INVESTIGATING TOGETHER, LEARNING MORE: A QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL STUDI OF GROUP INVESTIGATION IN EFL CLASSROOMS

SKRIPSI

Disusun Oleh :

ADE MUTIA PHONNA
NIM : 1042018020

Departement
English Education



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STATEMENT OF APPROVAL

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By :

Ade Mutia Phonna

1042018020

English Education Department

Approved by:

Main Supervisor

Ruly Adha, SS, MS
NIP. 19840830 200901 1 006

Co Supervisor

Dessy Kurniasy, M.Hum
NI PPPK. 19821212 202321 2 037

Dipindai dengan CamScanner

STATEMENT OF CERTIFICATION

INVESTIGATING TOGETHER, LEARNING MORE: A QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL STUDI OF GROUP INVESTIGATION IN EFL CLASSROOMS

SKRIPSI

Has been defended in siding Munaqasyah by the board of Examiners and has been accepted as a partial fulfillment of requirements for sarjana pendidikan (S.Pd) in English Department of Tarbiyah and Teachers Training Faculty

on:

Board of Examiners :

Chairman

Ruly Adha, SS, MS
NIP. 19840830 200901 1 006

Secretary

Dessy Kurniasy, M.Hum
NI PPPK. 19821212 202321 2 037

Examiners I

Fadhillah Wiandari, MS
NIP. 19881222 201503 2 004

Examiners II

Zahratul Idami, M.Pd
NI PPPK. 19890621 202321 2 044

Certified by :

The Dean of Tarbiyah and Teachers Training faculty
State Institute for Islamic studies Langsa,

Dr. Sabaruddin, M.Si
NIP. 19810917 200312 1 007

Dipindai dengan CamScanner

ORIGINAL LITERACY

Saya yang bertanda tangan di bawah ini:

Nama	: Ade Mutia Phonna
Tempat/ Tgl. Lahir	: Langsa, 18 Juli 2000
NIM	: 1042018020
Fakultas/ Prodi	: FTIK/Tadris Bahasa Inggris (TBI)
Alamat	: Alue Pineung Timue, Langsa Timur Kota Langsa

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Langsa, 23 Juli 2025
Yang Membuat Pernyataan



Ade Mutia Phonna
NIM. 1042018020

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Ade Mutia Phonna
NIM. 1042018020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENT ..... **i**
TABLE OF CONTENTS ..... **iii**
ABSTRACT ..... **v**

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION **1**
A. Backround of Study 1
B. Problem of Study 4
C. Purpose of Study 4
D. Significance of study 4
E. Terminology 6

CHAPTER II THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK **8**
A. Group Investigation 8
1. Definition Group Investigation 8
2. Characteristics of the Group Investigation Learning Model 10
3. Purpose of Group Investigation Method 10
4. Benefits of Using the Group Investigation Method 10
5. Steps for the Investigation Methods of The Educational Group 11
6. Advantages and Disadvantages of the Group Investigation Method 11
7. Succes Criteria 12
B. English as a Foreign Language (EFL) 13
1. Explanation English as a Foreign Language (EFL) 13
2. EFL in Indonesia 13
3. Obstacles in EFL 14
4. Methods in EFL 15
5. Principles of Teaching EFL 16
6. Teacher's Effectiveness in Teaching English as a Foreign Language 18
C. Previous Study 19

CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHOD **21**
A. Research Design 21
B. Population and Sample The Research 22
C. Technique of Collecting Data 23

D. Source of Data 24
E. Techniques of Data Analysis 25

CHAPTER IV FINDING AND DISCUSSION 28
A. Finding 28
B. Discussion 31

CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONAND SUGGESTION 36
A. Conclusion 36
B. Suggestion 36

REFERENCES 38

ABSTRACT

Ade Mutia Phonna. 2025. Investigating Together, Learning More: A Quasi-Experimental Studi of Group Investigation in EFL Classrooms

Supervisor **(1).** Ruly Adha, S.S., M.S **(2).** Dessy Kurniasy, M.Hum

This research aimed to investigate the effectiveness of the Group Investigation (GI) method in enhancing students' English learning outcomes in an Islamic junior high school context. The study employed a quasi-experimental design involving two classes of eighth-grade students at Madrasah Ulumul Qur'an (MUQ) Langsa: class VIII.1 as the experimental group and class VIII.2 as the control group. The experimental group was taught using the Group Investigation method, while the control group received instruction through conventional teaching methods. Data were collected through pre-tests and post-tests, classroom observations, and teacher interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, normality and homogeneity tests, paired and independent t-tests, and normalized gain (N-Gain) scores. The results showed a significant improvement in the experimental group's performance compared to the control group. The average post-test score in the experimental class was considerably higher, with a moderate N-Gain score indicating meaningful progress. Qualitative data revealed increased student engagement, collaboration, and the integration of Islamic values such as responsibility and mutual respect during group activities. The study concludes that the Group Investigation model is effective in improving students' English achievement and fostering character development in EFL classrooms. It is recommended for teachers seeking to promote collaborative and meaningful language learning, especially in contexts where Islamic values are emphasized.

