Sincerely,

*Joan DeWitt Seeler*

Joan DeWitt Seeler

Language Program Manager



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