



Exploring the Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Pair Work in the Foreign Language Learning Classrooms at Salahaddin University-Erbil

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Abstract

This paper examines the pros and cons of using pair work in foreign language learning classes at Salahaddin University. The objective of the research is to determine the impact of working in pairs on students' preferences and to modify their attitudes toward the effects of using pairs in activities. For the academic year 2023–2024, a set of questionnaires was made and 47 students took part in it in the English Language department of Salahaddin University-Erbil College of Basic Education. Questionnaires and audio-recorded interviews were used to collect the data. Following an analysis of the survey responses, it was found that students' attitudes had improved and they were more positive about the pair work activities and were very interested in them. However, the main focus of this paper is on the pros, cons, and objectives of working pairs, as well as the challenges that students face when performing pair work activities. As a result of this study, it can be concluded that the students feel comfortable using a mix of pair work with small group discussions for language production. Therefore, the study found that pair work gives individual students more time and opportunity to use their own language, speak and share their own thoughts and ideas. Also, the student becomes more confident in their language learning and can manage their tasks on their own.



About the Journal

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1.Introduction

Class activities are integral part of learning a second language as they promote active engagement in whole-class lesson, group work, or individual work. Each of these categories has its own advantages and disadvantages (Chiriac and Frykedal, 2011, p. 3, cited in Granström, 2006). One of the most important developments in the learning theories is the constructive learning of how to engage and work with partners in the classroom. Students are seldom given the opportunity to learn how to collaborate with partners in the classroom; instead, they are frequently instructed on how they should act and behave. For this reason, there has been a focus on pair and group work. For language learning, the majority of teachers contend for doing group or pair works in the classroom as students may get benefit. To reduce reliance on teachers consistently, this could lead to students developing their understanding. In recent years, many educational institutions have shifted from traditional work-based methods of teaching to pair-and-group-work methods. According to Rozholdova (1996, p.52, cited in Nunan, 1988), “The change in the way language is taught and learning has resulted in many studies on the needs of students, their language levels, their subject knowledge, their cultural background, their expectations and interests and their individual characteristics.” In this study, the researcher looks at the advantages and disadvantages of pairing and working in the classroom. Previous studies will also be reviewed that have been conducted on pairing and working in second language learning classrooms.

2.The Definition of Pair Work in the Classroom

According to Mark (2009), pair work in the classroom originated in the 1970s when teachers realized that more than 80 percent of classroom conversation was composed of teacher’s talk. The following are some definitions and descriptions of pair work by a number of authors: Al-Sheedi and Region (2009, p. 140, cited in Johnson, Johnson & Holubec, 1990) have defined them as “the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their learning”. According to Baines, Blatchford and Kutnick (2009, p. 8), pupils working together as a group or team for a joint purpose or outcome. In addition, “a process to use for reaching goals that cannot be attained efficiently by acting alone” based on (Al-Sheedi and Batinah, 2009, p. 140). Moreover, “students working together in small groups” (Chiriac and Frykedal, 2011, p.3, cited in Lumpe and Haney, 1998). Furthermore, working in a group as “what occurs when all members of a team are working together and supporting each other to achieve a specific goal” (Al-Sheedi and Region, 2009, p. 140, cited in Pugach and Johnson, 1995).

As McDonough & Christopher (2003, p. 196-197) stated that, pair work is easier to organize for teachers as students work with the person seated next to them, while group work is more complex and may involve role differentiation and physical reorganizations of the classroom. Group work takes longer to complete and requires more extension compared to pair work. It is suggested that group work is more suitable for longer, complex assignments, while pair work is better for simpler tasks. While pair and group work are not suitable for every language lesson, pair and group work can be adapted to most classroom activities (McDonough and Christopher ,2003, pp. 196-197). For instance, one student could lead the discussion, while another could serve as the timer, recorder, or note-taker for all of the group's ideas. Assigning roles to group members would be an excellent method for students to take ownership of their education. In order for the group's goal to be accomplished, the most crucial thing that students do in pair or group work is to motivate and support one another's efforts to accomplish or create and finish tasks. Based on Baines, Kutnick, and Blatchford (2009), in order for group work to be more effective in the classroom, the number of participants in a group should not be greater than four or five; however, the number of participants may vary depending on the activities and resources available.

