

THE IMPACT OF PEER COLLABORATION AND GROUP WORK ON ENGLISH ACQUISITION IN THE CLASSROOM

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the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The work presented in the thesis is in my / our own opinion original work undertaken at BRAC University.
2. The work in the thesis has not been previously published or written by an author other than the candidate except where source material is fully acknowledged by means of reference.
3. The thesis is not submitted, or is not accepted for award of any other degree or diploma at any university or other institution.
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Approval

The thesis/project titled The impact of peer collaboration and group work on English acquisition in the classroom submitted by Ashrafun Sultana Rafin-21303017 of Spring 2025 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of of [Semester], [Year] has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of [Degree Name] on [Date-of-Defense].

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Ethics Statement

This study was carried out with strict compliance by the ethical standards during all stages of the study. Ethical clearance was secured from concerned institutional authorities prior to the collection of data. Students as well as teachers had been thoroughly briefed on the aims, procedures, and potential consequences of the study. Informed consent was obtained from all healthy volunteers and from the parents or guardians of all minors as appropriate for the institutional guidelines.

All possible confidentiality and privacy protocols were followed. Information from the questionnaires, interviews and observations were anonymised and was stored securely and presented in aggregate form, so it was not possible to identify individuals. The data were available only to approved researchers.

The research process was created to guarantee that every participant had an equal opportunity to participate in the study, regardless of background, skill, or group role. Precautions were taken to minimize the risk, and discomfort of the participants and the participants had the right to quit the study at any time without having to face any penalties. Any challenges or conflicts that emerged during co-work were quickly and respectfully resolved.

Transparency and honesty were employed in all aspects of the reporting of methods, findings, limitations and potential sources of bias during the research process. The goal of the study was to make a positive contribution to educational practice by adhering to the highest standards of academic ethical conduct and the welfare of the participants.

Abstract

This study examines the benefits of peer working and collaboration of students on language acquisition specifically on how it can improve the 4 language skills i.e speaking, listening, reading and writing. With the globalization aspect pushing more and more people towards English in recent years, English is a critical means of communication across cultural and social borders. However, traditional teacher-centered approaches often fail to encourage real-world language use, highlighting the need for more interactive and learner-centered methods. This research aims at assessing how an established method which centers on peer collaboration and group work affect language acquisition, what aspects ensure its success and where possible provide suggestions for teachers. A sequential explanatory design was applied, including both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. A sample of the study participated in the study constitutes of group activity which aids in learning of language from one another. The data collection involved pre- and post- assessments of language proficiency, observation logs and surveys to assess students' perceptions of the collaborative learning process. Group composition, task design and teacher facilitation further improved students' language skills and group dynamics. According to the analysis, peer collaboration and working in groups had a very positive impact on speaking and listening, which contributed to improved confidence and communicative competence. However, reading and writing skills saw less improvement overall, indicating more work is required to properly adapt group work for those areas specifically. The effectiveness of collaborative learning was also influenced by group composition, task type, and teacher support. These problems include unequal levels of participation and cultural differences, which hinder collaborative work. In brief, peer interaction and group work can enhance English language learning through facilitating interaction and engagement, promoting critical thinking, and fostering communication skills. But the effectiveness of these approaches are contingent upon careful planning, task design, and teacher facilitation. One of the main limitations of this study is its small sample size and study domain which can limit the generalization of the study findings. These limitations should be addressed in future research along with examining its impact on reading and writing skills, and exploring the durability of collaborative learning in a wide range of classroom settings.

KEY WORDS: Peer collaboration, group work, language acquisition, language proficiency, sociocultural theory, collaborative learning.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Learning a language is more than an academic exercise; it's a gateway to connecting with others across cultures and borders. In today's interconnected world, English has become the most widely used lingua franca, enabling individuals to transcend cultural, social, and economic boundaries and engage in meaningful international communication. (Gillies, 2016) English stands out as a global language, empowering people to share ideas, build relationships, and navigate diverse settings. To master the English language just memorizing rules and vocabulary aren't enough. Also, a person has to be a competent user of the language in real life situations to avail native like competency. Our traditional teaching system doesn't allow much exposure to the realia or authentic learning in the language learning classroom which leads them to unprepared conversations and they lack accuracy and fluency in real life conversations. Students have been taught through rote memorization, repetitive grammar drills and passive learning which made them dependent on the teachers for their progress. (Johnson & Johnson, 2014) These conventional teaching methods have helped them to bring good grades in tests but cannot bring genuine changes in their practical use of the language

As we shift from conventional teaching methods we focus more on peer interaction and group activities to enhance their active participation and peer collaboration. This interaction helps them to create an environment where they can communicate effortlessly and meaningfully using the target language. Peer collaboration and group work have emerged as particularly promising methods, underpinned by decades of research in cognitive and social learning. (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). Inspired by Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, these methods view social interaction as a cornerstone of language development. By working together as a group students brainstorm and activate their schemata and bring background knowledge to light which makes their discussion more alive. They introduce new ideas, and compete with each other as they argue or awarded the merit points with their points, they each learn from the other downfalls while all interacting on an equal level. Learning is more likely to be relevant to their current situation. Learning is also transferred when working in groups

In turn, cooperative learning organized around peer interaction and group activities transform the classroom with increased active participation and collective encouragement of human

resources. In contrast of traditional teacher-led lectures, which leave learners with no choice but to listen, these methods encourage learners to relate to, practice, communicate in, and collaboratively build knowledge in a different language. Based on Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, the collaborative approach emphasizes the importance of social interaction in the learning process for the improvement of cognitive and language skills. Through discussing their work and challenges together, students can exceed what they could learn on their own with levels of knowledge and strength beyond their own. (Vygotsky, 1978).

The English language class is a lively place to practice speaking, listening, reading and writing through tasks and pair/group work. For instance, imagine a team working on a presentation—the members grapple with ideas, draft, and iterate together (Anderson, 1993). Not only does this process sharpen their language abilities, it fosters critical thinking, negotiation and teamwork – life skills that they will benefit from in the years to come. These kinds of activities connect classroom drills to the world of communication, and give students opportunities to try out the language, make their mistakes, and improve in a supportive atmosphere. Moreover, working as part of a group allows students to assume a variety of roles like facilitator, presenter, scribe — leading to an increase in confidence and socialization with peers. (Barlow & Lowe, 1985).

But for all their theoretical ringing, peer activities and group work seem to generate inconsistent results in language teaching. While some research demonstrates remarkable gains in language skills, other studies indicate more enduring challenges that limit their effectiveness. One big problem is that the same type of work delivers wildly different results from one classroom to the next, with the groups that get along best doing the best work, raising questions about what works and why. For instance, some groups flourish with the energy of mutual excitement, but others flail because dominant personalities take over or quiet students are left behind (Johnson & Johnson, 2014). Such imbalance in collaboration may weaken the group learning, and resulting in a lower learning effect of some learners. (Bax, 2003).

