



Determinants that hinder the practice of teaching-learning English speaking skills in group work: Althawra secondary school for Boys babel, Iraq in focus

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Abstract

The main objective of this study was to identify variables that affect how well AlThawra Secondary School pupils in Babel, Iraq's grade twelve students practice speaking in groups. This study employed a descriptive survey design that combined quantitative and qualitative techniques. The formula developed by Taro Yemane (1967) was used to determine the sample size. Using a straightforward random sampling selection strategy, 274 students and five teachers were chosen based on the available sample method. Other statistical analyses, such as frequency and percentage, were produced from the data by entering the survey data into SPSS. The results of the statistical study are presented in the tables. The interview data was also transcribed and organized. "Personal traits like low self-esteem, language anxiety, a lack of proficiency in English, and culture are some of the obstacles to productive speaking practice in group work, according to the findings. The results also showed that teachers' failure to fulfill their duties and situational elements such group size, composition, cohesiveness, speaking assignments' quality, seating arrangements, are all obstacles to effective speaking practice in group work. The results show that teachers' divergence from their duties and students' personal and contextual characteristics are some of the factors that affect effective speaking practice during group work. Because of this, course designers, especially English teachers, should take these factors into account and do all possible to ease students' concerns during group discussions in English classes.

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Introduction

Speaking is one of the key skills in language education and learning. A student needs to be able to speak in English in order to be successful in their academic endeavors. Cunnig Worth (1984:43) ^[19] asserts that being fluent in multiple languages necessitates being able to communicate effectively in spoken English. When we examine students' academic achievement, we can see how much they depend on their capacity to interact with others, engage in discussion, and understand what their teachers and fellow students are saying. Today's environment demands a form of language instruction that, in contrast to conventional speaking instruction, enables students to develop their communicative skills through group work, competence There has been a lot of discussion on the value of practicing public speaking.

The lack of opportunity for language practice is one of the biggest obstacles faced by language learners, according to Long and Porter (1985) ^[44] and Michael Swan (1985) ^[40]. Although speaking starts in grade 12 and takes over as the primary form of instruction in Iraq, students' English language proficiency hasn't proven to be sufficient to help them in their academic pursuits. Students and other subjects struggled to express themselves clearly in English.

To improve students' ability to communicate in a foreign language, the majority of language courses today lay a larger focus on

group discussions than on proper sentence construction. Speaking activities have received more time and attention in the classroom in proportion. Speaking practice, however, is one of the most crucial and challenging aspects of the language teaching and learning process for students in language classrooms.

Additionally, a number of research findings show that speaking abilities are enhanced by group activities. Reynolds (1994:26) asserts that group activities enhance learning because they are more engaging. Participating in group activities involves thinking as well as values and feelings. These conditions increase the likelihood that learning will stick.

Statement of the Problem

“The communicative language teaching and learning methodologies support group projects in language classes. For instance, Brumfit (1984)^[12] considers group work to be a crucial component of this method. The benefit of group work is that it makes sure that every participant engages fully in educational activities. However, a teacher's method of instruction, a student's inexperience with English, or a problem like language anxiety may make it difficult for learners to successfully participate in speaking skills in a group situation. According to Rivers (1987: 22)^[49], situations or individuals make it difficult for pupils to actively engage in educational activities. Her brief comments are as follows: Students won't express themselves in another language until they feel at ease around their teachers, peers, and even just themselves. She is therefore implying that one of the problems is anxiousness. Today, it's usual to see students working in small groups in the classroom. Additionally, there are a lot of group-based exercises in speaking sessions that students must do. To evaluate the value of speaking practice in group projects, however, relatively little research has been conducted. On the other hand, in order to enroll in a higher education institution, English is a high school subject that is additionally necessary to other disciplines.”

However, students lack the English language proficiency needed to follow what their teachers are saying or reading in their textbooks, let alone participate actively in speaking and writing.

The effectiveness of teaching and learning in the classroom has dramatically decreased as a result of the student's inability to communicate in English. Students at the ALThawra Secondary School in Focus have also had trouble picking up the English language. According to the researcher's teaching experience, when teachers assign group speaking tasks, pupils start off speaking in English before switching to their mother tongue (L1) or opting for silence. If a learner cannot articulate himself in English or is worried about making mistakes, they may also speak in their mother tongue. The finest teacher for speaking or learning a language is making mistakes. However, L2 language learners are frequently anxious when requested to converse in a second language (foreign language). Their original language could result in inaccurate. when there are several advantages to using your native tongue when learning a second language, overusing it might hinder your progress and sap your learners' enthusiasm. Based on these presumptions, the researcher is driven to investigate factors that influence effective speaking

practice in group work activities in EFL classes at ALThawra Secondary School in Focus.

