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Impact of Group Activities on the Development of English Grammar Skills on Secondary School Level Students

Waheed Shahzad

Institute of Humanities and Arts,
Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering
and Information Technology,
Rahim Yar Khan
waheed.shahzad@kfueit.edu.pk

Muhammad Mohsin,

Institute of Humanities and Arts, Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology, Rahim Yar Khan

Dr. Majid Rashid,

Institute of Humanities and Arts, Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology, Rahim Yar Khan

Dr. Muhammad Anwar Farooq,

Institute of Humanities and Arts, Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology, Rahim Yar Khan

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Abstract

Introduction: The study explores the comparative effectiveness of teaching English grammar using classroom group activities versus traditional textbook-based deductive methods among rural secondary-level students. It aims to enhance language skills and engagement, assessing whether group activities improve academic outcomes.

Methodology: Two Grade-X classes were divided into Control and Experimental Groups. The Control Group received traditional instruction, while the Experimental Group engaged in group activities focused on Tenses and Narration. Pre-test scores were collected to ensure comparable starting levels.

Results/Findings: Post-test results indicated that the Experimental Group significantly outperformed the Control Group. Group activities also fostered higher student engagement, though they did not affect

students' attitudes towards learning English grammar.

Future Direction: The findings support integrating group activity-based methods with traditional approaches to enhance English grammar teaching at the secondary level. Future research should explore the impact of diverse group dynamics and long-term effects on language acquisition.

Keywords: English grammar, classroom group activities, deductive methods, rural secondary students, language skills, student engagement, academic outcomes.

Introduction

English is the dominant language used in the global arena for scientific research, technological advancements, business transactions, and commercial activities. English has become the world's lingua franca due to its extensive use as a language for global interpersonal communication in the modern era. It is not merely a myth, but rather it successfully meets the criteria for determining the value of a language. English is the medium of instruction for a wide range of academic disciplines, encompassing the social sciences, humanities, arts and crafts, trade and business, and diplomacy. English is the predominant language utilized for communication and correspondence in both the public and private sectors of professional domains. Given the increasing significance of English and its status as the official language of Pakistan, it is crucial to cultivate and advance English as a means of communication and education. The present circumstances validate the notion that disregard for the English language is a contributing factor to the deficiency in advancements in trade and technology. Khahmisani (1983) saw a downward trend in English success, namely in English syntax, due to pupils' inadequate proficiency in English knowledge (Acevedo 2018).

Over the past few decades, there has been a push to promote teaching in group settings, and educators are now putting in more effort than ever to use group activities in order to accomplish learning objectives. In-class group activities are often regarded to promote the inductive approach to research. The effectiveness of employing the inductive technique with students from different age groups and educational levels has been observed, leading to positive outcomes (Mallia 2015). The primary goal of the inductive technique is to facilitate concept development, as its advocates argue that acquiring grammatical rules is akin to acquiring concepts.

Kozlowski and Bell thoroughly examine the process of group formation within the context of collaboration. They contend that in the face of current difficulties, there is a persistent pattern characterized by a rise in rivalry, mergers, and consolidations. Organizations are facing growing pressure to execute many tasks cooperatively in cutting-edge environments. Hence, it is imperative to cultivate a diverse set of talents, profound expertise, and significant practical exposure to effectively cope with these demands (Ebrahimi, & Rahimi, 2021). These characteristics empower organizations to promptly and effectively address difficulties, while being adaptable and flexible (Marsh and Hau 2004). Undoubtedly, team structures have the capacity to uphold these characteristics. In addition, as a result of a rise in mergers and expansions, organizations have extended their influence beyond what is traditionally considered their geographic borders. Joint partnerships have gained popularity today, in contrast to the institutions' traditional university cultural orientation (Chen, & Wang, 2020; Batdi, & Talan, 2020). Consequently, there is a growing emphasis on creating teams that consist of individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. Currently, virtual teams function across large distances in terms of both time and place, with members spread out extensively due to modern computer and internet technology. These tools facilitate more efficient scheduling and foster stronger ties among those who are geographically and temporally distant (Mazo 2015).

