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Impact of Group Work on Secondary Speaking Skills**A B S T R A C T**

This study investigates the effect of group work on developing students' speaking skills in English as foreign language (EFL) classrooms. It highlights how group activities provide learners with opportunities to practice speaking in a supportive and interactive environment. This study includes students of the second intermediate school for girls in Tikrit intermediate schools in Salah al-Din Governorate during the academic year 2025-2026, whose total number reached 78 students. The selected sample includes 60 female students from the second intermediate School for Girls. 60 students were divided into groups A and B. Group A consists of 25 students, while Group B consists of 35 students. Group A was randomly selected as the control group. The achievement test is a tool used to measure student ability to use group work activities. This study shows that group work increases students' participation, enhances their confidence, and improves their fluency and communication abilities. Furthermore, the findings indicate that students who engage in group work are more motivated and less anxious when speaking English compared to those who learn individually. Group work also helps learners exchange ideas, correct each other, and develop critical thinking skills and classroom interaction. Therefore, the study concludes that group work is an effective strategy for improving speaking skills and should be widely used in language.

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.25130/jtuh.33.5.2026.19>**أثر العمل الجماعي في تنمية مهارات التحدث بالثانوية**

شهد أحمد هوير/ وزارة التربية/ المديرية العامة لتربية صلاح الدين

الخلاصة:

تتناول هذه الدراسة أثر العمل الجماعي في تنمية مهارات التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية لدى طلبة صفوف تعليم اللغة الإنكليزية لغة أجنبية. وتبرز أهمية الأنشطة الجماعية في توفير فرص مناسبة للمتعلمين لممارسة مهارة

التحدث في بيئة تفاعلية وداعمة . تشمل هذه الدراسة طالبات الصف الثاني متوسط في مدارس تكريت المتوسطة ضمن محافظة صلاح الدين خلال العام الدراسي (٢٠٢٥-٢٠٢٦) , حيث بلغ العدد الكلي (٧٨) طالبة . وقد تضمنت العينة المختارة (٦٠) طالبة من الصف الثاني متوسط . تم تقسيم الطالبات الى مجموعتين , المجموعة الاولى تضم ٢٥ طالبة والمجموعة الثانية تضم ٣٥ طالبة. اختبار التحصيل هو اداة لقياس قدرة الطالبات على استخدام أنشطة العمل الجماعي . أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن العمل الجماعي يسهم في زيادة مشاركة الطلبة , ويعزز ثقتهم بانفسهم , مما يؤدي الى تحسين ملحوظ في طاقاتهم وقدرتهم على التواصل. كما تبين ان الطلبة الذين يشاركون في أنشطة جماعية يصبحون اكثر دافعية واقل شعور بالقلق عند التحدث باللغة الانكليزية مقارنة بالتعلم الفردي. وتخلص الدراسة الى ان العمل الجماعي لا يقتصر دورة على تحسين مهارات التحدث فحسب , بل يسهم ايضا في تنمية مهارات التفكير النقدي من خلال تبادل الافكار وتصحيح الاخطاء بين الطلبة . لذلك يعد العمل الجماعي استراتيجية تعليمية فعالة يوصى بتوظيفها بشكل اوسع في تدريس اللغة الاجنبية .

الكلمات المفتاحية: العمل الجماعي ,مهارات التحدث , اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية , التفاعل الصفي, المدارس الثانوية.

1.1. Introduction

Group work has recently gained as an effective teaching strategy that encourages interaction, communication, and collaboration among students. Through group activities, learners have more opportunities to practice speaking, exchange ideas, and build confidence in using the language. This section includes a statement of the problem, aims, hypotheses, definitions, and important.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Speaking is considered one of the most important language skills that learners need to develop. However, many students face difficulties in expressing themselves fluently and confidently, especially in traditional classroom setting that rely more on teacher-centered methods rather than interaction. Despite, learners' speaking

skills often remain weak and underdeveloped. Group work has been introduced as an interactive teaching strategy that may help improve speaking skills by increasing student participation and providing more opportunities for communication and practice. Nevertheless, there is still a lack of clear evidence regarding the effectiveness of group work in enhancing speaking skills, particularly in certain educational contexts.