Objectives

The primary goal of the study is to identify the factors that promote productive speaking practice in EFL classrooms at the study site, ALThawra Secondary School.

Specific Objectives

1. To learn how teachers might motivate their students to participate in L2 English-speaking group discussions.
2. To examine how students' participation in discussions on speaking abilities is influenced by personal and environmental factors.

Research Questions

1. How can teachers encourage their pupils to speak English as a second language in class discussions?
2. What are some of the individual and social difficulties that prevent pupils from engaging in speaking skills instruction?

Literature Review

This part of the article provides a review of literature that is relevant to the paper's research question. This covers topics including the value of group work in L2 classroom speaking instruction, challenges in teaching and learning speaking, and the responsibility of teachers in maximizing L2 involvement. Speaking well is important because it encourages students to participate in oral communication. It also has a weakness. (Bygate, 1986; Harmer, 1991; Nunan, 1998; Bygate, 1986; Harmer, 1991; Nunan, Likewise,^[12, 32, 42] speaking is an important component of learning a second language because the ability to communicate effectively and correctly in a second language contributes to the learner's success in school and subsequently in life. By explaining how and why speech should be taught, the researchers bolster the aforementioned assertion. Chaney (1998)^[17] defined speaking as the process of producing and exchanging meaning in a variety of contexts through the use of verbal and nonverbal symbols. Despite its significance, speaking instruction has long been undervalued, and English language instructors have kept on teaching speaking like drills or dialogue memorization. This explanation furthers the claim made by the educators who came before it, according to which speaking is crucial, undervalued, and improperly taught. According to a different instructor, mastering a variety of sub-skills that when put together result in comprehensive competency rather than speaking as the creation of written language is what constitutes speaking as a skill in the spoken language (McDonough, 2003)^[39]. Since speaking instruction requires the learner to be proficient in the language in a variety of contexts and situations, oral development of drills (written language) is different from speaking instruction. It follows that it would seem that a teacher would need to first comprehend what speaking is and how to teach it. Even though speaking hasn't gotten much attention, the goal of teaching and studying speaking needs to be looked at in order to help students communicate better in the modern world. This is because students are the only ones who can express themselves and learn how to adhere to the appropriate social and cultural norms in any communicative situation.

Methodology

Concept of Group Work

Group action has been described in a variety of ways by different researchers at various times. However, the fundamental idea behind any term is usually the same. "One or more meetings of small groups of people who speak face-to-face in order to accomplish a common goal," according to Borman (1977:12)^[7], are considered meetings.

Borman broadens his idea by incorporating a conference or gatherings. By saying this, he suggests that the group's declared objective might not be achieved in a single day, necessitating numerous meetings in order for members to reach their ultimate aims. An approach to taking part in group discussions that involves talking about current events, either to boost student involvement or to make decision-making easier. A Dictionary of Education by Girma Wossnie (1973: 187)^[30]. This concept implies that persons who assemble for group work discuss ideas on a common interest topic in order to reach a consensus.

Merits of Group Work

Each student can talk more frequently and on a larger range of subjects thanks to small group involvement. In small groups, students spend more time haggling and checking meetings. This indicates that after a protracted discussion, students persuade or are persuaded. Students gain confidence in the topic at hand when they perform well, which is one benefit of group discussions. The following is the premise, in accordance with Alamirew (1992:33)^[3]: Group projects are given to students to help them learn the language more easily and to boost their self-esteem. Because they participate in all that the organization does, they feel valued and appreciated by it. It would increase their motivation to learn. Additionally, it gives students a fantastic chance to learn from one another and enhances their academic experience. Kauchack and Eggen are in a comparable situation (2001:60). Students use group work as a strategy to complement other models by cooperating. In other words, group work is a strategy for boosting involvement while another model is being used, not an instructional model. This discourse also develops the idea that came before it. It emphasizes how crucial it is for learners to fully participate in the teaching-learning of speaking in the context of group activities, which is a participatory language education technique.