A further challenge is the absence of clear evidence for how collaborative learning affects the individual language skills. Speaking and listening obviously lend themselves to group work,

but shaping reading and writing in such terms is less direct. Good writing is about details, structure, and coherence, and it's hard to do any of that when the amount of effort among group members goes unnoted and their shared work is done on a tight deadline. Likewise, group reading assignments could lead to surface-level interactions if students do not delve deeply into the text. The identification of strategies for adjusting approaches to group work to develop these abilities is an area that requires further investigation.

The heterogeneity of classrooms complicates matters further. Students of differing proficiency, backgrounds, and ways of learning can end up in classes together. Although diversity may enhance the experience, it can also bring about communication and group dynamic issues (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999). Up for instance learners above B1 level may take the lead and the beginners might stay terrorized in their shell! Participation can also be influenced by cultural differences, with some students preferring to do independent work because they are more comfortable with it, either personally or culturally. This highlights the importance of activities that are inclusive of all children (Donato, 1994). An important role is played by teacher in resolving these problems and promoting effective collaboration. Successful group work requires careful planning, explicit purpose, and targeted support. Teachers need to guide children's understanding of what is to be done, give clear directions, and establish realistic expectations. They must also monitor interactions, provide guidance when necessary, and manage any issues such as conflict or disengagement. This task (balancing the giving of direction and student autonomy), is a subtle art that demands practice (Donato, 1994). However, there are a number of impediments to educators, not the least of which are insufficient training in how to work with students in collaborative activities and lack of resources to implement and manage such activities. In the absence of adequate support, acts such as moderating discussions, settling disputes, or judging individual contributions can seem daunting. In addition, abstracted curriculum, together with limited time in class, frequently results in superficial group work, thereby potentially jeopardizing the effect of group work (Ellis, 1996)

These difficulties serve to underscore the pressing imperative of exploring the way in which peer interaction (e.g., collaborative learning, group work) impacts on English language learning. Research must discover the factors that contribute to success and the barriers that impede it. For instance, an in-depth investigation into how group identity, task design, and

teacher mediation impact the outcomes could have been helpful (Harvey, 1985). Research might also investigate the experiences of students and teachers in collaborative contexts in order to inform development of more nuanced support for how to shape such designs for particular kinds of learners. Research can help fill these gaps to establish evidence-based practices that maximize the benefits of collaboration. For example, results may inform teacher training programs to further prepare teachers to use such tactics (Hinkel, 1999). Moreover, investigation has the potential to inform creation of inclusive, motivating activities—for example, role-playing, debating, or communal storytelling—that are designed to be accessible to varying ability levels and to promote access by all (Hird, 1995).

But the benefits of peer collaboration and group work don't stop with learning languages. Honing such skills are key competencies for success in the modern, international workforce – innovative problem-solving, working effectively with others, and analytical thinking. Creating occasions for students to exchange thoughts and to work together to solve problems, puts them in good stead in complex social and work contexts of tomorrow. Furthermore, group work promotes interpersonal skills, which is essential for growth and friendliness among students (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999).

But group work is not without its hitches. Some of them succeed, fueling one another's energy, while others fail because of uneven participation or clashing personalities. Still, questions linger about how to translate those strategies into consistent success across a variety of classrooms. For example, speaking and listening work best in interacting environments, whereas reading and writing might require more concentrated efforts. The diversity of your class room also has the potential to make group dynamics more difficult: rooms where students of many different abilities, from many different cultural backgrounds, with many different styles of learning, often come into contact. Teachers could help to drive these interactions, but often they are not trained, or simply lack the time to do so well. The focus of this research is to address these challenges by investigating successful peer collaboration and by providing practical avenues for teachers to make the English classroom an engaging and inclusive space.

1.2 Problem Statement

Across the language classroom, both peer collaboration and group work are widely regarded as providing a promising but unpredictable pathway to desired results. Although some

research reports that literacy levels improved dramatically (Stritikus, 2002; Taylor, Cordey-Hayes, Dixon, & Wild, 1996), other research points out setbacks such as unequal participation, confrontations between groups, cultural and linguistic differences, and a lack of teacher preparedness (Lightbown & Spada, 2013; Webb, 1995). (Lantolf & Appel, 1994) The effect on reading and writing- skills that involve concentrated attention and are practiced alone- is not as well studied as that on speaking and listening. Moreover, many teachers are not able to design and monitor successful collaborative activities, and when these are implemented, they may be employed ineffectively. The role of technology in the domain of collaborative learning is still under investigated as well, despite the advantage that it may provide to engagement. This study addresses these gaps by evaluating the effectiveness of collaborative strategies, identifying key success factors, and exploring technological applications.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The study seeks to establish whether collaborative learning could be of any benefit regarding acquiring a language as far as English language is concerned, it seeks to test how collaborative learning benefits areas of language proficiency like vocabulary retention, grammatical accuracy and communicative competence among others. The study is going to examine the working of different collaborative activities, i.e. group work, collaborative writing tasks, role-playing exercises, etc. to get to know how these strategies can be used to promote the latent development of specific language skills. The effectiveness of these strategies used in real-life classroom situations will also be analyzed in the research.

Also, the research will determine several variables that play an important role in defining the effectiveness of collaborative learning namely; the composition of the group, task design and teacher support. Through such knowledge, the study aims at presenting the knowledge of how teachers can make the learning environment more interesting and practical. Important issues to be discussed within the study, as far as challenges and limitations of collaborative learning are concerned, will be presented as well along with the presentation of recommendations that can be used by teachers to develop and deliver collaborative projects, which are consistent with the latest advances in the language teaching field.

1.4 Research Questions

The main research questions in this study shall be as follows:

- How should peer collaboration and group work influence the study of the English language on the level of vocabularies, grammatical precision, and communicative proficiency?
- What are the main factors determining the success of collaborative learning strategies in English language classrooms such as group composition, task design, and support of a teacher?
- What are the difficulties and constraints that are usually faced in cooperative learning setup and what can teachers do to overcome these problems to ensure effectiveness of group work?

1.5 Significance and Implications for Educators

The findings of this study have significant implications for language educators, curriculum developers, and policymakers. By identifying effective collaborative strategies, the study aims to enhance the quality of English language instruction, promoting more engaging and student-centered learning environments. For example, insights into group composition and task design can help educators create activities that maximize participation and minimize conflicts, while evidence-based recommendations can guide professional development and teacher training programs. Furthermore, this study contributes to the area of language education by present a comprehensive understanding of the role of peer collaboration in language learning. Its findings help shape future studies, suggesting more creative and effective approaches to language instruction.

