
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Using Group Work for Improving the First Year Non-English Major Students Speaking Skill at Dong Nai Technology University

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| ABSTRACT

This article aims to offer solutions to improve speaking skills for English majors at Dong Nai Technology University through the application of group work activities. The main research method of the paper is the survey method. The corpus was collected from 50 first-year non-English major students at Dong Nai Technology University. Research results show that group activities have been used quite often in speaking lessons, however, the effectiveness is not high due to a number of influencing factors such as learners' interests, and desires, The teacher's strategies have not met the students' expectations. Since then, the article proposes some solutions to improve the learning of speaking skills for non-English major students through group work at Dong Nai University.

| KEYWORDS

First year non-English major, group work, speaking skill

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

ACCEPTED: 20 March 2023

PUBLISHED: 31 March 2023

DOI: 10.32996/jeltal.2023.5.2.3

1. Introduction

International collaboration is currently the foundation for national development throughout the globe. In order to communicate with people from around the globe, we now rely heavily on the English language. There are severe restrictions placed on us because we cannot converse in English. In order to better comprehend and tolerate one another, people can overcome cultural, economic, and even social barriers by learning English (Graddol, 2001). In today's trend of integration, languages are one of the urgent problems. English is being used more frequently worldwide as a result of globalization's effects and the Internet's influence. English's significance in a nation's economic growth is becoming even more clear as evidence mounts that it is the language of choice for business and communication on a global scale (Mahboob, 2011).

According to Aydoğan, & Akbarov (2014): "English consists of four main skills, which are speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. In addition, English also has vocabulary and pronunciation skills". Speaking is one of the important skills that need to be focused on and enhanced because it is an effective means of communication. However, this ability is also regarded as one of the most challenging elements of learning a new language. Many students find it difficult to express all their thoughts in English, even if they feel shy to communicate in English even though they have been studying the language continuously for many years (Woodrow, 2006).

According to researchers such as Khamkhien (2010) and Martine, L. (2003), there have been preliminary assessments of the effectiveness of group activities in teaching speaking skills but only mentioned the level and frequency of participation and have not studied the influencing factors. Determining the importance of the effective application of group activities to enhance the effectiveness of speaking lessons, with the goal of enhancing the effectiveness of teaching and learning speaking skills through group activities for first-year non-specialized students at Dong Nai Technology University, this article was conducted to assess some influencing factors of group activities in speaking skills and propose some solutions.

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2. Literature Review

2.1.1. Speaking

2.1.1.1. The concept of speaking

According to Bailey (2003): "Speaking is a form of oral communication. We use many different parts of our bodies, such as the lungs, vocal cords, tongue, teeth, and lips, to produce sounds when we talk". Rao (2019) describes "Our ability to successfully communicate is speaking. It enables us to convey information verbally and in a manner that the listener can understand".

According to Bailey (2005), "The second ability in a foreign language, speaking, is frequently regarded as the most difficult of the four skills". The purpose of speaking is to communicate. Communication serves not only as a tool to interact with others but also as a means of communication to solve any problems they face.

Mulasari (2015) states that "Speaking is a skill when a speaker uses acquired language and creates a message through speech when communicating with others (Mulasari, 2015).

In general, from the above definitions, the writer can define speaking as expressing opinions, views, and feelings to others by using words or expressive sounds to inform, persuade, explain, and knowledge that can be learned by a number of teaching methods.

2.1.1.2. The purpose of speaking

According to Koch (2017): "First, speaking is for the purpose of informing. It's helping your audience get the information they don't already have. Second, speaking is for sharing knowledge. Third, it gives allow students to practice language items (vocabulary, grammar functions, etc.) more fluently."

2.1.1.3. Characteristics of speaking skills

According to Shaban (2021), activities for learners should be designed based on two equally important and attainable criteria: fluency and accuracy of speech. Due to the importance of these two elements in teaching foreign languages through communication techniques. Practical classroom activities can help students develop their communication skills. Therefore, learners need to understand the proper functioning of the language system.

First, fluency is a characteristic of speaking skills. Learners must regularly practice skills. According to Hedge (2000), fluency is the ability to respond in a coherent and coherent manner by combining words and phrases together, articulating clearly, and using stress and intonation when speaking.

2.1.1.4. The importance of speaking skills

According to Parupalli (2019) "One of the key abilities in acquiring a language is speaking. Students face problems while communicating due to insufficient language knowledge, and they must exit the conversation, develop speaking skills, and explain the methods and tactics educators use to help students improve their speaking abilities in English classes."

According to McLaren (2006), "One of the hardest abilities for language learners to master is speaking. The most crucial of the four English language abilities is speaking, even those who spend years studying a foreign language. When prompted, students find it challenging to communicate in everyday circumstances. Fixing this makes sense for many reasons. Students should first recognize the value of speech abilities and work to develop them in order to succeed in this cutthroat world.

