THE EFFICIENCY OF TEACHING ENGLISH THROUGH GROUP WORKING ACTIVITIES

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Abstract: This study examines the efficiency of teaching English through group working activities, focusing on students' speaking skills. It explores students' opinions about group work and its impact on their performance. Data was collected through questionnaires, classroom observations, and teacher's reflection notes. The results show that students have a positive attitude towards group work. They become more active, confident, and willing to speak. In conclusion, group working activities are an effective way to improve speaking skills if they are well planned. They also help create a more engaging learning environment.

Keywords: group work, questionnaires, classroom observations, questionnaires, classroom observations, collaborative learning, EFL, speaking anxiety, student participation, communicative competence, action research

GURUHLI FAOLIYATLAR ORQALI INGLIZ TILINI O'QITISH SAMARADORLIGI

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Annotatsiya: Ushbu tadqiqot guruhli faoliyatlar orqali ingliz tilini o'qitish samaradorligini, xususan o'quvchilarning og'zaki nutq ko'nikmalarini o'rganadi. Tadqiqot guruhli ishga bo'lgan o'quvchilar munosabatini va uning o'quv natijalariga ta'sirini tahlil qiladi. Ma'lumotlar so'rovnomalar, sinf kuzatishlari va o'qituvchi

refleksiya yozuvlari orqali to'plandi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatdiki, o'quvchilar guruhli ishga ijobiy munosabatda bo'lishadi. Ular faolroq, ishonchliroq va gapirish istagi yuqoriroq bo'lishadi. Xulosa qilib aytganda, guruhli faoliyatlar yaxshi rejalashtirилgan bo'lsa, og'zaki nutq ko'nikmalarini rivojlantirishning samarali usuli hisoblanadi. Bundan tashqari, ular yanada qiziqarli o'quv muhitini yaratishga yordam beradi.

Kalit so'zlar: guruhli ish, so'rovnomalar, sinf kuzatishlari, hamkorlikda o'rganish, ingliz tili chet tili sifatida (EFL), nutqdan qo'rqish, o'quvchilarning ishtiroki, kommunikativ kompetensiya, amaliy tadqiqot

ЭФФЕКТИВНОСТЬ ОБУЧЕНИЯ АНГЛИЙСКОМУ ЯЗЫКУ ПОСРЕДСТВОМ ГРУППОВОЙ РАБОТЫ

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Аннотация: Данное исследование изучает эффективность обучения английскому языку посредством групповой работы, уделяя особое внимание навыкам устной речи учащихся. Исследование анализирует отношение учащихся к групповой работе и её влияние на их успеваемость. Данные были собраны с помощью анкетирования, наблюдений в классе и рефлексивных записей учителя. Результаты показывают, что учащиеся позитивно относятся к групповой работе. Они становятся более активными, уверенными и готовыми говорить. В заключение можно сказать, что групповые виды деятельности являются эффективным способом совершенствования навыков устной речи при условии их грамотного планирования. Они также способствуют созданию более увлекательной образовательной среды.

Ключевые слова: групповая работа, анкетирование, наблюдение в классе, совместное обучение, английский как иностранный язык (EFL), речевая тревожность, участие учащихся, коммуникативная компетенция, исследование в действии

1.Introduction

In many EFL classrooms, students often do not participate actively in speaking activities. In Uzbekistan, English lessons are still mostly teacher-centered, where students mainly listen and repeat rather than speak freely. Because of this, many learners struggle to develop their speaking skills and often feel unconfident when using English. During my teaching practice at School No. 10 in Namangan, I noticed that students behaved differently when they worked in groups. They were more willing to speak and seemed less nervous compared to whole-class speaking activities. This made me interested in whether group work could really help students improve their participation and speaking ability. Group work refers to classroom activities where students work together in small groups to complete a task or solve a problem. It is believed that students learn better when they interact and share ideas with each other. According to Dörnyei, motivation and a positive classroom atmosphere are very important in language learning. Group activities can create such an environment because students feel more relaxed and supported.

2. My Context

This study was conducted at School No. 10 in Namangan, Uzbekistan, with a small group of 14–15 students. I am a third-year student at the Namangan State Institute of Foreign Languages, and this research was part of my teaching practice. Before starting the study, I already believed that group work could make English lessons more interesting. During my lessons, I observed that students were usually more active when they worked in groups compared to individual tasks. I also discussed this with other teachers. They agreed that group work can help students develop

communication skills, but they also mentioned that it needs careful planning to avoid noise and lack of control in the classroom.