In pairing work, it is evident that teachers have a role to play as well. They perform the roles of resource, facilitator, and watchdog. They choose which students will make up the final group and organize the lessons with specific goals. In 1991, the NCTM published *The Professional Standards for Teaching Mathematics*, page. 36). They characterize the function of educators as "active in a way that is different from that of educators in the traditional classroom discourse". The majority of the talking, modeling, and explaining must be done by students, not by teachers, who must "encourage" and "expect" student participation. Participating in group projects can be an excellent approach to guarantee that every student has an opportunity to speak with one another and practice the language they have been taught. On the other hand, giving low level students the chance to practice in groups and pairings can be difficult, but it is crucial to acknowledge this. It has been shown in numerous studies that students only retain 20% of the material they hear and 70% of what they say and do (NCTM, 1991, p. 36). It can be mentioned that ability groups, mixed ability groups, age groups, friendship groups, class groups, similar needs groups, random groups, and project groups are just a few of the numerous ways that groups can be formed.

3.A Summary of Earlier Studies on Pair Work in the Classrooms

Several studies have been done on working in pairs in the classroom due to having positive influences on students in compared to individual work and lockstep class. Here is focusing on four features of working together and co-operate in pairs because a number of researchers and teachers hotly argue that they may have positive and adverse impacts on the students and the teachers.

3.1 Heterogeneous groups consist of students with varying instructional levels who collaborate to achieve educational outcomes. For example, a reading group may comprise individuals with low, medium, and high reading abilities who work together to comprehend and analyze a given text. These groups can foster cross-gender and cross-ethnic relationships, enhance social behaviors, improve self-esteem and attitudes towards school, and promote acceptance of differences. However, there can be a potential drawback for high-level students, as they may be placed in lower ability groups. Low ability students often exhibit less positive attitudes towards school compared to high ability students, which can negatively impact the self-esteem of the latter. On the other hand, when high-level students explain subject materials to their peers, they can deepen their own understanding and retention of the content. Nevertheless, it can be challenging for high-level students to explain concepts if some students are not attentive. (Samsudin et al, 2006, p. 2, cited in Woodfolk, 2001).

3.2 Homogeneous groups: in a homogeneous group, students of the same instructional level are grouped together and work collaboratively on materials that are suitable for their level. This can be seen in both class grouping, where students of similar abilities are grouped together, and between class groupings, where students are placed in different classes based on their achievement level. It is important that the materials used in these classes are appropriate for the students' level (Bryson, 2007, p. 6). However, using different materials in classes can lead to positive changes in achievement. Advocates of grouping students based on ability recommend some key principles, as stated by Aydin and Tugal (2005, p. 3-4, cited in Mamary and Rowe, 1985): the first point is grouping students based on ability allows teachers to focus on planning more effectively. Another factor is homogeneous grouping classes generally have fewer discipline issues, making teaching easier. Therefore, for language production, mixed-ability pairs are better employed. This strategy encourages peer learning, as students can support and learn from each other.

3.3 Monolingual classes: In a monolingual class, studies have shown that students may not use their target language (L2) when speaking in the classroom. To address this issue, pair/group work can be implemented, allowing teachers to separate students who speak the same language into different groups. However, in a monolingual class, when students work in

pairs or groups, they may resort to using their native language (L1) instead of the target language (L2). This can have negative consequences for the students. Harmer (2007, p. 135) emphasizes the importance of teachers explaining the problems associated with L1 use in the classroom, particularly during conversation time, in order to enhance the use of the target language. Furthermore, teachers should actively move from group to group to facilitate and encourage the use of L2 by the students. Eisa (2004, p. 134, cited in Bassano (2003)) highlights several reasons why students resort to using their mother tongue in pair/group work. Firstly, students tend to rely on their native language when they lack sufficient language skills to express their viewpoints in the target language, especially when they are assigned to tasks that require a higher level of proficiency in the target language. Secondly, students may struggle to understand the task structure due to unclear instructions on how to achieve their goals. Lastly, students may feel encouraged to experiment with their language use. Thus, pairing a higher proficiency student with a lower proficiency student can create a supportive learning environment. The higher proficiency student can serve as a model and provide guidance, while the lower proficiency student can benefit from the language input and support.