Keywords: *Group Investigation, EFL Classroom, English Learning Outcomes, Quasi-Experimental, Collaborative Learning, Islamic Education*

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, particularly in Indonesia, students often face difficulties in engaging actively in the learning process. Traditional, teacher-centered instruction frequently dominates the classroom, leaving students as passive recipients of knowledge. This approach limits opportunities for critical thinking, interaction, and the development of collaborative skills that are essential for effective language acquisition.[1]

In recent decades, the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction has undergone a shift from teacher-centered paradigms to more learner-centered approaches. This shift is rooted in the understanding that language is not merely acquired through passive reception, but through meaningful interaction, critical reflection, and social engagement. However, in many EFL classrooms in Indonesia, particularly at the secondary education level, the implementation of these student-centered strategies remains limited. Traditional pedagogical practices that emphasize rote memorization and grammar

[1] Johnson, David W., Roger T. Johnson, dan Karl A. Smith, A*ctive Learning: Cooperation in the College Classroom*, 3rd ed. (Edina: Interaction Book Company, 2006), h. 23.

translation persist, leading to passive student behavior, minimal classroom interaction, and low engagement.[2]

To address these issues, educators are increasingly turning to student-centered and inquiry-based learning strategies. One such approach is Group Investigation (GI), a cooperative learning model that encourages students to work collaboratively in small groups to investigate topics, solve problems, and present their findings. GI not only enhances academic achievement but also nurtures students' interpersonal skills, autonomy, and motivation in learning English.[3]

Group Investigation (GI) is a cooperative learning model that encourages students to take an active role in their learning. GI integrates academic content learning with group collaboration, investigation, and presentation. Unlike traditional group work, GI empowers students to choose subtopics, formulate questions, divide tasks, research independently, and synthesize their findings in group discussions and presentations. This model allows learners to become co-constructors of knowledge rather than mere consumers.

Collaboration is a key principle in 21st-century education. In the context of language learning, collaboration creates spaces for students to engage in dialogue, solve problems together, provide peer feedback, and practice using language for real purposes. Collaborative learning not only supports academic

[2] Merrill Swain, "Communicative Competence: Some Roles of Comprehensible Input and Comprehensible Output in Its Development," in *Input in Second Language Acquisition*, ed. Susan Gass & Carolyn Madden (New York: Newbury House, 1985), h. 235.

[3] Gillies, Robyn M., *Cooperative Learning: Integrating Theory and Practice* (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2007), h. 45.

achievement but also nurtures essential soft skills such as empathy, adaptability, and leadership.[4]

In EFL settings, where students often experience anxiety and reluctance to speak English, collaborative environments help reduce affective filters. Working in groups can increase students' confidence, reduce the fear of making mistakes, and promote the development of fluency through repeated use of language. The Group Investigation model embeds collaboration naturally within its structure, making it ideal for enhancing both academic and linguistic outcomes in the EFL classroom.[5]

At Madrasah Ulumul Qur'an (MUQ) Langsa, teachers have identified a recurring problem: many EFL students demonstrate low participation and lack confidence in using English communicatively. These challenges highlight the need for innovative teaching methods that promote both engagement and academic progress. Thus, implementing the GI model in the EFL classroom offers a promising solution.

This study employs a quasi-experimental design to investigate the effectiveness of Group Investigation in improving students' EFL achievement at MUQ Langsa. By comparing the learning outcomes of students taught using GI and those taught with conventional methods, the study aims to explore how

[4] Abdul Majid, *Perencanaan Pembelajaran*, (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2008), h. 95.
[5] Lie, Anita, *Cooperative Learning: Mempraktikkan Cooperative Learning di Ruang-Ruang Kelas*, (Jakarta: Grasindo, 2008), h. 33.

collaborative inquiry-based learning can enhance language learning experiences in Islamic senior high school contexts.[6]

B. Problem of Study

Based on the background above, it researches provides some problems of study as follows:

1. Is there a significant difference in English learning achievement between students taught using the Group Investigation model and those taught using conventional teaching methods at MUQ Langsa?
2. To what extent does the implementation of the Group Investigation model improve students' English learning outcomes in an EFL classroom?