2.1.2. Group work

According to Martine: "A group is a community of people united together on the basis of one or more common signs related to their common performance and communication." According to Western psychologist Brown: "A group is a community of people with two or more people, between whom there is mutual influence and mutual influence, existing for a certain period of time, and doing things together. currently operating together."

According to author Tran Hiep in Social Psychology - Theoretical Problems (1996), a group is a collection of individuals who satisfy 4 factors: having two or more members; having a certain time to work together; sharing or carry out a common task or plan to achieve the goals expected by the group, operating according to the group's common principles.

A team needs members with complementary abilities and dedication in addition to being made up of numerous people working together under the direction of a manager or team leader. in charge of accomplishing a shared objective.

There are a wide variety of groups, including study partners, affinity groups, gifted groups, ability groups, clubs, project groups, organizational workgroups, etc.

3. Methodology

The research methods that the writer uses to complete this thesis are almost based on the actual data of Using group work to improve speaking skills for first-year students who are not majoring in English at the University of Technology Dong Nai technology. The first step which is used to collect the data is questionnaires. There were 50 the first year non – majored English students at Dong Nai Technology University participated in the questionnaire. Most of them are between 18 and 20 years old, they are not good at using language skills and they learn English at high school. They do not have a good English learning environment. Only in classroom they can learn and use the English language. Furthermore, the writer uses quantitative methods, and skills of investigation, survey, analysis, and evaluation to accurately describe the weaknesses and find solutions related to the topic.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Time for students who are not majoring in English at Dong Nai University to learn English

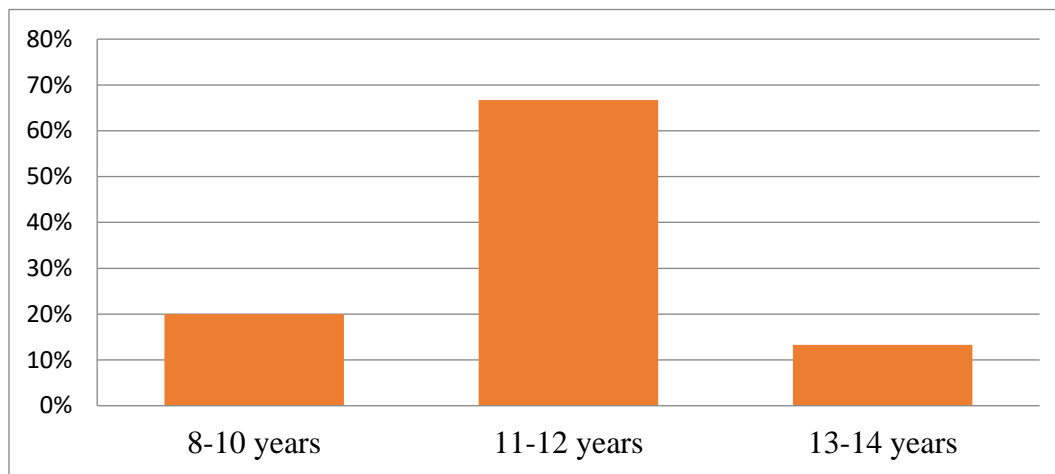


Figure 4.1. Results of English study time of first-year students who are not majoring in English

The aforementioned chart shows that the majority of the students at Dong Nai Industrial University had access to English from an early age. All have at least eight years or more of English study. The majority of students—67%—were in classes 11 and 12, which represented the largest percentage. Students who have completed 8–10 years of study come in second. Only 13% of those were 13 to 14 years old.

4.2. Students' attitude towards learning speaking skills

The most common responses from students were:

- I don't have a speaking strategy.
- I find it difficult to pronounce.
- I'm ashamed to have said the wrong word.
- I do not understand the content when speaking or communicating in English with others.

From the interview results, the biggest problem that students face is that there is no strategy to learn English, lack of vocabulary, lack of confidence, shame and fear that have caused a lot of difficulties in learning skills. There are also difficulties with English grammar, word meanings and sentence structure. Speaking requires confidence, pronunciation and communication skills. If the learner does not understand the word deeply, the learner may misinterpret the context of the word and lead to misinterpretation of the content.