1.3. Aims of the Study

This study aims at:

1. Finding out whether there are any significant differences between the experimental group which consist of (35) student and control group which consist of (25) student in the test.
2. Find out whether there are any significant differences between the pre and post-test for the group.

1.4. Hypotheses of the Study

- 1- Group work has a positive effect in developing speaking skills.
- 2- Students who participate in group work show higher confidence than those who do not.

1.5. Importance of the Study

The importance of speaking skills in language learning is widely recognized because speaking is one of the main ways people communicate and express their ideas feelings and opinions speaking skills are essential not only for academic purposes but also for real-life confiscation they help learners According to (Harmer, 2007 : 123) speaking is a productive skill that requires learners to use

language creatively and interactively He emphasizes that speaking activities in the classroom help students practice real communication Also (Brown , 2007: 140) in language Assessment principles and classroom practices .

1.6 Definition of Terms

Group work: refer to an instructional strategy in which learners are organized into small groups to collaborate, share ideas and complete tasks or solve problems together. It emphasizes common goals. It involves sharing ideas, responsibilities and tasks among group members, allowing them to interact, communicate and learn from one another. Group work encourages. (Hadijah, 2007:76)

Speaking skills: refer to the ability to express thoughts, ideas and feelings clearly, thoughts and effectively through spoken language. They involve the use of correct pronunciation, appropriate vocabulary, grammatical accuracy and fluency in communication. Speaking skills also include the ability to interact with others, respond appropriately in conversation and use verbal and non-verbal cues such as tone, gestures and facial expressions. These skills are essential for effective communication in both academic and real-life situations (John, 2017:45)

English as a foreign language (EFL): refers to the learning and use of English in countries where English is not the primary language of communication. In EFL contexts, learners study English mainly in classroom and outside the exposure to the language outside the educational environment (Nunan,2003:53).The present work focuses on EFL students and examines the role of group work in improving speaking skills it may be limited to a specific level (e.g. Intermediate school for girls in Tikrit).

1.3. Importance of the Study

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2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The introduction of which is the theoretical framework serves as a foundation for the entire work, it provides a general overview of the topics that will be discussed and explains the importance of reviewing previous studies. The reader can understand the context in this part the writer usually defines the key concepts and terms related the key concepts and terms related to the topic to avoid confusion later it also shows the purpose of reviewing previous studies and how they are connected.

2.1 Group work in language learning

Group work in language learning is considered one of the most effective teaching strategies used in modern classrooms. It refers to situation where learners work together in small groups to complete a task solve a problem or practice to (Brown, 2001: p 177) Teaching by principles) An Interactive Approach to principles An Interactive Approach to language pedagogy group work is a general term that includes a variety of techniques.

2.2 Types of Group Work Activities

Group work Activities in language learning can be classified in the class room one common type is discussion Activities in this type students work in small group to discuss a specific topic share opinions and exchange ideas the activity help learners develop fluency and critical thinking skills According to (Brown, 2007: p 129) discussion activities encourage students to use language freely and express their personal views which improves their speaking ability and confidence.

Role-play activities This type helps learners practice function language competence A second type is problem-solving Activity in this activity students work together to find solutions to a problem or complete a task it requires discussion negotiation. (Brown, 2001: 11)

Another type is information gap activities in this activity each study has different information to need ask and answer question (Nunan, 2003: p56) in practical English language teaching.

2.3. Advantages of Group work

This type of interaction helps learners use the language in natural and meaningful way. This encourages them to participate more activity in states that group work reduces anxiety and allows students to speak more freely without fear these skills are improving but also in real life According to Communicative Language teaching today group work supports cooperation and helps learners develop interpersonal skills.