In sum, peer collaboration and group work are a powerful resource that can enhance English language learning in classrooms. However, they depend on careful planning, structured support and a well-informed understanding of processes that influence group dynamics. By addressing the challenges and limitations of existing research, this research endeavor seeks to provide teachers with a strong evidence base to allow teachers to realize the full potential of collaborative learning. Above all, it works to provide students with a greater ease and confidence in their use and understanding of language, preparing them for life in an interconnected world.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Bases- Sociocultural and Cooperative Learning

The essential roles of peer collaboration in language classrooms are based on the theory of Vygotsky who considered the sociocultural theory according to which social interaction plays a crucial role in cognitive and linguistic development. The Zone of proximal development (ZPD) by Vygotsky provides an explanation as to how, with the assistance of peers or teachers, learners are able to accomplish more than they ever could have, on their own (Vygotsky, 1978). This model uses collaborative learning where learners scaffold their knowledge by means of group discussions, problem-solving activity, in which all learners contribute to the development of knowledge (Donato, 1994; Lantolf & Appel, 1994).

The theory of cooperative learning also instructs collaborative work of peers with the accent of positive dependence, personal responsibility, and group processing (Johnson & Johnson, 2014). The utmost importance of these principles is the design of group activities that will help them support one another and take collective responsibility so that all members should feel the benefits of the collective process.

Another critical aspect of the constructivist theory postulated by Piaget is the influence of the peer as far as learners face alternative opinions, which provokes the challenge of thinking, and mental development (Piaget, 1964).

2.2 Speaking skills and Peer Collaboration

The skill which is improved first with the help of peers is speaking. Oral communication can only be improved through group activities like debating, role-plays and discussions which offer the real-life situation in which the oral communication can be exercised and make the fluency of the oral communication as well as the confidence of the person exercising it to be enhanced (Long & Porter, 1985). Studies continue to exhibit that when a student is placed in a collaborative setting more language would be produced, there would be a broader variety of vocabulary and negotiation of meaning would also be more efficient than in a teacher-centered setting (Long & Porter, 1985; Gass & Varonis, 1986).

They are also confirmed by the findings of the thesis: experimental groups revealed extensive growth in speaking proficiency in the course of collaborative activities, in comparison with the control ones, as per CEFR-related tests, these findings can be compared with the

outcomes of some other studies which revealed that structured peer interaction yields not only communicative competence but also decreases the language anxiety (Gillies & Ashman, 2003; Slavin, 1995).

2.3 Listening and Peer Collaboration Skill

Listening is achieved using cooperative learning exercises that involve compulsory processing and response of students to others inputs. During group discussions in and out of class and in case of peer feedback, there is the need to be participatory in listening i.e. actively listening to others and trying to make sense of what one has heard, as opposed to passively listening (Gass & Varonis, 1986). The thesis information results in the area of Listening indicate that there were better results in the regarding listening skills of the experimental groups, because of the need to understand and communicate with the group members in the course of the tasks This conclusion can be substantiated by the study according to which interactive environments can help to develop listening skills in terms of exposure to different accents, speech rates and communicative intentions (Johnson & Johnson, 2014; Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

2.4 Group Work and Reading Abilities

Reading is also enhanced by collaborative learning although this is not hailed as much. Reciprocal teaching cooperative learning procedure, invented by Palincsar and Brown (1984), was used when students alternately displayed a summary, asked questions, explained and predicted the contents of texts, which helps them learn at a comprehension and thinking level. The achievement of reading promoting interpretive skills and text involvement by group reading tasks is inspired (Palincsar & Brown, 1984).

The thesis records that as a lesser degree of improvement than with speaking and listening, but nonetheless present with the participation and coordination of reading tasks did impact positively on the understanding as well as discussion on the sense, and context. This is in line with the studies which found out that collaborative reading fosters literal as well as inferential comprehension (Brown & Palincsar, 1989).

2.5 Writing and Groupwork

The activity of writing which is thought to be performed by an individual can be thoroughly improved when written collectively. The meaning negotiation offers students the opportunity to exchange ideas and share strategies as well as offer mutually supportive feedback making the texts more correct and consistent (Storch, 2005). Stated another way, peer review and group editing are used by writers to find their errors and develop a way of correcting them, ideas and organizational ability (Storch, 2005).

The experimental group of the thesis was characterized by a significant increase in writing proficiency, which is observed on the basis of post-intervention measures. This is in line with studies that have come up with the finding that group writing not only enhances language precision, it also boosts motivation and common responsibility (Storch, 2005; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006).

2.6 Synthesis of Combining All the Four Skills Using Peer Collaboration

Current language education has lobbied very strongly on composite skill learning in which speaking ability, listening ability, reading ability and writing ability are achieved in combination through productive, cooperative tasks. Peer collaboration, which is employed in task-based language teaching (Ellis, 2003; Nunan, 2004) and project-based learning, allows establishing real communicative situations in which several skills must be used in a concurrent manner.

All the activities carried out in the thesis intervention included group presentations, debates and collaborative writing projects that needed the students to read, write, listen and speak the English language. The approach is also justified by the evidence which confirms that these tasks raise deeper learning, critical thinking, and communicative competence (Ellis, 2003; Gillies, 2016).

2.7 Peer collaboration, group dynamics and teacher facilitation

Nevertheless, even the positive role of peer collaboration may be prevented by unequal participation of the peers or superiority of some of them and cultural or linguistic differences

(Webb, 1995; Lightbown & Spada, 2013). The thesis noticed that teacher facilitation played a significant role in balancing the group processes and fair contribution. Collaborative learning needs to be planned carefully and entail an expression of directions and continuous teacher support (Johnson & Johnson, 2014).

The possibility of the technology to ease collaboration learning is also promoted in recent studies and such technological tools as online writing platforms and discussion boards allow group work not only in the classroom (Beatty, 2010).

2.8 Gaps in the Research and Future Research Direction

Even though the positive role of peer collaboration in all four language skills has rather strong evidence, there are still gaps. The literature and the thesis report that there is need to carry out further research on:

Findings of Effects of Collaborative Learning on Language Proficiency over a long-time scale

- The best design of task on various skills
- Intercultural management strategies of dealing with group dynamics
- The contribution of technology to the maintenance of involvement and openness

It should also be explored in future how the teachers can be made to develop in their role of enabling collaborative learning, so that they can become competent (Gillies, 2016; Johnson & Johnson, 2014).