Teachers Factors

"Many experts indicate that group characteristics, task nature, and seating arrangements are some of the situational elements."

Group Size

The average number of pupils in each group is discussed from a number of authors' points of view. According to Byrne (1987:78), there is no magic number for the group, but four to eight students in each group is a good starting point. On the other hand, Dennick and Exley (2004:17)^[22] suggested an ideal group size and provided succinct justifications. They include: It is obvious that two people can have a reasonable discussion, but their topics will be limited to their respective areas of expertise and knowledge: greater participants will give the discussion greater variety and expose them to a variety of viewpoints that they may not have previously explored. If the group size is increased past a certain point,

individual contributions will be diminished and some people might find themselves unable to talk. According to Ur (1996), a group of five students is the ideal size for this issue. Consider the type of furniture or desks, the size of the class, the group's goal, and the nature of the activity when choosing the appropriate group size. And these variables affect the group members' language proficiency.

Group Composition

Consider a wide range of intellectual and social aptitudes, as well as gender and ethnic diversity, while assembling a group (Brubacher, Payne, and Prickett, 1990: 215)^[11]. According to Cohen (1972)^[19], combining students depending on their abilities, sex, age, ethnicity, status, and other factors can produce a successful combination.

Group Cohesiveness

How a learner feels about the other students in the group might have an impact on their language acquisition. According to various research, students in a group who are not familiar with one another may respond less positively and engage in group activities to a lesser extent. According to Knight and Lindsay (2006:9)^[36], group members' involvement and effective communication will increase if they get along well with one another. According to this perspective, teachers should take group cohesiveness into account when planning group learning because it has a substantial impact on students' engagement in group projects.

Nature of the Task

Another factor that affects why students don't use English in group work conversations is the nature of the tasks. For instance, students may not participate in group discussions when given boring or unmotivating tasks (Nunan 1998)^[42]. Additionally, the complexity of the assignments given to students in group cooperative learning should correspond to their level of comprehension. According to Ur (1996), group activities should be simple, engaging, challenging, and motivating.

Seating Arrangements

To effectively collaborate and engage with one another, group members must be seated near enough to one another to see and hear each other, preferably in a circular configuration of seats. Additionally, depending on the type of furniture, group size, task, and amount of space available, the classroom layout calls for moving chairs and tables (Cohen, 1972)^[19].

Teachers Role in Maximizing Students speaking Participation

Based on his classroom observations and teaching expertise. The study found that students' hesitation or refusal to take part in a group activity that uses the English language is a serious issue in foreign language classrooms. Cooperative learning groups are frequently suggested as a solution by experts. For instance, Richards and Rodgers (2001)^[47] assert that optimizing learners' verbal participation in group work depends on the kind and structure of group activity. This is because a well-run group exercise increases the proportion of students who participate verbally.

Concept of Communicative Competence

We should briefly summarize communication competency because it is such a crucial concept in our research. In 1964, generative linguist Chomsky was the first to distinguish between the terms "competence" and "performance." He put up the idea that performance refers to the actual use of language in a particular social situation, whereas competence refers to the language user's internalized understanding of linguistics and grammar. In contrast to Chomsky, who excluded sociocultural aspects of language from his definition of competence, Hymes (1972) ^[34] coined the term communicative competence to refer to a language user's grammatical and social awareness of how and when to use utterances correctly. According to him, there are four categories of talents that make up communicative competence:

1. Whether or if (and to what extent) anything is formally conceivable.
2. The extent to which something can be accomplished given the implementation tools at hand.
3. How appropriate (adequate, entertaining, or successful) something is given the context in which it is utilized and judged.
4. Whether or not (and how much) anything is done, as well as what it entails (Hymes, 1972, p. 281) ^[34].

Research Design and Methodology

The main objective of this study was to identify the factors that affect speaking practice in group projects in EFL classes at Al Thawra Secondary School in Focus. In order to define, analyze, and understand the conditions that exist in relation to teachers' perceptions, classroom practices, and difficulties with speaking in group work activities in EFL Classes, this research was created. A descriptive survey design that uses both quantitative and qualitative data was used as a result. A descriptive research methodology, according to Best and Kahn (2003), enables the researcher to evaluate the existing situation and identify some of the key concerns in the subject under study.