(Brown, 2001: 20)

2.4. Role of Teacher in Group work

One of the most important roles of the teacher This includes deciding the size of the groups assigning roles to students and ensuring that each member has a clear responsibility According to clear instruction help avoid confusion and save time during the activity freely while still being supported According to (Harmer, 2007: p 167)

2.5. Role of students in Group work

They actively participate constructing understanding of the subject matter must work together respect different opinion According to (Vygotsky, 1978:56) in his book Mind in society on time and contributing fairly to the group work this idea is supported by who emphasized that individual is a key element of effective group work.

2.6 Previous Studies

Lien (2021) investigated the implementation of group work in teaching speaking skills. The study found that group work significantly improved students' speaking ability by increasing their participation and confidence. Learners were more engaged and willing to communicate when working collaboratively.

Similarly, Phan (2018) evaluated the use of group work to enhance speaking fluency. The results indicated that group activities provided more opportunities for learners to practice speaking, which led to noticeable improvements in fluency and overall communication skills. The study also highlighted the positive classroom atmosphere created through collaboration.

In a more recent study, Abbasi and Anthony (2024) emphasized that group work plays a crucial role in increasing oral fluency and language use. Their findings

showed that students were able to overcome speaking difficulties through peer interaction and continuous practice.

Furthermore, Kuliahana and Marzuki (2023) focused on group discussion as a specific form of group work. Their study demonstrated a gradual improvement in students' speaking performance after applying group discussion techniques in classroom cycles.

According to Hadijah (2022), students have positive perceptions of small group discussions. The study revealed that learners felt more comfortable speaking in smaller groups, which reduced anxiety and encouraged active participation.

In addition, El-Sakka (2017) examined collaborative learning strategies and found that students who learned through group-based methods performed significantly better in speaking than those taught using traditional methods.

However, not all findings are entirely positive. John (2017) pointed out that the effectiveness of group work depends on factors such as classroom management, group composition, and task design. Some groups performed better than others depending on these conditions.

Earlier, Chen and Hird (2006) explored group work in EFL classrooms and concluded that it enhances communicative competence. However, they noted that its success relies heavily on student interaction and teacher guidance.

3. Methodology

3.1. Experimental Research

Experimental research is a scientific procedure that aims to determine cause and effect for two or more variables (Leavy,2017:87), empirical research is a process

of testing hypotheses and planning experiments, and for this reason, the data gained can be tested to reach correct and objective conclusions (Ryan,2007).

To implement the current study experience, two classes were selected in a fourth primary school. The test was offered for both the experimental and control classes.

The experimental group is taught using, Task-Based Approach while the control group is taught using the communicative approach, and at the end of the experiment, students are assigned to a test after the experiment, as indicated in

Table (1):

Table (1)

Group	dependent Variables	The Test
Exp.	Task-Based Approach	Pre and Post-test
Con.	communicative approach	Post

Independent Variables adopted for the Present.

Using this design, researcher can evaluate the effectiveness of using these methods improving the performance of second-year middle students on developing speaking skills. The performance of students in the experimental group can be compared with the performance of students in the control group to determine whether the use of these methods improving speaking skills.

3.2 Population and Sample of the Test

The population of the current study includes students of the second intermediate school for girls in Tikrit intermediate schools in Salah al-Din Governorate during

the academic year (2025-2026), whose total number reached (78) students. The selected sample includes (60) female students from the second intermediate School for Girls, which are considered distinguished students in the city of Tikrit. This sample represents 26% of the indigenous population.

The 60 students were divided into groups A and B. Group A consists of 25 students, while Group B consists of 35 students. Group A was randomly selected as the control group, while Group B was chosen as the experimental group, as shown in Table 2:

Table (2)

No. of Population	No. of Sample	Percentage
78	60	26%

Students Groups selected for this work.

3.3 Materials

According to this study, the achievement test is used as tools to collect study data.

3.4 Test

A test is a set of carefully written questions related to a specific research topic, and when presented and answered accurately by carefully selected individuals who are called representatives, it will provide the data necessary to complete the research project (Westling and Zappaterra, 2019).