The objective of this study is to investigate the increased effectiveness of teaching English grammar through the use of small group divisions within a class, which allows students to practice language skills in practical situations. The study specifically examines the impact of teaching English grammar through inductive methods and group activities in secondary schools located in rural areas. Implementing group work methodologies fosters logical reasoning skills in pupils, hence enhancing their academic achievement.

Objectives of the Study

1. To analyse the pragmatic elements present in "The Good-Morrow," including interrogatives, metaphorical imagery, and direct address, through a close reading of the text.

- To investigate the ways in which these pragmatic elements are employed by Donne to convey complex emotions, ideas, and themes, with a focus on love, connection, and selfdiscovery.
- 3. To explore the impact of the poem's pragmatic features on reader interpretation and emotional engagement, examining how language choices influence the reader's understanding and response to the text.

Research Questions

To attain its objectives this study attempts to answer the following research questions:

- 1. How does John Donne employ pragmatic elements such as interrogatives, metaphorical imagery, and direct address in "The Good Morrow" to communicate themes of love, connection, and self-discovery?
- 2. What are the underlying intentions behind the speaker's use of language in the poem, and how do these intentions shape the reader's interpretation and emotional response?
- 3. How do the pragmatic elements of the poem contribute to its aesthetic value and literary significance, and how do they enhance our understanding of Donne's poetic craftsmanship?

Review of Literature

According to the definition provided by Good (1973), the term "group" refers to the process of grouping particular measurements into specified groups and qualities. The practice of categorising persons, such as students or other individuals, according to the characteristics they share is a common academic activity (Yu, & Han, 2023). It is possible that these activities will be carried out for the goal of educating the individuals, carrying out evaluations, or compelling them to participate in trials. Whenever there are two or more people gathered together, the term "group" is typically used to refer to the gathering (Saeed, & Hussain, 2023).

The concept of group action was investigated by Rasmussen and Ewoldsen (2013). Group action is defined as the work that is carried out by a number of individuals with the intention of reaching particular objectives that may not be easily attainable if the individuals were working separately (Noor, & Ali, 2021). Therefore, in the context of the classroom, the term "group work" refers to any activity that is carried out by a predetermined subgroup of students with the intention of achieving a common goal (Quirk and Crystal 2010).

One of the most important roles that a teacher plays in the classroom is that of a leader, as indicated by study that was conducted by McGreal (1989). Within the context of a conventional

classroom, his major responsibility is to present new information and to take on a pivotal role in the organisation of all activities that take place within the classroom (Liao, 2022). Students are provided with a welcoming atmosphere in which they can acquire and hone a particular language competency through the use of English Language Teaching (ELT) programmes. On the other hand, this dynamic is reversed in a classroom with only second language learners. It is predicted that the role of the instructor would undergo a variety of modifications in a language classroom as a consequence of the distinct emphasis that the classroom will emphasise. It is the kids who are the primary focus of attention. To encourage children to take an active role in their education, it is essential to provide them with motivation. For the purpose of achieving this objective, it is recommended that the class be divided into groups each consisting of students with varying degrees of expertise (Wang, & Cheng, 2022). It is important to note that encouraging collaborative work in the classroom does not release the instructor from their responsibilities; on the contrary, it results in the instructor taking on a role that is less visible. There is no doubt that the ability of a teacher to continuously monitor, guide, and motivate their students is unending (Santos and Fabrício 2006). The possession of that quality is, without a question, a vital requirement for a language instructor. When the teacher's skills are put to use, he is able to become a more compelling, perceptive, and flexible educator in comparison to the atmosphere of a regular classroom (Rahman, & Abbas, 2022). For the purpose of improving classroom management and supervisory controls, teachers of foreign languages are required to take on additional responsibilities. The primary objective of the class as well as the students is to achieve a high level of proficiency in the language that is being targeted. Therefore, it is essential for teachers of English as a foreign language to have a mindset that is more flexible when it comes to the specific methods that are utilised in order to achieve this purpose. They should place more importance on the final result than on particular procedures. When members of a group are merely given instructions without being given any autonomy or help, the goals of the group that was formed are undermined. According to Sarwat, Andleeb, and others (2022), it is the role of the educator to maintain constant attention and ensure that everything continues to go in the planned direction.