Participants of the study

The purpose of this study was to identify the factors that prevent EFL students at ALThawra Secondary School in Focus from effectively practicing speaking in group work activities. As a result, English language instructors and students made up the majority of the study's participants. Five English language instructors were working with pupils in grade 12 at this institution.

The ALThawra secondary school students in grade 12 and English language instructors in the academic year 2021/22 are the study's target demographics. ALThawra Secondary School consequently had 2762 pupils. Since it is anticipated that only students in grade 12 will be able to provide the required data, only grade 12 students were selected as study participants. Several sampling techniques, which are described in the following sections, were used to sample the target population.

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

There were 2762 pupils enrolled in 39 sections, per data received from the record office of the institution. Assuming that each student would have a unique learning experience, the researcher chose 274 students for each section using Taro Yamane's (1967) sample size selection approach at a 95

percent confidence level. The formula below is used to calculate the sample size:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

Where, n= is the sample size

N= is the population size, and

e = is the level of precision or sampling error

$$n = \frac{2762}{1+2762(0.05)^2} = 274$$

Last but not least, 274 students were chosen at random to represent a sample population for the study. Additionally, an available sample approach was used to choose the teacher participants because all of the English instructors of ALThawra Secondary School who were available for grade twelve were chosen as participants.

Source of Data

This study's data originated from a primary source. Grade 12 students and faculty from ALThawra Secondary School are represented here. A questionnaire, classroom observations, and interviews with a few English teachers were used to collect the data.

Instruments for Data Collection

Data were gathered using surveys, interviews, and classroom observations. Additionally, the tools underwent pilot testing to guarantee that the responders would receive understandable questions. Additionally, it was intended to determine whether the tools were pertinent and appropriate for the goals of the study. The tools used to collect data for the complete study were then put to use after the necessary changes and alterations were made based on the results of the pilot project. A questionnaire enables researchers to quickly get data from a large number of participants (Kothari, 2004). It was developed using the essential inquiries as well as the available data. Both closed-ended and open-ended questions are present in the poll. It was used to triangulate the data gathered from the interview and classroom observation, as well as to collect data from students who were chosen at random. In order to obtain firsthand information from people, the researchers frequently used interviews as a method of qualitative data collection (Burns 1999). Additionally, semistructured interviews were conducted to obtain firsthand information from a select group of people (Kumar, 2005). To obtain firsthand information from a few of the participants, the researchers used a semi-structured interview (Kumar, 2005). As a result, information from the English language instructors who were sampled was obtained through a semi-structured interview. The interview was used to triangulate the questionnaire and classroom observation results. Four main components were developed by the researchers in accordance with the study's stated objectives. The interview questions were created using the results of a literature review. Ten English teachers were consequently interviewed. Only one interview session with a single instructor was scheduled, and face-to-face interviews were done. The conversations were tape-recorded and played again as information was being extracted. The recorded data was then written down and examined. To see what was happening in the actual

classroom, a classroom observation was lastly carried out (Kumar, 2005).

Another helpful tactic for understanding situations is to observe in the classroom (Kothari, 2004). In order to confirm the results, Merriam (1998) said that classroom observation is a type of data triangulation in this scenario. The researcher can see what happens in a real-world classroom setting using classroom observation (Kumar, 2005). Another helpful tactic for understanding circumstances is to observe in the classroom (Kothari, 2004). In order to determine if instructors and students have positive opinions in actual classroom settings, classroom observation was used in this study. Over a four-month period, data from classroom observation was gathered, starting with three observations of five teachers' lessons. An already prepared notepad was used to record the observation.

According to the objectives of the study and the literature, the observer's notebook was produced. Additionally, information was gathered through note-taking to see how English language teachers practice classroom interaction to help students' skills. The researcher initially got approval and discovered the instructors' schedules before conducting the classroom observation. Next, the researcher examined the general condition of the courses.

Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the questionnaires and determine whether they achieve their intended objectives. When the student respondents completed the questionnaires, the pilot study helped the researchers make some doable improvements. For instance, duplicate questionnaires were removed, and ambiguous phrasing was also fixed.

Ethical Consideration

The researchers of this study followed all the procedures and took all the precautions required to enter the educational institutions under examination and secure official approval for the collection of data from both teachers and pupils. The necessity of choosing such participants was made clear to all parties involved in this study, including school management, directors, students, and instructors. The objectives of the investigation were stated in a statement in simple language. The clear statement explained in full how the administration of the questionnaire, the interview, and the participants' classroom observations would be done at those schools with the cooperation of the required parties.