Chapter 3

Methodology

The methods section of this research features a detailed strategy to investigate the impact a peer collaboration and the group work has on the English language learning in classrooms. It was qualitative and quantitative in nature enabling a synthesis of the two methods to explore the problem from both sides. This allowed for an exhaustive analysis of the relationship between cooperative learning methods and language proficiency, as well as the subjective viewpoints of students and teachers. Two schools were selected through stratified random sampling: a total of 60 students (13 to 14 years of age) and 5 experienced English teachers participated in the study. A stratified random sampling method was applied to enrol participants and ensure that both boys and girls who achieve academically and those who do not achieve were represented. Teachers were selected based on their knowledge and experience in collaborative learning skills.

3.1 INSTRUMENTS USED IN THE STUDY

3.1.1 Observation Checklists:

Structured observation checklists were employed to record group interactions, participation rates, and the application of the target language in collaborative tasks.

3.1.2 Survey Questionnaires :

Two separate surveys were created: one for students to gauge their views on collaborative learning and another for teachers to evaluate their experiences and difficulties with group activities. Both included Likert-scale and open-ended questions.

3.1.3 Interview Protocols:

Semi-structured interview guides were crafted for students and teachers, targeting their experiences with peer collaboration, perceived advantages, and encountered challenges.

3.2 TREATMENT

The intervention involved task-based collaborative learning activities aimed at improving English acquisition. These tasks consisted of:

3.2.1 Role-Playing:

Students took on roles in simulated real-world situations, like shopping, participating in meetings, or traveling, using English in realistic settings.

3.2.2 Debates and Discussions:

Groups received topics for organized debates, promoting critical thinking and persuasive language use.

3.2.3 Collaborative Writing Projects:

Teams worked together to produce essays, reports, and creative writing pieces, focusing on grammatical accuracy and cohesion.

3.2.4 Interactive Reading Activities:

Group members analyzed texts, summarized content, and presented findings to their peers, enhancing reading comprehension and oral communication.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION

3.3.1 Quantitative Data Collection:

Surveys: Student and teacher surveys were distributed at the end of the intervention.

3.3.2 Qualitative Data Collection:

Observations: Classroom observations were conducted during collaborative activities. Field notes and checklists documented group interactions, student engagement, and language use.

Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 students and all 5 teachers.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

3.4.1 For Quantitative Analysis:

Descriptive statistics summarized survey responses, while inferential statistics identified significant differences between the experimental and control groups.

3.4.2 Qualitative Analysis:

Thematic analysis was employed to analyze interview and observation notes.

3.5 MITIGATION OF RESEARCH BIASES

Efforts were made to minimize potential biases by randomized group assignment, students were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups to reduce selection bias. Triangulation, data from multiple sources (surveys, interviews, and observations) were cross-

verified to enhance reliability. Anonymity and confidentiality, participants' identities were anonymized during data collection and analysis to ensure unbiased responses. Rationale for selected methods, the mixed-methods design was selected in order to gain a more comprehensive picture of how peer collaboration and group work impact on the acquisition of English. Quantitative approaches enabled objective assessment of changes in competency and qualitative methods were used to gather subjective experiences and contextual complexities of collaborative learning. The reliability and validity of the findings were assured by using validated tools and standardized protocols.

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical approval was provided from the institutions. All participants were informed about their right to withdraw at any time, without any further obligation. Data were managed and stored securely, and aggregate results were reported to ensure confidentiality..

3.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The model of the study seeks to map out the relationships between different parts of the research process, as it demonstrates how cooperation among peers and group work on EFL may affect acquisition of English in classroom settings. Peer collaboration and group work strategies are the primary interventions (independent variables) to facilitate cooperative learning and engagement. These are moderated by variables such as student skill level, teacher support, and group process, which have a profound impact on the success of the interventions by enhancing or constraining their effects. Processes of the framework included the use of group tasks, including collaborative activities and interactive exercises promoting the active use of and improvement of English. It is the support of teachers as they guide these tasks to be in line with the learning objectives that is important. Data is then collected through the use of instruments such as tests, surveys, interviews, and observations in order to record quantitative and qualitative results. The dependent variables are the outcomes of the study, which are improved student language performance in speaking, listening, reading, writing and attitude of students and teachers to collaborative learning. This loop permits discoveries to inform our teaching practice, nurturing a cycle of improvement. In sum, the model offers a systematic exploration of peer collaboration and group work on English language acquisition.

3.8 THESIS FRAMEWORK

The entire study is summarized as shown in the graphical representation below:

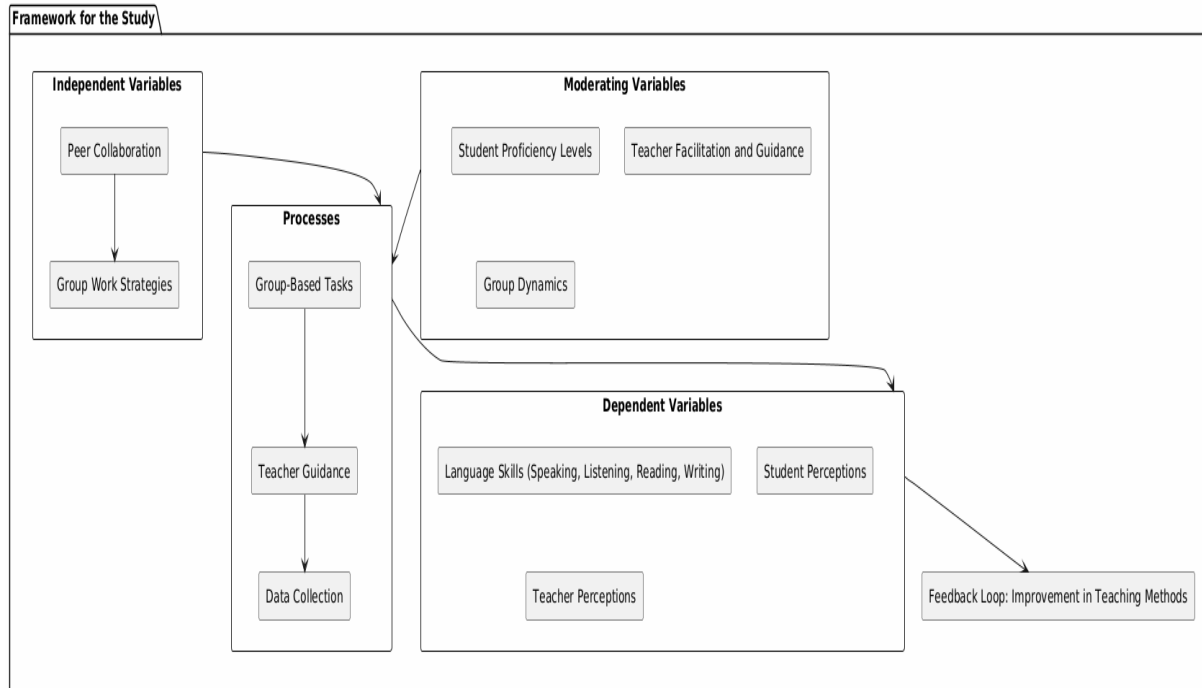


Fig 1: Frame work of the study

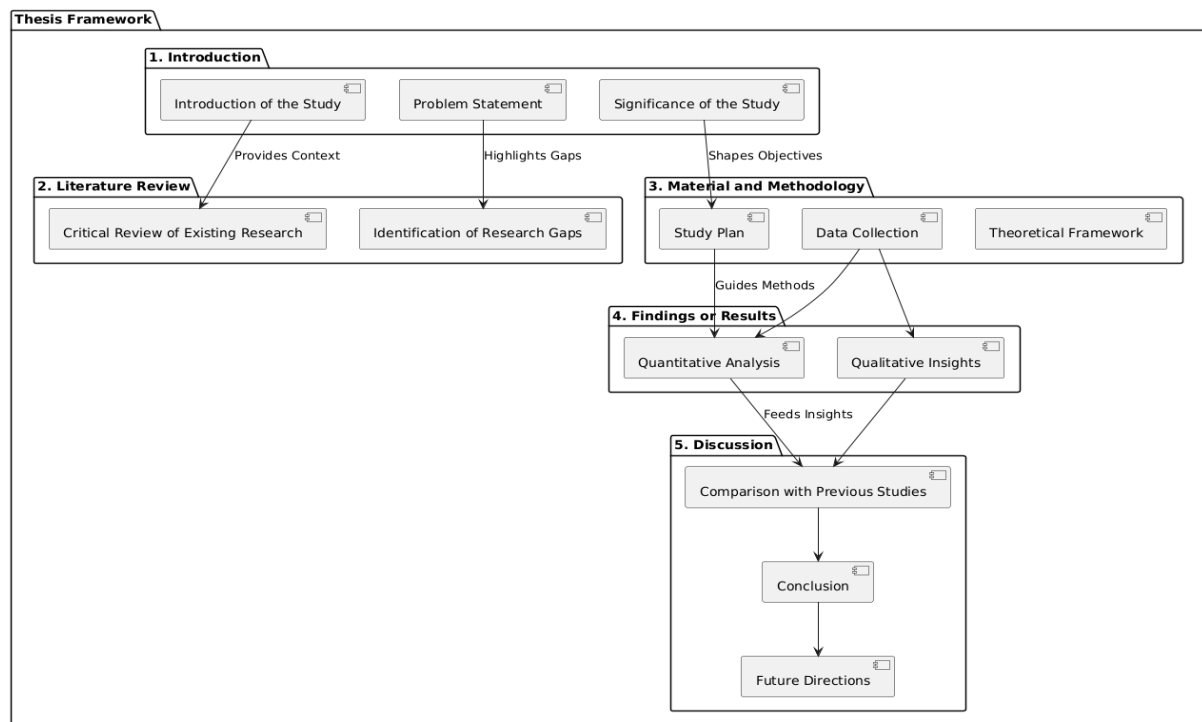


Fig 2: Thesis Outline

Chapter 4

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

It covers a result-based overview of a study on the effects of peer collaboration on language learning. Results are organized to address the study aims; include quantitative and qualitative data; and are illustrated with tables, graphs, and robust narrative summaries.

4.1 QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

4.1.1 Survey Questionnaire Results

Student Survey: The student survey was designed to capture perceptions of collaborative learning. It consisted of 14 questions grouped into four themes:

A) Group 1: Engagement and Motivation

1. I find group work engaging.
2. Collaborative tasks motivate me to learn English.
3. Group work makes learning more enjoyable.

B) Group 2: Skill Development

1. Group activities improve my speaking skills.
2. Writing collaboratively enhances my grammar and vocabulary.
3. Group reading tasks help me better understand texts.

C) Group 3: Peer Interaction

1. I feel comfortable sharing ideas with my peers during group tasks.
2. Working in a group helps me learn from my peers.
3. My peers encourage me to use English more confidently.

D) Group 4: Challenges and Support

1. I feel supported by my teacher during group tasks.
2. Unequal participation among group members is a challenge.
3. I sometimes find it difficult to express my ideas in a group.
4. Group conflicts affect my ability to focus on tasks.

5. Feedback from peers helps me improve my language skills.

The table 4.3 summarizes responses from various groups regarding their perceptions in four key areas: Engagement & Motivation, Skill Development, Peer Interaction, and Challenges & Support. In the Engagement & Motivation category, a significant 58% of respondents strongly agreed that they felt engaged and motivated, with an additional 29% agreeing, indicating a positive overall sentiment. For Skill Development, 62% strongly agreed and 25% agreed, suggesting strong confidence in their progress and learning. Peer Interaction received favorable responses as well, with 54% strongly agreeing and 31% agreeing that they found value in their interactions with peers. In the Challenges & Support category, while still generally positive, only 48% strongly agreed that they felt adequately supported in facing challenges, with 35% agreeing. This indicates that while a majority felt supported, there is a slightly lower level of enthusiasm compared to other areas. Across all categories, a small percentage of respondents expressed neutral or negative views, suggesting overall satisfaction with the experiences related to engagement, skill development, and interaction but highlighting a potential area for improvement in the support provided during challenges.

Question Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Engagement & Motivation	58%	29%	8%	3%	2%
Skill Development	62%	25%	7%	4%	2%
Peer Interaction	54%	31%	10%	3%	2%
Challenges & Support	48%	35%	10%	5%	2%

Table 4.1: Survey Questionnaire Results (Students)