As a result, in the current study, the questionnaire is used to measure the use of group work in the classroom as an educational tool. The five-point Likert scale was

used, which ranges from 1. Strongly agree to 5. Strongly disagree in the questionnaire, where students mark (yes) on the options for responses to the evaluation scale, which are as follows: 1. Strongly agree 2. agree 3. Neutral 4. Disagree 5. strongly disagree.

The survey structure aims to assess the attitudes of middle school students to learn English through using group work.

Table (3)

No.	Items	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	•
1	Group work helps me speak more English.					
2	I feel happy when I speak in a group.					
3	Group work makes speaking easier.					
4	I learn new words from my friends in group work.					
5	I like speaking with my classmates.					
6	Group work helps me practice speaking every day.					
7	I feel shy when I speak in a group.					
8	My friends help me when I cannot speak well.					
9	Group work is fun for learning English.					
10	I speak more in a group than alone.					
11	Group work helps me say full sentences					
12	I am afraid to make mistakes in group work.					
13	My teacher helps us in group speaking.					
14	I understand English better in group work					

15	Group work helps me listen and speak					
16	I like asking questions in group work.					
17	Group work makes me more confident.					
18	I do not like speaking in groups					
19	Group work helps me talk about many topics					
20	I enjoy learning English with my group.					

The Questionnaire used for the present work.

These questions are directed to assess the attitudes of middle school students towards the use of group work in the educational process. It aims to measure how group work use effects of various aspects of their academic and social lives.

3.5 Construction of Achievement Test

The achievement test is a tool for teachers to evaluate students in the school environment. In the school environment, it is used as a tool to measure the success of the individual in a specific topic or a set of topics. The achievement test provides information about what individuals acquire through their capacity test Gronlund (1988). The current study consists of two written questions, where students are required in the first question to describe the post by writing an article about it. The second question is asked to write a story for the video they see on group work. The total test mark is 50 degrees, as shown in Table (4).

This test aims to measure the extent to which students' writing skills improve after using the group work in the learning process. The test focuses on the ability to

express thoughts and imagine through writing, and provides a reference point for measuring students' development in this skill.

Table (4)

Level	Behavioral Objectives	No. of Questions	Scores
Production	Describing a post through written an article	1	25
Production	Analyzing the main themes seeing video on group work	2	25

Specifications of Post-test Contents, Behaviors, and Scores.

This data shows more required behaviors and the number of questions related to them in the final exam, providing more diversity in assessing students' written production skills.

3.6 Validity of the Questionnaire

Validity is the effect of a scanning tool, as it is supposed to measure validity is an estimate of its accuracy (Wainer and Braun, 2013). Validity related aspects in this study are facial validity and validity content. The arbitrators review the questionnaire and make some amendments to some elements before reaching an agreement on the validity of the questionnaire.

The goal of verifying validity is to ensure that the questionnaire measures accurately aspects that aims to measure, which helps in providing accurate and reliable results for study.

3.7. Validity of the Achievement Test

Validity indicates the degree of influence of the tool, analytical process, statistical method, or testing of the accuracy of what is measured Newton and Shaw(2014). Validity related aspects in this study are facial validity and content validity. In order to ensure the validity of the tool, it was presented to a committee of experts in English language education and language science, and some changes and amendments were considered before preparing the final test.

3.8. Reliability of the Questionnaire

Secretariat and accuracy indicate the accuracy and consistency in the use of the measurement used in the study to analyze the same idea. In order to achieve the Secretariat, the researcher used Alpha Cronbach laboratory and found it 0.77, which is an acceptable result. It is the result of 0.77 for Alpha Cronbach laboratory is an acceptable result, which means that the questionnaire has good reliability.

3.9. Reliability of the Achievement Test

Trust and accuracy are a way to assess internal cohesion and test measurement. Reliability specifications are used when the test is designed to measure one characteristic, or when the feature of the test changes by the test over time, or when the frequent results affect the frequent exposure to the test. Alpha Cronbach laboratory, which statistically evaluates the internal consistency, was used to detect the reliability of the evaluation test. The result of the formula was 0.83, which is an

appropriate number. The result of 0.83 for Alpha Cronbach laboratory is an appropriate result, indicating that the test has good reliability.

