

SPECIFIC FEATURES OF GROUP WORK IN TEACHING ENGLISH

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Annotation. Group work is when the learners work together on a task or activity in groups. Learners in threes, a class separated into two, and an open class, are all examples of groups. Group work increases the opportunities for all learners to speak the new language.

Key words: teaching groups, collaborative work, language, different styles.

Group work is a form of voluntary association of members benefiting from cooperative learning, that enhances the total output of the activity than when done individually. It aims to cater for individual differences, develop skills (e.g. communication skills, collaborative skills, critical thinking skills), generic knowledge and socially acceptable attitudes or to generate conforming standards of behavior and judgement. The benefit of a group work is that it helps the student to break complex problems into smaller parts which make it easier on the student to get the job done. The following is an outline of some of the most crucial advantages and usefulness of group work. Examples of typical group work activities include ranking discussions, jigsaw activities, project work group and group writing tasks. The concept of group work arises from a thing called democracy. The group works together to come up with a suitable solution and achieve goals in a sufficient amount of time. The concept of group work is used by many teachers and college professors all over the world. The reason why teachers and college professors use group work is because it is an effective method that improves the student's ability to use critical thinking and be able to out judge and out reason why he chose that answer. The other reason is because it involves collaborative team work which involves the student to work amongst a group and being able to exchange ideas, so that the task is finished within a certain deadline. The concept of collaborative work is a strong aspect which is needed when the student enters the work force and all employers look for this key factor when hiring employees. The reason that this method is used is because it develops the students' communicative skills. It helps the student to carry any barriers, he may have which is preventing him from speaking and it allows him to speak freely. Learning English in a group is much more effective than on a one-to-one basis. When arranging for group work, there are some important factors to keep in mind. Just having students work in groups does not automatically mean they are learning the language skills you want them to. Consider the objectives carefully and how the characteristics of group work might help students to achieve those objectives. For example, group work can be very effective for stimulating thinking and generating ideas in pre-reading or pre-listening activities, or in preparation for speaking activities. Second, how many students in the classroom should work together in each group? Smaller groups offer more opportunities to participate for each student, but larger groups allow for a greater range of ideas and input. Learning English in a group has more advantages than learning it individually and I am going to prove it.

First of all, if a child learns to speak English in a group, he is sure to get more motivated and enthusiastic about learning it. Modern textbooks, unlike old-fashioned Soviet ones, contain a wide choice of activities for learners of different styles and intelligences, which are kind of a clever trick even for those children who dislike doing any kind of work. For example, if a child can't stand dictations, there are creative writing storms at his disposal, if he doesn't like listening for the main idea, he might do listening to complete a picture and compare it with his peers. Whereas if he is taught one to one, he won't have the chance to do writing storms, to complete the picture with his partner, share his ideas or understand what it is that makes other children more motivated. So, he is left to face reading alone, writing alone, listening alone and what is worse speaking alone, though one hour lesson is entirely his and his teacher's attention as well.

Second of all, learning in a group contributes to creativity. In a group there are students with different personality characteristics and this variety will bring diversity of ideas. For example, in my reading class students discover things for themselves, but they are open to new ideas which come from their partners, they question these new ideas, they respond to these ideas and learn how to explore and develop them. On the other

hand, if a student is left one to one with his teacher, who is he going to discuss with, whose questions and responses is he going to hear? Parents will say teachers should do it and they do lead students to ideas but teachers as mature personalities bring their own experiences, their own style of thinking which can't be compared with that of their peers. Though one hour lesson is completely his, the student does not know how his peers think, what ideas they have or how they solve the problems posed in their books.

The last but not the least advantage of learning in a group is peer collaboration. Students learn how to support each other, monitor and facilitate. Moreover, peer collaboration helps them to overcome shyness, get rid of complexes and discover leadership qualities in themselves. I have witnessed positive changes in my students' behaviour after having worked in a group, some of them became more open, others more helpful, third ones more confident. But the happiest part of my teaching life is when I notice the eagerness to express his ideas in my student's eyes which is thanks to working in a group. As soon as I notice this quality, I know this student will be a monitor, a supporter, a facilitator and a leader. In contrast, the student who is without a group is deprived of collaboration and is left to stew in his own juice, though one hour lesson is still his. Parents, if you want your children to be eager to learn English, be able to speak it fluently, and at the same time be original, reflective, supportive and tolerant, decide in favour of groups. The teachers instruct their students on how to work in groups in the same way that they were instructed as students.

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