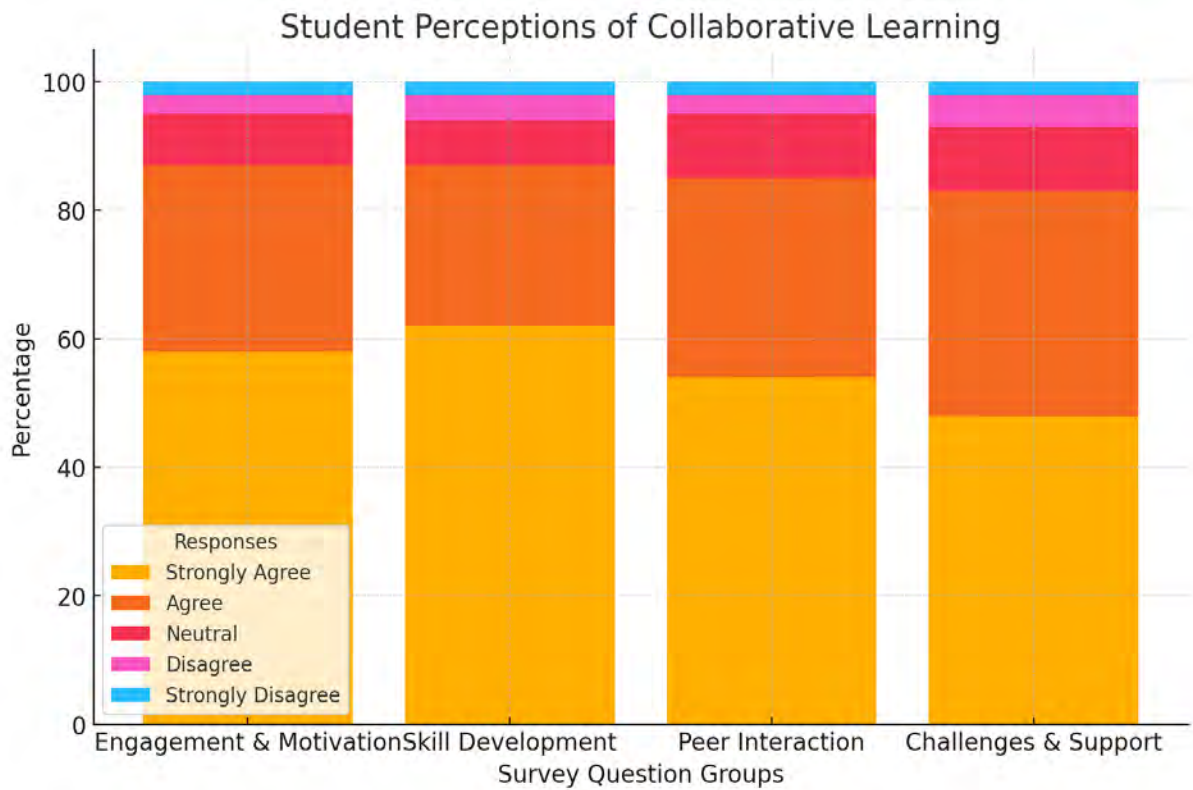


Figure 4.1: Survey Questionnaire Results (Students)

Teacher Survey

The teacher survey included questions focusing on their experiences with implementing group work:

1. Group work enhances student engagement.
2. Collaborative tasks are effective for improving language skills.
3. Unequal participation is a common challenge.
4. I feel confident in facilitating group activities.
5. Time constraints limit my ability to implement group tasks.

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Enhances Engagement	60%	30%	8%	2%	0%
Effective for Skill Development	57%	35%	6%	2%	0%
Challenges: Unequal Participation	50%	40%	8%	2%	0%
Confident Facilitator	45%	42%	10%	3%	0%
Time Constraints	48%	40%	7%	5%	0%

Table 4.2: Survey Questionnaire Results (Teacher)

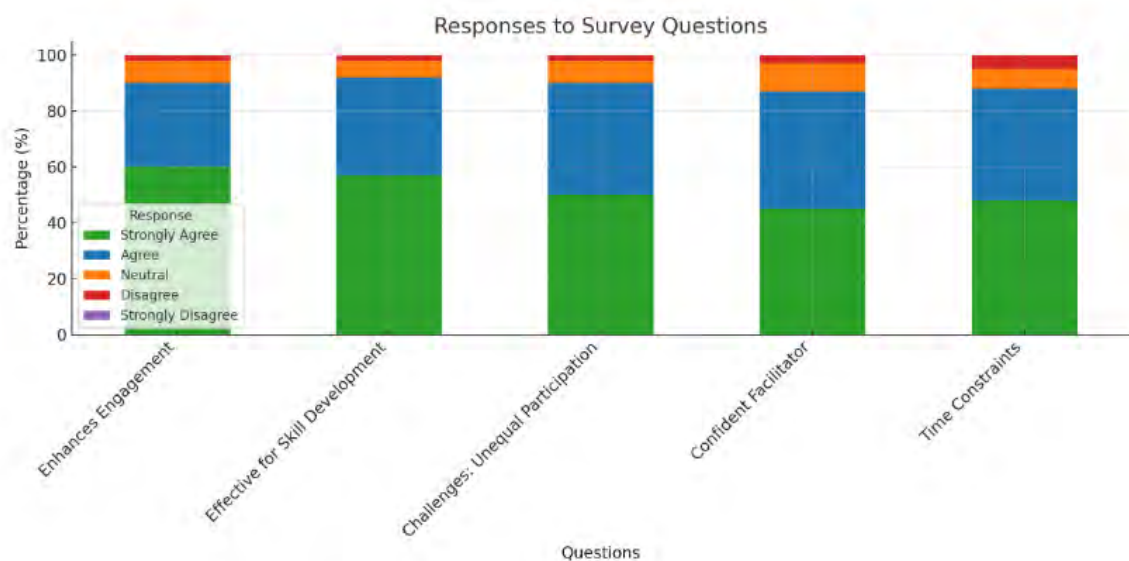


Figure 4.2: Survey Questionnaire Results (Teacher)

4.2 QUALITATIVE RESULTS

4.2.1 Observations

Findings of classroom observations showed that there were marked differences between the control and the experimental groups. Students involved in an experimental group showed more interest and very often communicated in English in the course of group works. As an instance, one spectator said:

“When the work starts within the groups, students who used to be silent started to contribute to the group with their ideas showing English.”

In times when the issues such as an imbalance in participation came along, the teacher-intervention was used to balance out contributions:

“The teacher urged everybody to contribute and after that each member of the group began to share his/her opinions more equally.”

On the other hand, majority of the control group was passive:

“Majority of the students would wait to be instructed by the teacher and would have minimum contacts with one another”.

4.2.2 Interviews

Student Feedback

Students had mixed opinions on group work, some loved to work in groups and some said they hated to work in groups. When the group members are cooperative and known to them they feel more relaxed and participate more openly. But students who didn't participate at all but got credit for doing nothing bothered other group members. But if the tasks were divided evenly and everyone communicated and participated, that made the task easier for all. Some of them also mentioned group work in class time is more functioning than group work for projects or assignments. Some also mentioned that group work in class time gives them less time to discuss and take opinions from all group members. People tend to choose their known acquaintance as group members which leads to irrelevant discussion and less topic discussion. One student said “I would prefer working in a group if the group members are my friends and I know they will participate equally and work hard to finish the task on time”.