The attitude that students have towards the process of language acquisition is of the utmost significance (Al-Jarf, 2020). The connections that learners have with one another, as well as the relationships they have with their teachers and classmates, are extremely important. Students' levels of motivation are significantly influenced by the use of cooperative learning (Tanveer, &

Aslam, 2024). It is possible that individuals will reap major benefits as a result of their participation in shared learning activities (Dewi, & Fatimah, 2021). The mentality of students with regard to the establishment of groups and the learning that takes place through collaboration is of the utmost significance (Jamali, & Nabifar, 2023).

The hypothesis that Jacob and Mattson put up encourages the implementation of methodologies that involve collaboration within the context of educational institutions. Children that have a low grasp of language abilities are said to have major advantages when they are placed in cooperative learning environments, according to this concept (Hammad, & Ghali, 2020). Students who are in this category have the potential to improve their language abilities and achieve academic success (Fernández, & Bueno, 2022). In light of this, it is not impossible to have a language classroom that places an emphasis on the successful completion of assignments. The fundamental component of this strategy is the formation of smaller groups, which can range from two to six people, with the purpose of completing the tasks at hand (Kim, & Kim, 2021). In situations when there is a considerable level of interdependence and reciprocal interaction among the members of the group, the approach is at its most successful. As a result of the increased number of opportunities for direct connection that are available in this setting, students have a better probability of completing activities and attaining academic success. As extra benefits, participants have the opportunity to improve their communication skills and their level of self-assurance (Ghazi, & Khan, 2022).

Material and Method Population

The population of the research enrolled Students of the Government High School of Basti Azeem Shah, District Rahim Yar Khan, for the academic session SSC 2022–2024 were included in the study's population, which was defined beforehand (Smith, & Jones, 2021). However, in a broad sense, the population for the titled study includes all secondary school students and all secondary school teachers who teach English in High and Higher Secondary schools in the province of Punjab, particularly in the schools operating in the province's rural belts (Osman, & Ahmed, 2020).

Sample

A sample of the research is understood as a set of data that can be collected from both primary and secondary sources and empirically using preconceived selection method-random techniques adopted for the data collection about two sections of Class X. Students were selected randomly as a sample. There were forty students in each of these classes. Thus, 80 students (from both groups) participated in the study. Students from both sections (20+20-40) were randomly assigned to either the experimental group or the control group.

Instruments

Based on literature review and required information, the researcher developed Pre-Test and Post-Test as research instruments because the study followed an experimental design. The terms pre-test and post-test are often used interchangeably to refer to the same thing: an evaluation of a student's progress in a course by contrasting their knowledge before and after instruction on a given topic.

The following schedule and procedures were followed to complete this project: -

- a. At the outset of the study, both groups took a Pre-Test to establish where they stood before the experiment began.
- b. Every day, students in both classes received the same material, but their teachers used different approaches. The students in the experimental group were obviously taught in small groups using inductive methods, while those in the control group were instructed by using deductive method.
- c. There were a total of 15 students in the experimental group, and they were split into three groups of five. The results of the preliminary examination served as the basis for these groupings. Each day, for a total of one month, participants spent forty minutes participating in the experiment/treatment.
- d. A follow-up assessment was performed after the allotted treatment time had passed. It was observed and analyzed how the two groups' pre- and post-test scores compared. Please find the Post-Test in the Annex. The group teachers administered and tallied the Pre-Test and Post-Test.

Results and Discussion Data analysis

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This section is devoted to showcasing the data acquired during the experiment and its subsequent statistical analysis, aimed at deriving conclusive results for the study. Comprehensive computations involving mean, standard deviation, variance, and Z-tests were conducted based on the accumulated data for this research.

Analyzing the data derived from pre-tests and post-tests, comprehensive tables and corresponding charts have been provided below. Each table's data was meticulously assessed alongside its graphical representation. The results of these analyses, along with their corresponding charts, are included herein.

Pre-Test Scores Indicator of Academic Status:

Table 1: Mean Pre-Test Scores for both the Control Group and the Experimental Group

Variables	Students	Mean	Variance	Standard Deviation	Computed Z-Value
Experiment Group	40	12.87	10.26	4.02	0.51428
Control Group	40	12.47	11.24	4.35	

Before the research experiment commenced, both the Control Group (CG) and the Experimental Group (EG) underwent a pre-test. Individual student scores within each group were compiled to compute the mean, standard deviation, and variance for both groups. These data sets were then organized into tables for a comparative analysis.