C. Purpose of study

The purposes of the study are as follows:

1. To determine whether there is a significant difference in English learning achievement between students who are taught using the Group Investigation model and those who receive conventional instruction at MUQ Langsa.
2. To analyze the improvement of the Group Investigation model in enhancing students' English learning outcomes in the EFL context.

D. Significance of study

Based on the above background, it can be concluded that the benefits in this study are:

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[6] Slavin, Robert E., *Cooperative Learning: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1995), h. 98.

1. Theoretical Significance

   The results of this research will enrich the existing body of knowledge on cooperative learning, especially the use of the Group Investigation model in EFL instruction. It may also contribute to the development of learning theories that emphasize collaboration, inquiry, and student-centered learning as effective strategies to enhance language competence.

2. Practical Significance

   a. For Teachers:

      This study offers an alternative teaching model that can be applied to make English classes more interactive, student-centered, and effective. It may also encourage teachers to shift from traditional teaching practices toward more collaborative and inquiry-based approaches.

   b. For Students:

      The implementation of the Group Investigation model is expected to increase students' motivation, engagement, and self-confidence in using English, while also improving their academic performance through active involvement in the learning process.

   c. For Schools/Educational Institutions:

      The findings of this study can serve as a reference for curriculum developers and school leaders in designing instructional strategies that foster active learning and critical thinking, particularly in Islamic school environments.

d. For Future Researchers:

This study can be used as a foundation for further research on cooperative learning models, or adapted to different subjects, levels, and educational settings to explore the broader impact of collaborative strategies in education.

E. Terminology

To avoid misunderstanding of readers in understanding this discussion, researcher explain some of the terms contained in the title of this scientific paper, the terms shown here are as follows.

1. Group Investigation (GI)

   Group Investigation is a cooperative learning model that involves students working collaboratively in small groups to choose topics, plan investigations, conduct research, analyze information, and present their findings. In this study, GI refers to the specific, applied in the EFL classroom to promote active learning and communication among students.

2. English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

   EFL refers to the teaching and learning of English in a country where English is not the primary language. In this research, EFL refers to the English subject taught at MUQ Langsa, where students learn English as part of the school curriculum, not as a native or second language.

3. English Achievement

   English achievement refers to the students' performance in English language skills, particularly in reading comprehension and speaking, as

measured through pre-test and post-test assessments. It reflects how much the students have improved as a result of the instructional intervention.

4. Conventional Teaching Method

   Conventional teaching refers to traditional, teacher-centered instruction in which the teacher delivers content directly and students mostly listen, take notes, and complete exercises individually. This method is used as the comparison (control) group in the study.

5. Quasi-Experimental Design

   Quasi-experimental design is a research method that seeks to evaluate interventions but does not use random assignment of subjects to groups. In this study, the design involves two intact classes—one experimental and one control—used to compare the effects of the Group Investigation model on student outcomes.

CHAPTER IV

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

A. Finding

1. Data Description

This research was conducted at Madrasah Ulumul Qur'an (MUQ) Langsa in the academic year 2024/2025. The study involved two classes of eighth-grade students: Class VIII.1 as the experimental group, and Class VIII.2 as the control group. The total number of students was 50, with 25 students in each class. Both groups were taught the same English material with the theme "Islamic Role Models" over four meetings, but different teaching strategies were employed.

The experimental class (VIII.1) was taught using the Group Investigation (GI) model, which emphasized collaborative learning and student inquiry. The control class (VIII.2) was taught using conventional teaching methods dominated by teacher explanations and individual exercises.

To measure the effectiveness of the Group Investigation method, the researcher used a pre-test and post-test design. Both tests consisted of 20 multiple-choice questions covering vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension, and writing related to Islamic-themed English materials.

Table 4.1 Pre-Test Results

Group	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Experimental	25	40	70	55.20	8.65
Control	25	42	72	56.40	7.80

The mean score of the experimental group (VIII.1) before the treatment was 55.20, while the control group (VIII.2) scored slightly higher with a mean of 56.40. The results show that both groups had comparable English proficiency levels before the treatment.