The researchers concurred with those recommendations and emphasized that no one would have access to the participant names during interviews using an audio recorder or during video recordings in the classroom. As a result, in this research, consent from the school was obtained in order to conduct the empirical investigation.

These conversations also covered data gathering and what would actually occur during the class observations. The researchers promised the teachers that they would keep their classroom procedures a secret from the administration of their school and would, to the maximum extent feasible, safeguard their identity.

All participants in the study—students and teachers—were informed that all information about them—such as names, classes, and ages—would stay anonymous. Finally, it was confirmed that the participants' information would only be used for academic purposes; it would only be accessible by

the researchers; and it would be deleted after a set amount of time once the research was finished.

Procedures of Data Collection

The following procedures are used to gather data. A sample of 274 students were given the questionnaire after each participant in each component had heard the study's objective explained. Second, the observations were made using a checklist. Third, five teachers were selected from the sample sections and interviewed; the interviews were recorded on video and the transcriptions were used to create interpretations and analyses.

According to Tibebe (2011, 35), the five-point Likert Scale was condensed into the following frequency range to determine the most and least popular strategies. Therefore, a mean value of 1.0-2.49 is considered low, 2.5-3.49 is considered medium, and 3.5-5.0 is considered high. These three methodologies' combined use of data collection allowed for careful analysis and interpretation. Finally, conclusions and implications from the findings.

Data Analysis

A combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches were used to analyse the data collected through surveys and classroom observations. Classroom observations were used to support the questionnaire results. Initially, the questionnaires were used after being checked for accuracy and completeness before data collection. The questions were thoroughly and consistently coded before being loaded into SPSS version 26. After that, different statistical analyses, including frequency and percentage calculations, were performed on the SPSS data. The outcome of the statistical analysis was presented in tables. Finally, using information from observations, questionnaires were validated and supported. Classroom observations and questionnaire results were displayed interactively during the analysis so that they might support and confirm one another.

Results and Discussions

Personality and Socio-Cultural Factors

The researchers are looking for information in this area to see if personality and sociocultural characteristics have an impact on students' willingness to participate in group discussions in English. The average values of each category might help identify the most important elements.

Table 1: Personality and socio-cultural factors

No	Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	I fear my English teacher.	274	2.83	1.171
2	Worry to speak	274	2.83	1.322
3	am shy so that I often use my mother tongue when I talk to peers.	274	3.05	1.390
4	I feel that other students are better in speaking English language.	274	2.62	1.335
5	My culture doesn't allow me to speak English a lot in front of elders and guests.	274	2.22	1.348
6	I don't have good speaking ability.	274	2.79	1.246
7	The way I was brought up influences me to be silent in front of groups.	274	2.38	1.171

“Grand Mean 274 =2.65 Total Std.= 1.316.”

“The mean value for item 3 is 3.05, as shown in Table 1. Students indicated that they do not actively study speaking in group work because they are frightened of speaking in English. Students tended to "Agree" with a statement that

asked if they had language fear, the method they used to bring it up, and the notion that other students in the group discussion are vastly more proficient in English in items 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7, which had medium mean values (2.8.3, 2.6.2, 2.7.9, and 2.3.8, respectively)."

Interview responses from teachers provide more evidence that personality and sociocultural traits affect pupils' capacity for group communication. During group talks, students are more likely to vehemently deny that they do not speak English (the mean value is 2.22. It's because it's offensive to speak English in front of elders or visitors to their country. Students' questionnaire responses, teachers' interviews, and classroom observations revealed a lack of self-assurance, poor English proficiency, and generally low self-esteem. Thus, it might be stated that the aforementioned factors are the most crucial in terms of influencing a significant number of students.