3.4.Class size: Class size is a crucial factor in working groups, with the option of being either small or large. It is evident that larger classes can result in larger groups within the class, which can negatively impact the quality of student work and the quantity and quality of teaching. However, a study conducted by Çakmak (2009, p. 395) found that students in larger classes were more inclined to simply listen to the teacher, whereas in smaller classes, they were more likely to actively engage with the teacher by initiating, responding, and maintaining contact. Additionally, Blatchford, Goldstein, and Mortimore (1998) highlight that teachers may be able to adapt their teaching style to the entire class when faced with larger class sizes. Hence, the use of pairwork in speaking classes can be effective in promoting active student engagement and providing opportunities for meaningful language practice so class size here does not make problem for students. Pairwork allows students to interact with their peers, engage in authentic conversations, and develop their speaking skills.

4.The Significance of Pair Work in the Classrooms

In various aspects of life, individuals must collaborate and cooperate, making it essential for students to acquire the skills needed to interact and work together with their peers on assignments and classroom tasks. Engaging in pairs activities is advantageous for students as they can learn from one another and benefit from the shared knowledge during these activities (Al-Sheedi and Region, 2009, p. 141, cited in Al-Badi, 2006). Furthermore, pair work enables students from diverse backgrounds and abilities to appreciate and embrace their differences, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of lessons and promoting increased interaction and participation in the classroom. Another advantage of pair work is that students may experience reduced stress levels as they share the responsibility of speaking in class, thereby enhancing their communication skills. The primary benefit of pair work lies in the creation of a supportive community among students in the classroom, where they can assist and encourage one another. Berčíková (2007, p. 12, cited in Byrne, 1989) suggests that whole class activities may not offer sufficient opportunities for oral practice unless the class size is very small. Conversely, when students are divided into pairs or smaller groups, they tend to have more speaking opportunities within a given timeframe. Pairs serve as a valuable tool for motivating students, fostering active learning, and enhancing critical thinking, communication, and decision-making skills. However, group work may lead to frustration among students and educators if not carefully planned and facilitated.

5. The Drawbacks of Pair Work in the Classroom

Pair/group work is often viewed as a convenient solution for various challenges encountered in language teaching classrooms. Nevertheless, misuse of this method can lead to adverse effects on teachers, students, the learning process, and teaching itself. One drawback is the possibility that students' mistakes go unnoticed or uncorrected by teachers, resulting in the use of incorrect language within the classroom groups. Martine (2006, cited in Long and Porter, 1985) argues that teachers frequently overlook students' speech errors and that explicit error correction may not significantly impact students. Conversely, peer correction allows students to rectify each other's mistakes, proving to be more beneficial for their learning. Additionally, students may rely heavily on their native language (L1) during classroom activities due to difficulties in understanding instructions or lacking a clear task structure. While L1 use can be helpful in assessing comprehension, teachers should address the drawbacks of excessive L1 use and encourage students to utilize the target language (L2) by providing support and guidance. Another drawback of L1 use is the potential loss of classroom control felt by some teachers. Chiriac and Frykedal (2011, p. 4, cited in Gillies and Boyle, 2010) observe that many educators are hesitant to implement pair work due to feeling overwhelmed. The collaborative nature of pair work can create challenges in classroom management, particularly for teachers lacking experience in effectively organizing such activities. Negative past experiences with pair work may also contribute to teachers' reluctance to utilize this teaching approach.

6. Methodology and Research Design

6.1. Introduction

The target of this study is to discover the advantages and disadvantages of pair work and how it impacts student performance. To accomplish this goal, interview and questionnaire tools are used in this study.