Table 4.2 Pre-Test Results

Group	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Experimental	25	65	92	79.60	7.10
Control	25	58	80	68.40	6.75

After the implementation of the Group Investigation model in the experimental group, the mean score increased significantly from 55.20 to 79.60. Meanwhile, the control group also improved, but less significantly from 56.40 to 68.40. This shows a notable difference in achievement growth between both groups.

2. Data Analysis

To examine the effectiveness of the Group Investigation (GI) model in improving students' English achievement, the collected data from the pre-test and post-test were analyzed using quantitative statistical procedures. The analysis followed several key steps to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings.

The analysis began by evaluating the distribution characteristics of the data. This involved testing for normality to determine whether the scores from both the experimental and control groups followed a normal distribution. This is an essential prerequisite for using parametric statistical tests such as the Independent Samples t-Test.

Next, the data were tested for homogeneity of variance, which is important to ensure that the variance between the two groups was not significantly different. Only after confirming the assumptions of normality and homogeneity, the researcher proceeded to test the research hypothesis using the Independent Samples t-Test. The Shapiro-Wilk test was used to assess the normality of the data. This test was selected because it is considered suitable for small sample sizes ($n < 50$), such as those used in this research.

Table 4.3 Normality Test

Group	Pre-Test Sig.	Post-Test Sig.
Experimental	0.182	0.145
Control	0.120	0.110

All p-values are greater than 0.05, indicating that the distribution of scores in both pre-test and post-test is normal. Therefore, the data meets the assumption required for parametric testing, such as t-tests.

Table 4.4 Homogeneity of Variance Test

Test Type	Sig. (p-value)
Pre-Test	0.401
Post-Test	0.218

The test results indicate that the variance of both groups is homogeneous ($p > 0.05$), justifying the use of parametric tests. This test was used to determine whether there is a significant difference in the students' performance between the experimental and control groups.

Table 4.5 Hypothesis Testing Using Independent Sample t-Test

Test Type	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pre-Test	-0.563	48	0.576
Post-Test	5.486	48	0.000

The pre-test comparison shows no significant difference ($p = 0.576 > 0.05$), confirming both groups started at a similar level. The post-test comparison indicates a significant difference ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$), meaning the Group Investigation model significantly improved students' English achievement compared to the conventional method.

B. Discussion

The results of this study indicate a significant difference in the English achievement between students taught through the Group Investigation (GI) model and those taught using conventional methods. The analysis of pre-test and post-test scores shows that the experimental group (VIII.1), which was exposed to GI, achieved notably higher learning gains than the control group (VIII.2), which received teacher-centered instruction. This section will elaborates on these findings by interpreting them through theoretical perspectives, relevant research, and the contextual background of MUQ Langsa.

The post-test results demonstrated a substantial increase in the mean score of the experimental group, from 55.20 to 79.60, compared to the control group's increase from 56.40 to 68.40. This clearly shows that the GI model contributed significantly to the improvement of students' English achievement. This outcome is in line with the theory of cooperative learning proposed by Slavin, which states that students tend to achieve better academically when they work together toward shared goals. The GI model specifically fosters this type of cooperation by dividing students into small investigative teams where each member has a role in gathering, analyzing, and presenting information.[28] Through this process, learners are actively involved in constructing knowledge, rather than passively receiving it.

The student centered nature of GI allowed for greater autonomy, accountability, and active learning. Instead of simply memorizing vocabulary and grammar rules, students in the experimental group engaged in meaningful discussions, peer teaching, and collaborative problem-solving activities. These interactions enhanced their language acquisition, especially in speaking, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension.

Moreover, the GI model aligns with the constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes that knowledge is constructed through interaction with the environment and collaboration with others. In this case, students learned English through tasks that required them to communicate, negotiate meaning, and draw conclusions all essential components of effective language learning.

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[28] Robert E. Slavin, *Cooperative Learning: Theory, Research, and Practice*, (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1995), h. 5.

One of the distinguishing features of this study is the integration of Islamic themes into the English teaching materials. The content included vocabulary and reading passages about prophets, Islamic moral values, daily worship practices, and expressions commonly used in a Muslim context. This thematic focus had a positive effect on students' motivation and engagement.

Students at MUQ Langsa, a madrasah-based institution, are accustomed to religious instruction and Islamic values. When these values were embedded into English learning materials, students were able to relate the content to their daily lives and beliefs, making the lessons more meaningful and relevant. This is consistent with the contextual learning approach, which suggests that students learn best when the subject matter is personally relevant and connected to their real-world experiences.