3. Literature Review

Research on group work in second language learning has been widely conducted in EFL contexts. Nguyen[1] found that group activities help improve students' speaking fluency and increase their confidence, especially among learners who are usually less active in class. In a similar way, Laal and Ghodsi[2] explain that cooperative learning is often more effective than individual work because students help and support each other while learning. Affective factors also play an important role in language learning. Dewaele and MacIntyre[3] state that enjoyable activities can reduce anxiety, and group work often creates this positive effect. Khajavy et al.[4] also found that working in small groups lowers students' language anxiety, as they feel less pressure compared to speaking alone in front of the whole class. In terms of language production, Swain and Watanabe[5] highlight that students need to actively produce language in order to improve. Group work encourages this because students must communicate to complete tasks. However, Storch[6] points out that group work is not always effective if it is not well organized. Without clear instructions and teacher support, stronger students may dominate while weaker students become passive.

4. Research Questions

This study was guided by three questions:

[1] Nguyen, H. T. (2019). Group work and speaking performance in EFL classrooms. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *10*(4), 783–791.
[2] Laal, M., & Ghodsi, S. M. (2012). Benefits of collaborative learning. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *31*, 486–490.
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[4] Khajavy, G. H., MacIntyre, P. D., & Barabadi, E. (2018). Role of the emotions and classroom environment in willingness to communicate. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *40*(3), 605–624.
[5] Swain, M., & Watanabe, Y. (2013). Languaging: Collaborative dialogue as a source of second language knowledge, skills, and attitudes. In C. A. Chapelle (Ed.), *The encyclopedia of applied linguistics* (pp. 1–8). Wiley-Blackwell.
[6] Storch, N. (2026). Collaborative writing. *Language Teaching*, *52*(1), 40–59.

1. Do students enjoy learning English through group work?
2. How does group work affect students' participation in lessons?
3. What difficulties do students experience during group work activities?

5.Exploratory Phase

1.Methods of Data Collection

Three tools were used to collect data throughout the study:

a.Student questionnaires

These were given before and after the intervention. They helped me understand students' attitudes toward group work, their enjoyment during activities, and their confidence in speaking English. The questions were written in both English and Uzbek so that students could answer easily and honestly.

b.Classroom observations

These were carried out during all lessons. I observed how many students participated, what language they used (English or Uzbek), and how active they were in group work compared to individual tasks.

c.Reflective teaching notes

After each lesson, I wrote short notes about what went well and what problems appeared. These notes helped me track students' progress, their participation, and changes in their confidence over time.

2. Exploratory Research Findings

Research Findings	Number of Students	Percentage

Afraid of being judged negatively by peers or teacher	**12**	**86%**
Feel nervous speaking in front of the whole class	**11**	**79%**
Feel less nervous when speaking with close friends	**11**	**79%**
Prefer small-group over whole-class speaking	**10**	**71%**
Teacher's presence increases nervousness	**8**	**57%**
Feel more confident in interactive/game-based activities	**9**	**64%**

The questionnaire results, supported by classroom observations, showed clear and repeated patterns. The main findings are presented in Table 1 below.

Students were afraid of making mistakes in front of others, felt they lacked enough vocabulary, and believed that only “talented” learners can speak English well. They also gave suggestions. They said practicing with friends first, using familiar topics, and receiving kinder feedback from the teacher would help them feel more confident and participate more in speaking activities.

6.Action Plan

Based on the exploratory findings, I created an action plan to improve students’ speaking confidence by making the classroom environment less stressful

and giving them more chances to practice English in a safe way. The plan was carried out over eight weeks, with ten one-hour lessons.

Several strategies were used during lessons:

•**Think-Pair-Share:** Students first thought about their answer alone, then discussed it with a partner before sharing with the whole class. This helped them feel more prepared and less nervous when speaking.

•**Small-group discussions:** Instead of always asking questions to the whole class, students often worked in small groups of 3–4. Groups were mixed so students could get used to working with different classmates.

• **Role-plays:** Students acted out simple situations. Because they were playing a role, they felt less pressure and were more willing to speak.

•**Group roles:** Each student had a clear job in the group (for example, speaker, writer, or timekeeper). This helped quieter students participate without feeling too much pressure.