6.2. Research Questions

1. What are the students' attitudes towards pair work activity?
2. What is the impact of pair work on Kurdish students' English language learning process?
3. What are the teachers' views on using pair work in the classrooms?

6.3. Research Design

In this study, the questionnaire is implemented as a tool for collecting data.

6.3.1. Questionnaire

In this study, a questionnaire is used to gather information on student's attitudes towards pair work and reflections on the advantages and disadvantages of pair work during class activities. A questionnaire is a tool used to collect information or to collect data from a group of participants. The disadvantage of using a questionnaire is that respondents are often reluctant or unable to respond to the questionnaire. (Girden, 1996, p. 61). For example, Gillham (2000 p. 10) asserts that: "Respondents to the questionnaire are not always able to respond to questions that are unclear or ambiguous." Besides, Dunnne (1995, p. 13) believes that: "The Use of questionnaires is especially beneficial when you need precise answers to questions that are generally straightforward."

The 5-point Likert is used in all sections of the questionnaire (Appendix 1). The items on the scale are rated on a scale of 1 meaning 'very strongly disagree', and 5 meaning 'very agree'. The same amount of positive and negative positions was taken into account to distinguish the individual views from point to point. However, if the scale had been more than 5 point scales for this study, there would have been little meaningful differences in the responses from each successive category on the scale according to Richardson, Goodwin, and Vine (2011, p. 44-45), on the other hand, participants would not have been able to express their opinions if the scale had been less than five points, forcing them to be "biased." The study's "closed questions" were included to streamline and expedite the questionnaire's creation process. Still, compared to open questions, the questionnaires typically take longer to develop. In contrast to

factual inquiries, "scaled" questions "generally used to elicit opinion" (McDonough, 1997, p. No. 176).

1.3.2. The Subjects

The questionnaire is distributed in paper-and pen format, included 47 students (19 males and 28 females). Participants in the questionnaire ranged from 21-25 to 30-50 years old. The majority of participants were undergraduate students. Some of the participants had Diploma degrees at different levels in the English Department/College of Basic Education-Evening/Salahaddin University-Erbil. The objective of the study is to evaluate the impact of pair work in classroom activities.

1.3.3. Piloting the Questionnaire

It is used to check whether the questions are understandable. The piloting test was conducted in five students were participated in the test before distributing it to see if it works as expected. The following questions were asked: Are the instructions straightforward and easy to understand? Are the questions clear? Can respondents answer all or some of the questions? Do respondents have any comments/proposals that would help improve the effectiveness of the questionnaire? Do students have any notes about the questionnaire? The researcher modified the questionnaire by providing clear written instructions, changing difficult-to-read questions, providing clear instructions, deleting many repeat questions, and modifying the questions. Consequently, the study used this modified version.

1.4. Procedure

The students were provided with questionnaire by the researcher. Prior to that, the researcher divided the students into three groups. Students were informed that the survey is unidentified and that participation is completely voluntary. In addition, students were told that they can withdraw from the survey at any time. The Researcher collected 50 questionnaire forms by the deadline. Three of the forms were rejected because they were incomplete.

2. Data Analysis

The data was examined using the following classifications after the questionnaire responses were gathered:

7.1. Students' Evaluation on the Students' Speaking Ability

As depicted in Figure one, the students who participated in the questionnaire have different levels of English-speaking ability.

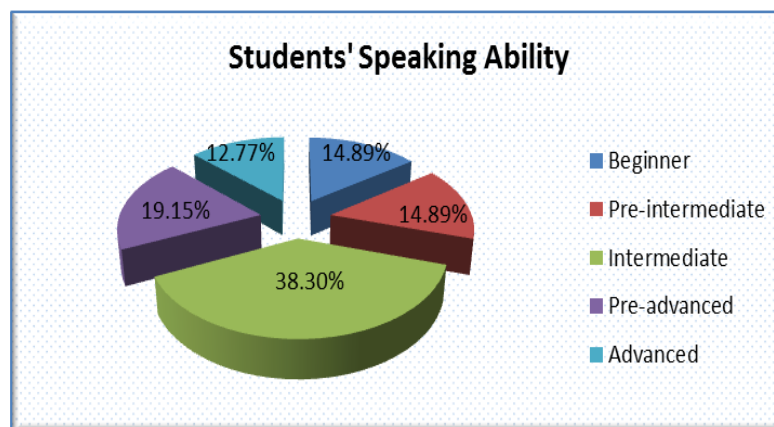


Figure 1: Students' level of education

7.2. Students' Thought on the Opportunities to Practice Activities

As one can see in Fig. 2, during English classes, students are encouraged to engage in activities.