In addition, the integration of Islamic content supported students' identity as Muslims and reinforced their moral development, while simultaneously enhancing their English proficiency. This dual focus on language and values is particularly appropriate for religious schools like MUQ Langsa, where character education is highly emphasized.

The comparison between the experimental and control groups further highlights the advantages of GI over traditional teaching methods. In the control group, instruction was mainly teacher-centered, with students expected to listen, take notes, and complete individual exercises. While this method provides structure and is easier to manage, it does not actively engage students in constructing their own knowledge or practicing authentic communication.

In contrast, the GI model encouraged students to explore topics collaboratively, ask questions, discuss ideas, and present their findings. These activities fostered a deeper level of cognitive engagement and developed both their academic and social skills. Students also had the opportunity to practice real-world language use, which is vital for second language acquisition.

The GI model promotes student autonomy and voice, empowering students to take charge of their own learning. This sense of ownership increases intrinsic motivation, which is a key factor in successful language learning. It also shifts the teacher's role from a lecturer to a facilitator, who guides, supports, and challenges students as they work through the learning process.

The results of this study are consistent with prior research on Group Investigation in language learning Yuliani found that GI significantly improved students' reading comprehension and engagement in Islamic junior high schools.[29] Rahayu concluded that GI enhanced both students' academic performance and their ability to work collaboratively.[30]

Furthermore, the study confirms the findings of Lie, who emphasized that cooperative learning not only improves academic achievement but also promotes empathy, tolerance, and communication skills—values that are essential in both language learning and Islamic education.[31] His study therefore contributes to the existing body of knowledge by confirming the effectiveness of GI in a specific

[29] Yuliani, "Improving Students' Vocabulary Mastery through Group Investigation Method," *Journal of English Language Teaching*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (2018), h. 90.

[30] Rahayu, "The Effect of Group Investigation on Students' Speaking Ability at the Eighth Grade of SMP Negeri 4 Kediri," *Jurnal Pendidik Bahasa*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2020), h. 47.

[31] Lie, Anita, *Cooperative Learning: Mempraktikkan Cooperative Learning di Ruang-Ruang Kelas*, (Jakarta: Grasindo, 2008), h. 33.

context—an Islamic EFL classroom in a madrasah setting where the blending of language instruction and moral education is both necessary and beneficial. Although the implementation of the GI model yielded positive results, it also presented several practical challenges. Some students initially found it difficult to work collaboratively, especially in assigning roles, making decisions, and managing time during group discussions. Others lacked confidence in speaking English in front of their peers.

From the teacher's perspective, managing multiple groups simultaneously required more preparation, monitoring, and classroom management skills than traditional instruction. Designing meaningful investigation tasks, supporting students' inquiry, and ensuring equal participation across groups were some of the demanding aspects of the process.

However, these challenges diminished over time as students became more familiar with the structure of the GI model and received consistent guidance. The teacher's role in scaffolding group work and modeling effective collaboration was crucial in helping students adapt to this more interactive learning environment.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussions in the previous chapter, the researches draw some conclusion as follows:

1. The implementation of the Group Investigation (GI) model had a significant and positive impact on students' English achievement. The experimental group (class VIII.1), which was taught using GI, showed a greater improvement in post-test scores compared to the control group (class VIII.2) taught using conventional methods.
2. The GI model encouraged students to be more actively engaged, collaborative, and responsible in their learning. Through group discussions, investigation, and presentation, students developed their language skills in a meaningful and contextually relevant way.

B. Suggestion

The research provided some suggestions as follows:

1. For English Teachers

   Teachers are encouraged to implement Group Investigation as an alternative teaching model in EFL classrooms. GI fosters student collaboration, higher-order thinking, and language development in an interactive and engaging way. It is especially useful in promoting student-centered learning and preparing students for 21st-century skills.

2. For Curriculum Developers

   It is important to develop English learning materials that are contextually and culturally appropriate, particularly for Islamic schools. Thematic materials related to Islamic values, characters, and practices can motivate students and provide meaningful contexts for using English.

3. For Schools and Institutions

   Schools should support the professional development of teachers by providing training on cooperative learning models, including GI. In addition, school policies should encourage innovation in classroom instruction to improve students' academic achievement.

4. For Future Researchers

   Future studies are encouraged to apply GI in other language skills (e.g., speaking or writing), and in different educational settings, such as senior high schools or pesantren. Researchers may also explore the integration of technology and digital platforms to facilitate group investigations more effectively.