3.10. Scoring Scheme of the Questionnaire

The registration is based on the Likert scale, which consists of five points, ranging from 1. "strongly agree to 5. Strongly disagree" that was used in the questionnaire. Students are required to respond with a 'yes' sign. A normative value for alpha Cronbach laboratory is 0.75, which is an appropriate result. The result of 0.75 for the Alpha Cronbach standard is an appropriate result, indicating that the questionnaire has good reliability.

3.11. Scoring Scheme of the Achievement Test

The registration process is the process in which the results of the results are evaluated using a digital scale. In the current study, the test sample includes two questions. Students are registered with 50 marks. 25 marks are allocated to the first question, where students are required to write an article about the post they saw. 25 marks are devoted to the second question, where students are asked to write a paragraph about the video they watched about group work. The researcher evaluates the answers themselves according to specific criteria, namely: content, organization, vocabulary, and language use.

3.12. Final Administration of the Questionnaire

The survey was finally administered on Sabe Al-mathani School for Girls. The researcher clearly explained the objective of the questionnaire to the participants, where the importance of participating in the study and how to use the questionnaire to collect data was explained.

3.12. Final Administration of the Achievement Test

The final exam was conducted on the same day and at the same location after the completion of the questionnaire. The objective of the test was clearly explained to the students, where the importance of assessing and improving students' writing skills using the group work.

4. Data Analysis, Discussion and Results

4.1. Analysis of the Questionnaire

An analysis of students' responses was conducted, and the results are shown in Table (5). The table provides information about the number of items in the content, their weighted percentages, and weighted averages for each item. The analysis revealed that the number of items in the content was (4.34), indicating a relatively comprehensive coverage of the topic. Weighted percentages, listed from highest to lowest, indicate the distribution of answers across items Zainuddin & Halili (2016).

This indicates that the majority of students have positive attitudes toward using group work in their classrooms. These findings suggest that group work, is viewed as a valuable tool for enhancing teaching and learning outcomes among Iraqi EFL secondary school students.

Table (5)

N	Items	Weighted Mean	Percentage	Tendency
1	4	4.90	98	Strongly agree
2	8	4.85	97	Strongly agree
3	3	4.75	95	Strongly agree
4	2	4.66	93	Strongly agree
5	9	4.64	92	Strongly agree
6	16	4.62	90	Strongly agree
7	19	4.55	88	Strongly agree
8	18	4.44	86	Strongly agree
9	11	4.43	85	Strongly agree
10	20	4.42	83	Agree
11	17	4.41	81	Agree
12	5	4.40	80	Agree
13	15	4.40	78	Agree
14	12	4.39	76	Agree
15	6	4.38	75	Neutral
16	13	4.37	73	Neutral
17	7	4.36	71	Neutral
18	14	4.35	70	Neutral
19	10	4.34	68	Neutral
20	1	4.34	68	Neutral

The Average, Percentages, and trend of Students'' Reactions to using group

work

4.2. Comparison between the Mean Scores of the Experimental and that of Control Groups in the post-Test

To find out if there are any statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group's and the control group 's in the post test. Statistics show that the mean score of the experimental group is (76.46) and that of the control group is(54.88). By using t-test formula for two independent variables, the calculated t-value is found to be(9.89), while the tabulated t-value is found to be(2.00)at the degree of freedom(58) and level of significance(0.05). This means indicates that there is a significant difference between the achievement of the two groups and in using of the experimental group. Thus, the first hypothesis, which states that there is a statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group's and the control group 's in the post test, is accepted, as indicated in table (6)

Table (6)

Groups	No. of Students	Mean Scores	SD	T-value		DF	Level of Significance
Experimental	35	76.46	15.56	Calculated	Tabulated	58	0.05
				9.89	2.00		
Control	25	54.88	14.72				