Group Formation Factors

Situation-specific factors (4.2.2.1) The purpose of items 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 was to elicit information about how group discussion affects the learners' capacity to communicate in English. The outcomes of each item's analysis are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Sit factors

No	Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
8	In my English text book, speaking tasks are interesting, using group work and inviting to speak in English.	274	2.87	1.273
9	I choose small group sizes (2-5). Because my participation in speaking English increases in small groups	274	3.22	1.286
10	I don't prefer large group (6 and above) for discussion in order not to miss the opportunity of practicing speaking.	274	3.12	1.236
11	I participate better in homogenous groups (groups with similar ability).	274	2.22	1.348
12	I participate actively when group members are my friends	274	3.99	1.174
13	I participate more in heterogeneous groups (mixed ability group).	274	3.49	1.238
14	Speaking ability in the English textbook is suitable to my age, background knowledge and level of understanding.	274	2.89	1.224
15	Seating arrangements like the immovable desks affect our communication competence in group work	274	3.04	1.395
GRAND MEAN		274	=3.55	Total Std.= 1.453

According to Table 3 above, item 12 has a mean value of 3.99. The study's participants resoundingly concur that group members participated more and actively practiced speaking when they were friends. The items 9, 10, 11, and 13 had tendency to agree scores of 3.22, 3.12, 3.49, and 3.04, respectively, and were also well-liked by students. These elements have an effect on students' capacity for effective group English communication. According to the responders, small groups are best for them because they speak up and

learn to converse in them. On the other hand, they disagreed that spoken English should be taught in large groups. The results and replies in Table 3 thus support a review of related literature that asserts that exceeding a specific threshold for group size diminishes individual contributions and prevents some people from speaking. Similarly, this theory is supported by the findings of the teacher interviews and classroom observations. The mean values for items 8 and 14 are 2.87 and 2.89, respectively. These numbers go more toward "Agree." This suggests that respondents find the speaking tasks in the new English textbook for grade 12 to be interesting and attractive for learning English while taking part in group activities. Additionally, respondents believed that these assignments were suitable for their level of comprehension and age. The importance of professors in encouraging pupils to speak up in class.

A classroom English teacher

This section's goal is to gather information on the vital responsibilities that classroom teachers play in encouraging students to participate as much as possible in group activities. Items 16 through 25 were covered in this part.

No	Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
16	introduces the topic of the lesson in English.	274	3.80	1.131
17	gives an explanation in English when the textbook's presentation is not clear.	274	3.51	1.287
18	encourages us to speak English in group discussions.	274	3.36	1.314
19	uses different methods of group formation.	274	2.47	1.173
20	goes around during discussion to observe groups.	274	3.39	1.316

21	facilitates group discussion	274	3.34	1.281
22	intervenes and helps us when it is necessary.	274	3.43	1.259
23	evaluates our group performance.	274	3.27	1.309
24	suggests his/her opinions when students stop speaking in English or shift to their mother tongue (L1) during discussion.	274	3.21	1.372
25	gives us feedback (correction).			
GRAND MEAN		274	3.40	Total Std.= 1.408

Table 4 demonstrates that item 16's mean value is 3.80. This demonstrates that when their English teacher introduced the lesson's subject, everyone present agreed. The subjects appear to genuinely feel that their classroom teacher provides further explanation when the text book's presentation is unclear, based on the mean value of item 17 of 3.51. According to respondents to question 18, their English teachers strongly encourage them to take part in English-language group discussions in the classroom (the mean score is 3.36). Group assignment (item 19) has a mean value of 2.47. These findings imply that the participants don't believe their English professors use a variety of methods to split their students into groups in class. According to the researcher's observations, T1 and T2 were not seen presenting the activities that they mentioned as if they did. The results of

this study may perhaps help to explain why classroom teachers make such little effort to encourage students to participate in group discussions. Students are more likely to "Agree" that their English teachers move around the classroom to observe groups when it comes to teacher movement (mean value = 3.39).

The majority of respondents also generally prefer to 'Agree' that their English instructors encourage group discussion, according to the mean score of 3.34 for question 21, which is about encouraging group discussion. The students agreed that their English professors should step in and help them as needed with issue 22 (a 19mean value of 3.43). The answers provided by instructors during interviews in response to the questions pertaining to the items (16–22) below show that throughout the practice stage, teachers' activities vary according to the exercises provided to the students. During observations, T1 was attentive to the group conversation but did not take many crucial actions. He appeared to take pleasure in the time allowed for group work, nevertheless.