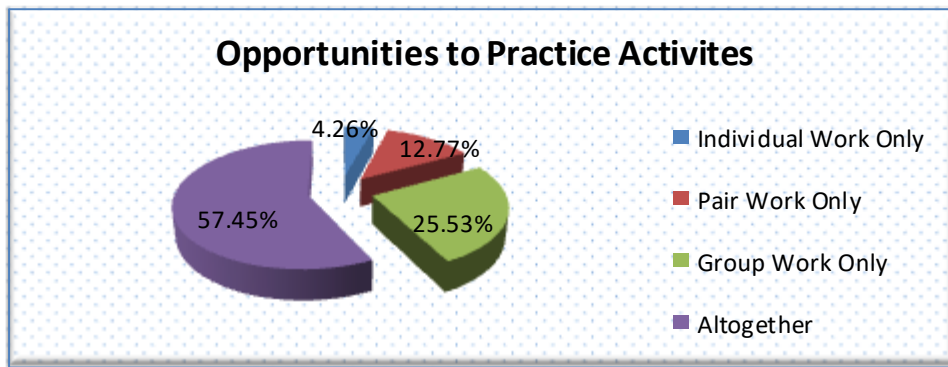


Figure 2: opportunities for practice

7.3. Students' View on the Students' Preference for Classroom Activities

Figure 3 shows that 38% of all participants agree to work in pairs in the English class activities while only 13% of students would like to work individually in the speaking activities.

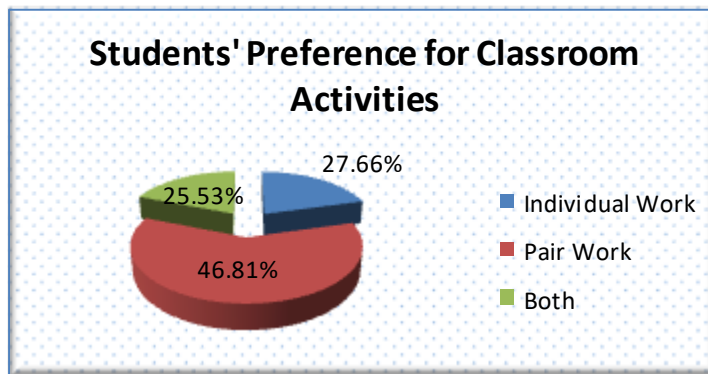


Figure 3: Students' Preference for Classroom Activities

7.4. Students' Reflection on the Working Pairs

As shown in Figure. 4, participants had different opinions on the impact of working in pairs. For example, 43.55% of participants agreed that they have better opportunities when speaking to their colleagues. However, 10.64% of participants disagreed to statement number 1. In addition, 40.43% of participants agreed with statement 2 "increased confidence when working in pairs". Only 6.38% of participants disagreed to statement number 2. However, 36.17% of participants strongly agreed to statement number 3 "preferring to collaborate in pairs instead of in teams" whereas only 8.51% of participants strongly disagreed to statement number 3.