Students reported that they felt more secure and they felt supported when they were in groups in practicing English. To give an example, one of the students said: “Students felt more comfortable using English in their group since their friends gave them the support of correcting them in case they misuse and make mistakes.” One more student pointed out difficulties with group dynamics: “There is a case whereby there would be a few people who would talk much and the rest would just keep their mouths closed. Not all the time it is easy to strike a balance.” Students had different opinions on different concepts like group task, timing, equal participation, willingness to participate, communication. But mostly they felt confident while working in a group. Also one said “While working in a group I get more information and more knowledge from my peer members”. Another student mentioned “By working in a group I closely monitor how my group members pronounce words vs how I do. According to that I worked on my word pronunciation to make it better and clear”. Students feel they are more fluent in their second language when they talk in groups as they don’t have to worry about their language being accurate. Still if they make some mistakes their friends help them to correct them. Students like the friendly ambience of the classroom which is created due to group work. One student mentioned “ Seating arrangements in classrooms makes it easier or difficult to make peer communication. If the seating arrangement isn’t proper then some of the group members might feel left out”. Seating arrangement plays a vital role in group discussion. For that a wide spacious classroom is mandatory. So that students can sit in circles or semi-circles, so that each member can interact with other members. Equal distribution of work is mandatory and top of that they should share what they are working on and how they are working on. One student said “ Sometimes group work feels like individual work with more pressure if peer members don't understand the task”. Students acquire the language through the process but feel some unwanted pressure due to unequal participation and lack of monitoring.

Teacher Feedback

Teachers felt group work is necessary to increase student communication in the classroom but also felt that teachers need to be trained well. A well trained teacher would be able to monitor the class and provide proper instructions on the task. A neat observation will make group work even and fair for all. Teachers must ensure everyone’s active participation. The teachers stated that they required training and organized activities. Said one teacher:

“Everything is alright with collaborative learning; however, we must train more to deal with group processes.” Teachers feel group work encourages students to communicate, participate and share their ideas. But without proper guidance some students do all the work while others stay quiet. Therefore a teacher said “We need strategies to manage work distribution better”. Teacher also mentions “If group works are managed well it helps students to develop critical thinking and social skills. But managing it takes skill as well”. Teacher notices students' unequal participation hence he says “some students dominate discussions while others barely contribute. With proper training teachers can intervene tactfully and keep things balanced. That’s why ongoing teacher training is important”. Several teachers noted that simply placing students in groups does not guarantee meaningful collaboration. One shared: “It’s not enough to put students into groups and expect results. Teachers must know how to structure activities and follow up effectively. Training in group facilitation would be a game-changer.” Finally, there was a collective call for structured support and professional development: “We believe in collaborative learning, but our methods need refinement. Workshops on task design, assessment, and student engagement would make a big difference.” Teachers supported group work or peer collaboration for students' better understanding as one teacher mentioned “I have seen students understanding concepts better when their peer makes them understand that in their own way of understanding or comprehending it”. Teachers want the students to work in groups but warn teachers to be more tactful so that no students lag behind or get marks for not doing anything. Teacher believes all students should get marks according to their efforts and no students should get it because other group members worked but he/she didn’t. Equal participation will lead to proper communication and will help them finish the task within time.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

This study assessed the impact of peer collaboration and group work on English language acquisition among secondary school students. The results demonstrated significant improvements in language proficiency across speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in the experimental group exposed to collaborative learning techniques. These findings underscore the efficacy of peer interaction and task-based learning strategies in enhancing students' engagement and linguistic capabilities. Survey responses and qualitative feedback further highlighted the perceived benefits and challenges associated with these methods. Teachers and students largely endorsed the effectiveness of collaborative tasks, though concerns about group dynamics and participation inequalities were noted.

The observed improvement in language proficiency aligns with the findings of earlier studies. For instance, Johnson and Johnson demonstrated that collaborative learning fosters better academic outcomes due to increased interaction and knowledge sharing among peers. Similarly, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory emphasizes the role of social interaction in cognitive development, supporting the idea that group-based activities can accelerate language acquisition. The skill-specific gains, particularly in speaking and listening, corroborate the research of Gillies and Ashman, who found that students engaged in structured group work exhibited enhanced oral communication skills. Our study extends these findings by demonstrating that structured collaborative writing and reading tasks also yield substantial benefits in grammar accuracy and text comprehension. Moreover, Swain's Output Hypothesis provides additional theoretical support, highlighting how producing language collaboratively forces learners to refine their linguistic output, thereby improving accuracy and fluency. Student survey results showed strong engagement and motivation in group tasks, supporting Slavin's view that collaborative settings boost participation and reduce language learning anxiety. These findings align with Dörnyei and Murphey, who emphasized peer collaboration as a key motivator in language classrooms. By incorporating role-playing, debates, and collaborative writing, our study employed a diverse approach to sustain student interest and involvement. Zajonc's social facilitation theory, further explains these results, indicating that peers enhance performance on familiar tasks, like structured language activities. However, challenges like uneven participation and group conflicts were observed, consistent with Webb's

findings. Cohen's research highlights the need for effective teacher guidance to address these issues, emphasizing structured support to ensure fair participation in collaborative tasks. Our observation that teacher training enhances task implementation supports the recommendations of Kagan, who advocated for professional development programs to equip educators with the skills to manage collaborative classrooms effectively. Moreover, Dornyei's L2 Motivational Self System underscores the need for interventions to address motivational disparities within group settings.

Teacher feedback in our study aligns with the research of Gillies, which highlighted the dual role of teachers as facilitators and evaluators in group-based learning environments. The time constraints reported by teachers in our study resonate with findings by Mulryan, who identified time limitations as a significant barrier to implementing collaborative techniques. Furthermore, our findings complement Mercer's exploratory talk framework, which emphasizes the need for teachers to model effective group discussions to maximize cognitive benefits. The positive outcomes related to peer interaction reflect findings by Topping, who emphasized the reciprocal benefits of peer tutoring and collaborative exercises. Our results also support the conclusions of Littleton and Mercer, who highlighted the role of dialogue in fostering critical thinking and deeper understanding among students. The social interdependence theory by Deutsch, also provides a foundation for interpreting our findings, as it underscores the interconnectedness of group members' efforts in achieving shared goals. A meta-analysis of the literature by Rohrbeck et al., nevertheless demonstrated that peer assisted learning can greatly enhance an individual's learning outcomes, particularly for well-structured assignments that have clear outcomes. These principles are reflected in the structured collaborative writing and debate tasks our study implemented, which brought about significant gains in linguistic competence. Similarly, according to Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), collaborative activities provide an effective combination of metacognitive, cognitive and, social strategies, with positive effects on the whole learning process.