Means, Standard Deviation, and T-values of the Two Groups

4.3. A Comparison between Experimental Group in the Pre and the Post-Test

According to the second hypothesis that show "there is no statistically significant differences between the mean scores in the pre and post- test for the experimental group. It is found that the mean score between the students' performance of the experimental group in the post-test is (76.46) with a standard deviation (15.56).Whereas that of the pre-test is(44.94) with a standard deviation (11.20). The calculated t-value is (9.89), which is found to be higher than the tabulated t-value which is (2.06) at(0.05) level of significance when the degree of freedom is (34), as indicated in Table (7). These means indicate that there is a significant difference between the mean score of pre -test and that of the post-test. Final results show there is a significant difference and in favor of the post –test using group work. Thus, the second hypothesis is rejected.

Table (7) The T. Test Value of Samples, the Experimental Group Achievement in the Pre-Test and Post-Test

Groups	No. of Students	Mean Scores	SD	T-value		DF	Level of Significance
Post-test	35	76.46	15.56	Calculated	Tabulated	34	0.05
				9.89	2.06		
Pre-test		44.94	11.20				

The T. Test Value of Samples, the Experimental Group Achievement in the Pre-Test and Post-Test

4.4. Discussion of the Obtained Result

The results of the present study show that students' achievement of the an experimental who taught by utilizing Task-based approach have a positive impact on writing skill is better than those of the control who has been taught by utilizing communicative approach. This explains the proficient utilize of group work in improving students' ability to comprehend and develop positive and beneficial thoughts. From the researcher point of view, the development of the students achievement in English language by utilizing Task –based approach could be attributed to the following factors:

- 1.Group work can enhance students' self-esteem.
2. It motivates students to learn English language.
- 3.It improves students confidence in their writing ability.
- 4.It enhancing visual learning of the students through photos and videos, which can give in better understanding and keeping of information.

5. CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS and SUGGESTIONS

5.1. Conclusions

After calculating and analysing the data, it can be concluded that although there was an increase in the mean scores from the pre-test to the post-test, the use of group work did not significantly improve the English-speaking skills of second-grade students at Sabe Al-mathani. Based on the results of the test, there was no statistically significant difference in learning outcomes between the experimental and control groups. Based on the research findings, the researchers provided several suggestions and implications. First, teachers may use group work as an alternative strategy to reduce students' anxiety in speaking English, as learners tend to feel more comfortable discussing ideas with their peers. Teachers are also

advised to form groups randomly without involving students in the selection process. This approach helps prevent the formation of groups based on personal preferences or similar ability levels, thereby reducing the potential gap between active and passive groups. Second, this research may serve as a reference for future researchers who wish to explore speaking skills or investigate the use of group work techniques in English language teaching. Future researchers are also encouraged to conduct studies with longer treatment durations to gain deeper insights into the effectiveness of group work in improving students' speaking performance.

5.2 Recommendations

Encourage the use of group work in classrooms Teachers should regularly include group activities to increase students' speaking opportunities. Form small and balanced groups groups of 3–5 students are ideal to ensure active participation from all members. Create a supportive learning environment .A safe and friendly atmosphere helps students speak confidently without fear of mistakes. Assign roles within groups Giving roles such as leader, speaker, note-taker, and timekeeper ensures equal participation. Use a variety of speaking activities like discussions, role plays, problem-solving tasks, and presentations improve speaking skills. Provide constructive feedback Teachers should correct mistakes in a positive way to help students improve without discouragement. Integrate speaking into assessment including speaking tasks in evaluation motivates students to participate actively. Train teachers in group work strategies Proper training helps teachers apply group work effectively in the classroom.

5.3 Suggestions for Further Studies

There are some suggestions for using group work by teachers and students to improve further studies:

1. The researcher can encourage students to document their study progress through regular stories or posts, which can serve as a motivational tool and help in tracking their learning journey.
2. The researcher can use group work to enhance critical thinking exercises, where students analyze and discuss the content and engagement with the material.
3. Both teachers and students can follow educational accounts, subject matter experts and educational influencers to stay updated with the latest of resources and knowledge.

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