•**Positive feedback:** I focused on encouraging students when they spoke and avoided correcting every mistake immediately. I also showed that making mistakes is a normal part of learning a language.

7. Results

Before the intervention, only 3–4 students usually spoke voluntarily during whole-class speaking activities. After eight weeks of applying the new strategies, clear improvements were observed in both participation and students' confidence.

Table 2. Impact of Implemented Strategies

Indicator	**Observed Change**

Voluntary speaking contributions	Increased from 3–4 students to 8–10 students per lesson
Participation in small-group tasks	Nearly all students (13 out of 14) took part regularly
Student-reported confidence	Most students reported feeling less nervous after about 4 weeks
Signs of physical anxiety	Clearly decreased during pair and group activities
Role-play participation	All 14 students participated, and some spoke for longer turns

Some students who were previously very quiet started to take part more actively in group discussions and role-play activities. For example, one student who did not speak at all during the first two weeks later became a group leader during a discussion about daily routines in week six. These changes show that the strategies helped create a more comfortable and supportive classroom environment, where students felt safer and more willing to speak English.

8. Discussion of Findings

The findings show that students' main difficulty in speaking English is not language ability, but fear of making mistakes in front of others. They feel more comfortable in small groups than in whole-class speaking situations, which means social pressure is the main problem. The strategies used (Think-Pair-Share, group work, and role-plays) helped students feel more relaxed and increased their participation. These activities gave students more time to think, work with classmates, and speak in a less stressful way. Over time, students became more

confident and willing to speak. However, the study has some limitations. The sample size was small, and there was no comparison group, so other factors may also have influenced the results.

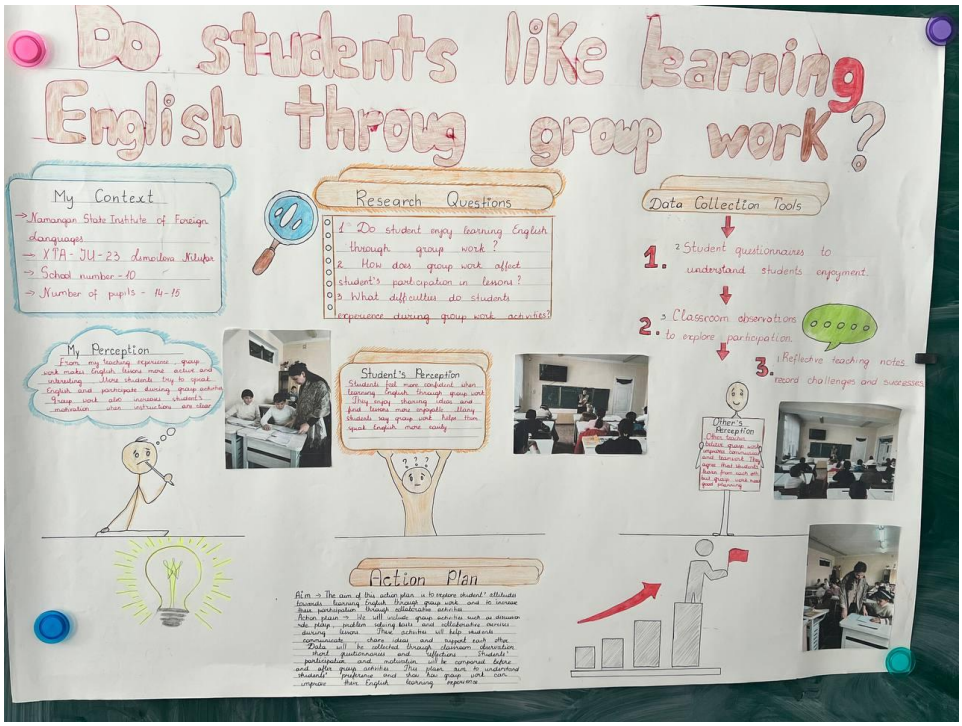
9. Conclusion

1. What I Learned

I learned that students are not silent because they do not know English, but because they are afraid of being judged. Small group activities and interactive tasks can help reduce this fear and improve participation. Student feedback and reflection are very important for improving teaching.

2. Challenges

The main challenges were limited time, difficulty in measuring which strategy worked best, and the fact that some students remained shy even after the intervention. Overall, the study showed that group work and interactive methods can improve students' confidence and speaking participation.



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