CONCLUSION

The present study investigated the impact of peer collaboration and group tasks on the learning of English as second language by focusing on the possibility of their contribution to linguistic fluency in authentic interpersonal communication. The findings stress collaborative learning's role in extending the engagement with the language, to maximize the development of speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. Complemented by Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and the principles of cooperative learning, the research demonstrates how social interaction, peer scaffolding, and collaborative problem solving contribute to kids cognitive and linguistic development. Nevertheless, differences in involvement, group aggressions, and language competence mediate how group work functions in heterogeneous classrooms. The research also points to an empty space of knowledge related to the effects of peer collaboration on writing and reading which need a tailored approach, in contrast with speaking and listening on which the benefits are evident. This depends on factors such as who make up the groups, how the task is designed, and the facilitation of the teacher, with skilful task design and management and even participation being key for fair participation. Teachers play a significant role in mediating collaboration, conflict resolution, and making sure that all students profit from the interaction, but they are often not trained to use these strategies in the right way. The research calls for educator training to ensure teachers have the skills and tools to implement SEL effectively. It also advocates for research on how to best facilitate peer collaboration in multilingual and diverse classrooms, and for evidence-based practices to be scaled to more widespread use in language teaching. The results have important implications in providing a basis for the development of inclusive, effective pedagogic strategies that cater to heterogeneous learning needs and are responsive to 21st century communicative needs. Developing those skills, such as communication, collaboration and critical thinking, Collaborative Language Learning: (Consequently and This results in not only English language proficiency, but preparing students for an interconnected world. Although these approaches are very promising, they are successful as far as the team dynamics, teacher's feedback, and the thoughtful design of the task are concerned. Implemented thoughtfully, they foster a stimulating, inclusive and effective learning environment in which students acquire critical linguistic and communication skills. Additional work and refining will be required to bring these methods to bear in addressing a range of learner needs and also to optimize opportunities for language learning.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study provides valuable implications for peer synthesis and group work in English learning; however, it also has its limitations and indicates the direction for further study. A limitation in this study is the size of the sample and the contextuality it had, which was in a fairly homogenous group, which possibly limited the generalizability of the findings to other educational contexts with different cultural, language and proficiency contexts. Future research should be conducted with larger and more diverse samples, particularly in multilingual and multicultural classrooms, to explore how peer collaboration works across different settings and learner characteristics. Another limitation is the focus on the speaking and listening skills but hardly ever on reading and writing. As these skills are crucial for language acquisition, future studies should conduct broader investigations to evaluate the impact of collaborative strategies on all language skills comprehensively. Research could focus on how peer collaboration facilitates the development of writing fluency, coherence, and argumentation skills, or how reading comprehension can be enhanced through collaborative activities such as group discussions and joint analysis of texts.

FUTURE DIRECTION

Additionally, while this study identified several factors influencing the success of collaborative strategies, such as group composition and task design, there remains a need for a deeper exploration of the pedagogical practices that can optimize these elements. Future research could delve into how specific task types (e.g., debates, role-playing, collaborative writing projects) influence group dynamics and language outcomes, and how educators can tailor these tasks to meet the diverse needs of their students. Furthermore, the role of technology in facilitating collaborative learning offers an area for future investigation. With the increasing integration of digital tools in education, research could examine how online collaborative platforms or digital collaborative writing tools impact language acquisition and group work dynamics. Another important area for future research is the professional development and training of educators. As this study revealed, many teachers face challenges in effectively implementing peer collaboration due to limited training and resources. Future research could investigate the creation and assessment of targeted professional development programs to train teachers in facilitating group work, managing conflicts, and designing engaging, effective collaborative tasks. Exploring the impact of such training on successfully integrating peer collaboration in classrooms will be crucial for optimizing these strategies' effectiveness.

Lastly, longitudinal studies could provide valuable insights into the long-term effects of peer collaboration and group work on language proficiency. While this study assessed immediate outcomes, exploring how sustained collaborative learning influences students' language development over time would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of its enduring benefits. Longitudinal research could also track how peer collaboration shapes learners' attitudes toward language learning and their ability to use the language in real-world contexts. While this study offers significant contributions to the field of language pedagogy, further research is needed to address the gaps identified, explore new dimensions of peer collaboration, and refine the strategies for integrating these methods into diverse classroom environments. Future studies should continue to investigate the conditions under which peer collaboration is most effective and explore the broader implications for language teaching and learning in the context of a globalized world.

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QUESTIONARE

Section A: Demographic Information (For both students and teachers)

1. Name (Optional): _____
2. Age:
 - ☐ 12-13
 - ☐ 13-14
 - ☐ 18+
3. Gender:
 - ☐ Male
 - ☐ Female
 - ☐ Prefer not to say
4. Role in the study:
 - ☐ Student
 - ☐ Teacher
5. Years of English learning/teaching experience:
 - ☐ Less than 1 year
 - ☐ 1-3 years
 - ☐ 4-6 years
 - ☐ More than 6 years

SECTION B: STUDENTS' SURVEY

B1: Perceptions of Collaborative Learning (Using a 5-point Likert scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree)

1. Working in groups helped improve my English speaking skills. []
2. Group activities encouraged me to participate more in class. []
3. Peer collaboration made learning English more enjoyable. []
4. I felt comfortable expressing my ideas in group discussions. []
5. Collaborative writing activities helped me improve my grammar and vocabulary. []
6. Role-playing tasks made it easier for me to use English in real-life situations. []
7. Interactive reading tasks improved my reading comprehension skills. []
8. Group work helped me develop confidence in my English communication. []

B2: Challenges in Collaborative Learning (Using a 5-point Likert scale: 1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Often, 5=Always)

9. I found it difficult to communicate effectively in a group setting. []
10. Some group members did not contribute equally. []
11. Managing time during group tasks was challenging. []
12. I preferred individual learning over group work. []
13. I faced difficulties understanding my peers' pronunciation or grammar mistakes. []

SECTION C: TEACHERS' SURVEY

C1: Experiences with Collaborative Learning (Using a 5-point Likert scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree)

1. Collaborative learning improved students' language skills. []
2. Group work enhanced students' engagement and motivation. []
3. Students showed noticeable improvement in speaking proficiency. []
4. Writing assignments done collaboratively improved students' grammar and coherence. []
5. Peer discussions helped students understand reading materials better. []
6. Role-playing activities were effective in developing real-life English skills. []
7. Managing group work was challenging in a classroom setting. []

C2: Challenges in Implementing Group Work (Using a 5-point Likert scale: 1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Often, 5=Always)

8. Some students dominated group discussions, limiting others' participation. []
9. Group work required extra time for planning and assessment. []
10. Some students lacked interest in collaborative activities. []
11. Assessing individual contributions in group work was challenging. []

Thank you for your participation! Your responses will help improve the effectiveness of collaborative learning strategies in English classrooms.