T2 and T3 experienced the same effects. Results from the student survey, teacher interview, and classroom observation (items 16–22) may suggest a negative relationship between the difficulties brought up and instructors' overall performance in the classroom. With a 3.27 average value, item 23. The target groups' perception of how their teachers evaluate their work is "Agree" (i.e., they believe it). Similar to item 23, item 24's average is (3.21). During a group discussion, when students stop speaking in English or switch to their first language (L1), it gets close to "Agree" that the teacher is expressing his ideas. The observation's findings, however, indicate that the teachers were not witnessed criticizing group performances or urging students to talk just in English. The 3.41 mean score for item 25 indicates that respondents are likely to "Agree" with the statement that their English teachers in the classroom provide feedback. Three teachers admitted during the interview that they occasionally provide them with feedback at the conclusion. The observation, however, runs counter to what the teachers said in the interview. In conclusion, the results of the aforementioned data (items 23–25) show that when English teachers allow students to practice speaking in group work activities, they may forget to assess, present their point of view, and give feedback—three crucial duties. If a teacher fails to assess group discussion and offers criticism without paying attention, group members may become discouraged and think that there is no distinction between speaking actively and sitting in silence.

Discussion

According to the survey's results, some of the variables that affect effective speaking practice include students, professors, and the course designers themselves. The students initially mentioned the following personal factors as having a substantial influence on their speaking practice in group discussions. This shows that most students avoid speaking in English in group settings because they are shy or insecure. However, students' motivation and desire to speak in English in group settings can help them learn the language. Students' reluctance, linguistic anxiety, poor English proficiency, cultural influences, or upbringing (their rigorous upbringing) limit their speaking practice and lead them to switch to L1, or they prefer silence.

Second, situational elements and individual characteristics both have an impact on students. They decline to take part in

English-language group discussions.

The results of the questionnaire, interview, and classroom observation revealed yet another factor contributing to the students' reluctance to use English and the ineffectiveness of English non group projects. The results showed that students speak up more in small groups (1–5) but that speaking in English in large groups (6 and above) reduces learning. Students also learned that their speaking practice improved when they were put in heterogeneous groups as opposed to homogeneous ones. Similar to this, students' interaction may be high when they are part of a cohesive group. Third, the assignments in the English textbook for grade 12 were not as engaging or engaging as they ought to have been. The results from the three instruments show that speaking in group discussions is hindered in ALThawra secondary school by fixed desks and rigid chairs. Finally, the findings demonstrate that teachers have a considerable impact on increasing learners' participation in an English-language group discussion. Teachers should speak English as fluently as possible during all activities during the presentation stage. They routinely suggest discussion topics and offer additional explanations when the text is unclear. At the presentation stage, they do not, however, use these activities. Furthermore, different grouping techniques are not taken into account by English teachers. Furthermore, they do not provide feedback, remarks, or suggestions for group performances at the conclusion.

5.2. Conclusions

The results of the investigation led the researcher to the following conclusions:

The researcher came to the conclusion that most teachers fail to define group work objectives, establish groups using a variety of tactics, and promote a collaborative atmosphere throughout the presentation stage. According to the survey, almost all students experience language anxiety and nervousness when speaking in front of their peers in English. The results demonstrate that participants in an English-language group chat cannot maintain their learning after a few sentences. Teachers should keep a careful eye on their students' group discussions and act as a facilitator to make sure that English is utilized frequently.

5.3. Implications

"The following inferences have been drawn from the study's findings:"

✓ Speaking exercises that are interesting and motivating for secondary school pupils should be provided by English teachers. Additionally, they should encourage and inspire students to take part in English-language group discussions. They ought to compliment children who participate in speaking activities as well.

The use of various grouping strategies should be thought about by teachers. In order to help students learn to speak more effectively in group discussions, teachers should try to separate students into small, mixed-ability groups. Teachers should make sure that the class functions as a cohesive unit so that there can be greater interaction.

✓ The Education Bureau and other relevant organizations should help secondary schools set up classroom seating according to the method of language instruction being used. Additionally, course designers should consider seating arrangements when creating speaking exercises that include

group collaboration. The only group sizes that can be used in other classes, according to the professors, are three and six. Group participation in a speaking-as-teaching class ought to be recognized and rewarded academically.

✓ Teachers should put their students as much as possible into mixed ability groups to encourage students' interest in speaking.

✓ In group discussions, the teacher should give appropriate feedback and keep track of students' advancement toward the necessary standard.

✓ The study concludes by recommending further research in order to fully comprehend the factors that hinder the practice of teaching-learning speaking in groups and the best role that teachers may play in maximizing the learning potential in speaking English in groups.

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