The table illustrates the Control Group's mean, standard deviation, and variance as 12.47, 4.35, and 11.24 respectively, while the Experimental Group exhibited figures of 12.87 (Mean), 4.02 (SD), and 10.26 (Variance).

To evaluate the difference between these calculations, a Z-test was conducted. The resulting computed Z-Value of 0.51428 was compared against a tabulated value of 1.96, indicating that the difference in mean scores between the two groups is not significant. With a measurement accuracy set at 0.05, it suggests that both groups were relatively similar during the pre-test stage. The purpose of both the CG-Pre and EG-Pre -tests was to assess the initial status of the two groups before the experiment began. This step aimed to establish a baseline understanding of their respective positions before any experimental interventions were introduced (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013).

Post-Test Scores Indicating Academic Achievement

Table-2: Mean Post-Test Scores of in Academic Achievement

Variables	Students	Mean	Variance	Standard Deviation	Computed Z-Value
Experiment Group	40	54.31	49.53	7.64	8.38467
Control Group	40	33.87	224.75	21.87	

Following the conclusion of the research experiment, post-tests were conducted for both the Control Group and the Experimental Group. Scores from these post-tests were organized and analyzed to determine mean scores, standard deviation, and variance for each group, as presented in the table above (Mahmoud, 2023).

Specifically, the Control Group exhibited a mean score of 33.87, a standard deviation of 21.87, and a formidable variance of 224.75. On the other hand, the Experimental Group showcased mean, standard deviation, and variance figures of 54.31, 7.64, and 49.53, respectively. To evaluate the disparity between these calculations, a Z-test was conducted. The resulting computed Z-value of 8.38467 significantly surpassed the tabulated value of 1.96. This substantial difference indicates that the mean scores between the two groups are indeed significant. In essence, it suggests that the Experimental Group has performed notably better than the Control Group in this post-test analysis.

This measurement was conducted with an accuracy level set at 0.05, highlighting the substantial difference in performance between the two groups following the conclusion of the experiment (Jebur and Al-Azzawi 2019, Hussain and Ahsan 2023).

Scores from the post-test assessing comprehension of tenses

Table -3: Mean Post-Test Scores evaluating the comprehension of tenses.

Variables	Students	Mean	Variance	Standard Deviation	Computed Z-Value
Experiment Group	40	10.04	0.75	0.81	8.92761
Control Group	40	6.70	2.17	2.07	

The table provided summarizes the post-test results for both the experimental and control groups regarding their comprehension of tenses. Similar to previous assessments, the scores were gathered to compute the mean score, standard deviation, and variance for each group.

For the control group, the mean score, standard deviation, and variance were calculated at 6.70, 2.07, and 2.17 respectively. Conversely, the experimental group demonstrated a mean score, standard deviation, and variance of 10.04, 0.81, and 0.75 respectively. To gauge the magnitude of difference between these calculations, a Z-test was employed. The resulting computed Z-value of 8.92761 significantly exceeded the tabulated value of 1.96. This notable difference signifies a significant divergence in the mean scores between the two groups. In essence, the experimental group's performance in the post-test for tenses comprehension stands notably superior compared to the control group's performance.

The substantial discrepancy between the computed and tabulated values solidifies the belief that the difference observed in mean scores between the two groups is indeed significant. Thus, it

is confidently concluded that the experimental group has distinctly outperformed the control group in the post-test evaluation for comprehension of tenses.

Scores from the post-test assessing Comprehension of Narrations

Table 4: Mean Post-Test Scores evaluating the Comprehension of Narrations

Variables	Students	Mean	Variance	Standard Deviation	Computed Z-Value
Experiment Group	40	5.94	11.16	4.09	4.89
Control Group	40	3.37	12.74	4.14	

Similarly, both groups underwent a post-test focusing on the comprehension of narration. The table above showcases the mean scores for both groups, accompanied by their deviations and variances. Notably, the experimental group displayed a higher mean score of 5.94 compared to the control group's 3.37. Moreover, the Control Group exhibited a higher standard deviation (4.14) and variance (12.74) compared to the Experimental Group's values of 4.09 and 11.16, respectively.