4.3. Current status of students' teamwork skills

4.3.1. Is group work important?

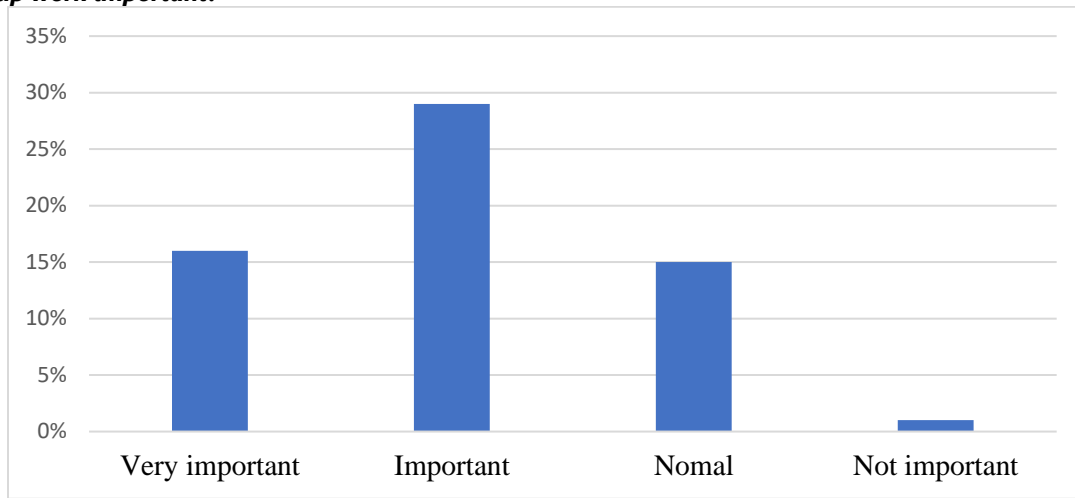


Figure 4.4. Importance of group work in learning to speak English

The majority of students think teamwork is important, accounting for 29%. There are 16.7% of students who think group work is very important, students think group work is very normal, accounting for 15%. The rest think teamwork is not important for their work, accounting for 1%.

4.3.2. Team work process student's

The organization of group activities through group discussions or group essays has a positive and effective influence on students, and group work-related teaching activities are quite common in today's universities.

When they first begin working in groups, new pupils are frequently taken aback and encounter many challenges. Many students are unable to select their own group when instructors ask them to work in groups. Additionally, it takes a long time for a group's members to adjust.

The reason is that everyone had a strong sense of self when we first started working together, so they only insisted on their own views. This makes it challenging for the group to come to an agreement. And debating to reach a consensus takes up a lot of time. Even that time is more than the time to complete the exercise together.

Students' poor teamwork skills lead to frequent conflicts. Team members have different personalities, often clashing with each other. When there is a problem, everyone wants their opinion to be right, no one listens to anyone. There are even members who are loud when arguing with each other. Others also make the atmosphere of teamwork become tense. Many groups have been inefficient and even disbanded for this reason.

Level	Total number of students	Like so much		Like		Normal		Not like	
		absolute	%	absolute	%	absolute	%	absolute	%
First year	50	10	20%	20	40%	12	24%	8	16%

Table 4: Do you like working in groups?

From the table above, we can see that most of the first-year students want to work in groups. The number of students who answered that they liked and liked working in groups in the first year was 30, accounting for 20%, while the number of students who did not like it was only 8 students, accounting for 16%, and the number of students who found it normal accounted for 12%. Explaining the above phenomenon, we can understand: Student age is an age when their psychology can be said to be gradually

stabilizing, they are a class of people full of vitality and creativity. dreams and ambitions. They are always looking for opportunities to assert themselves and interact widely with people. Moreover, teamwork is an advanced method widely applied by qualified developed countries in the world. Therefore, we believe that teamwork will be the opportunity our students are looking for and want to make a new breakthrough and succeed.

5. Conclusion

In summary, there is no time for more stereotypical ideas, only bold ideas that can be successfully implemented with the help of many people. Science and technology are developing more and more, society is progressing, the need to exchange and expand relationships is becoming more and more necessary, and work is becoming more and more difficult. It requires a unified and ingenious combination of many people and contains in it the most reasonable structural organization. Therefore, the need for teamwork is indispensable. More and more businesses are demanding this skill from workers. Especially, after joining the WTO, more and more foreign enterprises are participating in the Vietnamese labor market. They require employees not only professional knowledge but also other soft skills for their work, in which teamwork skills are the most important, showing harmony with the job work and with the collective of each person. Students are the future owners of the country, they need to know how to assert themselves and train themselves with all the skills to meet the needs of the job. It is indispensable to train yourself in highly effective teamwork skills, and know how to build an effective team. English is a tool for communication that improves mutual understanding. There are numerous languages spoken throughout the globe, but not all of them are simple to comprehend and learn. People today have decided to use English as their primary language so that they can interact in everyday speech across borders without having to worry about language barriers. There are numerous job openings everywhere. But it requires employees to have a high level of expertise, mastery of soft skills, and especially speaking skills. So teamwork skills are necessary and important skills for doing work in today's time. Due to many limitations in terms of ability, experience, time, and research materials, as well as an understanding of this issue, the group's topic only mentions a small part of the actual situation of students at Dong Nai University.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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