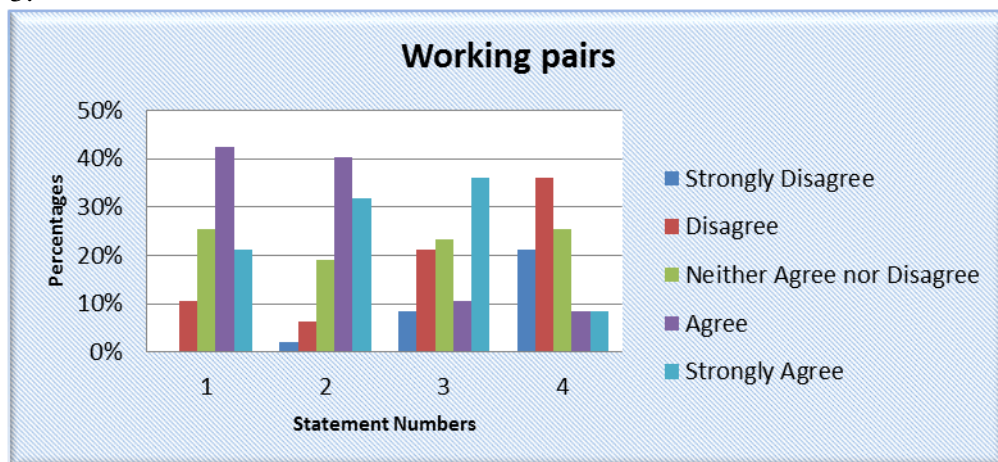


Figure 4: The Percentages of Working pairs

7.5. Students' Attitudes towards the Impact of Pair Work on Students' Comfortableness

As shown in Figure 5, participants agreed that students feel at ease in pairs with students at different skill levels, which impacts on both how they communicated and performed in activities. Regarding statement number 1:- The data found that 23.4% of all participants strongly agreed. Students feel comfortable when working with higher level students in pair works. And just 6.38% of participants strongly disagreed with the statement number 1. 36.17% of all students agreed that working pairs with the same level of students makes them perform better in speaking activities. Responses to statement number 2 had only 12.77% of students disagreeing. However, 27.66% of all students strongly disagreed with the statement that students do not like working with a lower-level student in pair work. While 17.02% strongly agreed to that statement number.

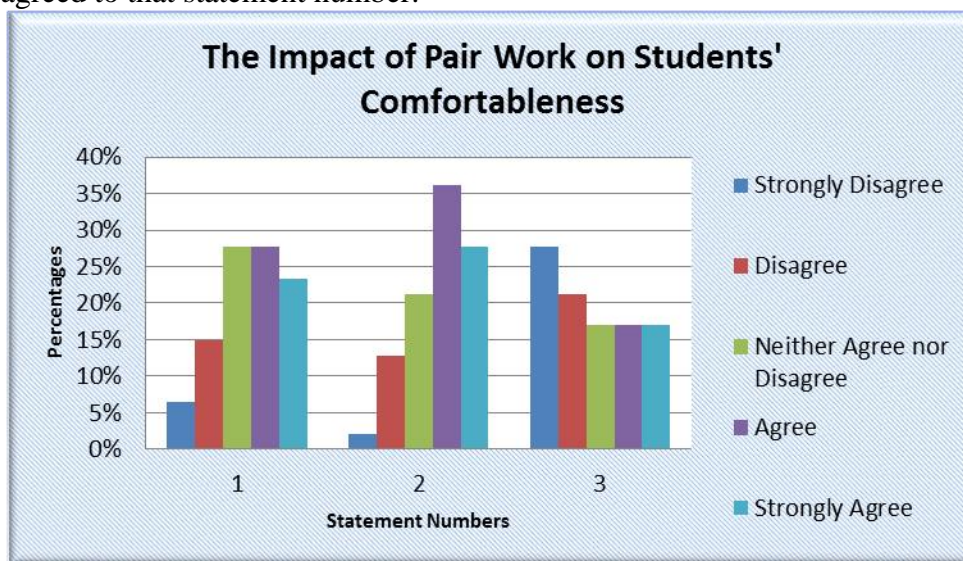


Figure 5: The Percentages of the Impact of Pair Work on Students' Comfortableness

7.6. The Students' Perspective about the Language Production during Different Pair Work Strategies

As shown in Figure 6, all answers were unique and respondents reported favourable response on language production in working pairs during classroom activities. Thus, only 29.79% of participants agreed with "when students work with a lower-level student their language production improves during pair work". Nonetheless, only 21.28% of participants disagreed of statement number 1. Moreover, 31.91% of all the participants strongly agreed in relation to statement number 2, "students' language production improves when they talk with a student at a similar level", while not a single participant strongly disagreed with this statement. However, the most interesting point is that 21.28% of all students strongly agreed with the last statement that "language production improves when students speak to a higher-level student" while none of the participants strongly disagreed with it. From this point of view, students were able to identify when their language performance improved during pair work.