This higher mean score observed in the experimental group signifies a superior performance by its students in comparison to those in the control group. It indicates that the students in the experimental group showcased a deeper understanding and greater efficiency in comprehending narration within the realm of English grammar. The application of a Z-test led to a computed z-value of 5.05, significantly surpassing the tabulated value of 1.96. This substantial difference emphasizes the significance of the disparity between the mean scores of the two groups. In essence, the larger the mean score, the better the performance exhibited by the group. This analysis was conducted with an accuracy level set at 0.05, reinforcing the distinct and notable difference observed in the performance levels of the two groups in grasping the aspect of narration in English grammar (Kafipour, Jafari et al. 2018).

Scores from the post-test assessing the Sequence of Tenses in Reported Speech

Table 5: Mean Post-Test Scores evaluating the Sequence of Tense in Reported Speech

Variables	Students	Mean	Variance	Standard Deviation	Computed Z-Value
Experiment Group	40	7.99	11.21	2.98	
Control Group	40	5.37	6.87	3.51	4.14621

The table provided showcases the mean, standard deviation, and variance for both the Control Group and the Experimental Group. Notably, the Control Group exhibited figures of 5.37 for the mean, 3.51 for standard deviation, and 6.87 for variance, whereas the Experimental Group displayed higher figures of 7.99 for mean, 2.98 for standard deviation, and 11.21 for variance. This comparison highlights that the Experimental Group demonstrated a notably higher mean score than the Control Group. Moreover, the standard deviation in the Experimental Group was larger, measuring 2.98 compared to the Control Group's 3.51. Additionally, the variance in the Experimental Group, indicated by 11.21, surpassed that of the Control Group, which measured 6.87.

Given the higher mean score observed in the Experimental Group, it can be confidently stated that the students in this group performed better in the post-test compared to those in the Control Group. The application of a Z-test computed a value of 4.14621, exceeding the tabulated Z-value of 1.96. This substantial difference underscores the significance of the variance in mean scores between the two groups, affirming the superior performance of the Experimental Group in this parameter as well (Linse and Nunan 2005).

Post-Test Scores assessing the Conversion of Expression

Table-6: Mean Post-Test Scores evaluating the Conversion of Expression in Reporting Speech - Indirect Narrations

Variables	Students	Mean	Variance	Standard Deviation	Computed Z-Value
Experiment Group	40	8.73	0.53	0.72	6.69159
Control Group	40	6.3	4.73	2.17	

The higher mean score observed in the experimental group indicates a superior performance compared to the control group. This suggests that students in the experimental group exhibited enhanced proficiency in converting expressions utilized in narrations, specifically in the reporting segment of direct narration. This calculation was conducted with a precision level set at 0.05.

Upon applying a Z-test to the provided data, a computed Z-value of 6.69159 was obtained, significantly surpassing the tabulated value of 1.96. This substantial difference underscores the significance of the variation in mean scores between the two groups. In essence, a larger mean score indicates better overall performance by the group.

Through the assessments of CG-Post and G-Post, the post-experiment status of both groups was evaluated. Consistently, across various stages of the post-test, the experimental group consistently demonstrated superior academic achievement. This outcome is attributed to the adoption of more effective teaching methods, particularly through engaging group work activities conducted within the classroom environment (Long and acquisition 1985).

Post-Test Scores assessing the Translation of Sentences

Table-7: Mean Post-Test Scores evaluating the Translation of Sentences

Variables	Students	Mean	Variance	Standard Deviation	Computed Z-Value
Experiment Group	40	8.04	2.13	2.06	
Control Group	40	2.89	7.95	3.14	10.01762

The provided table captures the data pertaining to students' ability in translating sentences as part of the post-test assessment. Notably, the Control Group exhibited a mean score of 2.89, a standard deviation (SD) of 3.14, and a variance of 7.95. In contrast, the Experimental Group displayed figures of 8.04 for mean score, 2.06 for standard deviation, and 2.13 for variance. Conducting a Z-test revealed a computed value of 10.01762, significantly surpassing the tabulated Z-value of 1.96. This substantial difference reinforces the significance of the divergence in mean scores between the Control and Experimental Groups.

This disparity once again emphasizes the superior academic performance showcased by the Experimental Group in their proficiency in translating sentences from Language 1 (LI) to Language 2 (L2) and vice versa. The students within the Experimental Group displayed not only higher mean scores but also showcased smaller deviations and variances in their scores. This observation reflects a positive indicator of their learning outcomes within this particular context, reinforcing the effectiveness of their learning approach.

RESULTS

The present research has its main focus to identifying the effectiveness of teaching English Grammar through classroom group activities, contrasting the inductive teaching method with the deductive approach relying on textbooks. The analysis of the data revealed that the mean scores from the pre-tests administered to both the experimental and control groups showed no significant

difference. This indicates that both groups commenced their learning process with nearly identical levels of academic proficiency. Primarily, the hypothesis that implementing group work activities in the classroom facilitates English grammar learning has been affirmed. The analysis of the data revealed a noticeable positive impact on the academic performance of the experimental group, where students taught through group formations achieved superior scores in the post-tests compared to their counterparts taught via conventional methods in the control group. The utilization of group work activities fostered an environment where students were notably engaged and motivated in the learning process. This heightened involvement was indicative of their active participation during classroom sessions. The improved performance of the experimental group underscores the deeper engagement fostered through teaching methodologies involving segmented group formations and the utilization of diverse group activities within the classroom setting.

One hypothesis posited in this research was that employing group work activities in teaching aids the instructional success of educators. Upon examining the academic performance of the experimental group, it becomes apparent that teachers experienced success in their instructional endeavors. The students' enhanced academic efficiency in the experimental group, reflected in their higher mean scores, serves as a testament to the effectiveness of the teaching method employed by the educator. Additionally, the superior academic performance showcased by the experimental group in understanding narrations was established through physical practice and detailed statistical analyses of the post-test data. This analysis brought to light a significant divergence between the mean scores of the post-tests administered to the control and experimental groups. Consequently, this discrepancy led to the rejection of the null hypothesis, which initially posited no significant differences in the mean scores of the post-tests between the two groups. The students belonging to the experimental group showcased a notably higher level of academic proficiency when handling various sentences and passages in L2 compared to their counterparts in the control group. Particularly in tasks involving translation between Urdu and English, the experimental group demonstrated superior accuracy, exhibiting a stronger grasp of tenses. Moreover, an inclination towards collaborative group work activities was observed among the students, indicating a heightened interest in participating in such group-oriented tasks. This positive shift in attitude towards learning was highlighted through the feedback provided by the teacher overseeing the experimental group. Notably, the teacher explicitly noted this observed change when comparing the students' attitudes during the experiment to their previous dispositions

before the experiment began. Consequently, the initial hypothesis asserting the absence of a positive effect from group activities on students' attitudes stands invalidated based on these observed changes.

Conclusions

Collaborative group work initiatives yield beneficial outcomes in the realm of teaching English grammar at the secondary level, notably contributing to the enhancement of students' academic performance. Drawing from the feedback and practical insights shared by educators immersed in teaching secondary classes, a discernible positive shift in students' attitudes towards group activities emerges. There's a notable inclination among students to engage more actively in the learning process when organized into groups and involved in diverse activities. This heightened interest is evidenced by their active participation and enthusiasm while undertaking various tasks within these group settings.

Educators teaching English at the secondary level can significantly enhance outcomes and elevate student achievement by adopting inductive teaching methods and implementing group-based learning activities within the classroom. This study doesn't propose the complete abandonment of traditional, deductive teaching approaches involving textbooks. Rather, it underscores that the inductive approach has a more profound impact on the intellectual development of secondary level students.

Students exhibit a heightened sense of engagement and ownership when involved in activities that allow for self-directed learning, a departure from the conventional teacher-centered instructional approach. Furthermore, it's essential to ensure heterogeneous grouping, integrating students of varied abilities within groups. This strategic approach fosters a balanced and cohesive learning environment. Conversely, if groups are formed without considering the diversity of participants' capabilities, the resulting imbalance can negatively influence the study's outcomes.

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