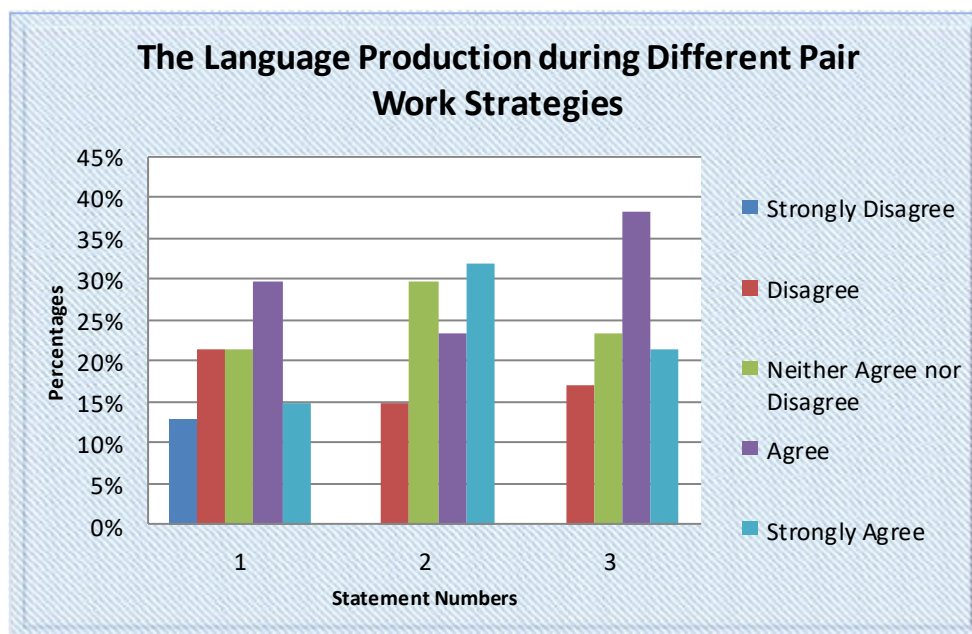


Figure 6: The Percentages of the Language Production during Different Pair Work Strategies

8. Interview

In the second part of the study, a semi-formatted interview tool was used. The semi-formatted tool was chosen because it provided a broader range of information on teachers' attitudes towards working pairs during activities. The questions were more general and left the door open for interviewees to state their point of view in writing (Carruthers, 1990, p.65). Carruthers concluded that the objective method, not the questionnaire, "was the means by which the interviewees' opinions and reasons for those opinions could be understood." In many ways, "an interview" is "flexible and more personal" (Brown, 2001, p. 76). An interviewer can ask for more information in order to get an answer to a question, change the interview schedule when it is not working, and explain or rephrase directions. The interview process can be "complex" due to variations or similarities in the interview, and there may be "bias" (i.e., race, gender, age, socio-economic background, relative education) between interviewer and interviewee.

In addition, the interviewer conducted an informal pilot interview on one teacher. After that, some changes were made in the interview questions to make them easier to understand. For example, the researcher asked; how teachers make differences between pair work and group work? Then the researcher replaced it by how do they use pair work in their speaking classes? Another change in the interview question was that the researcher added a question about pairing strategy for mixing student's ability in the classrooms. The questions were sent to interviewees in advance to provide them with an idea of what the researcher intends to ask. Informants were provided with a consent form prior to the start of the interviews. They were given the opportunity to read the study objectives and were made aware that the interviews would be recorded. All interviewees were made aware that their names and the audio recordings would be kept private, and their participation was entirely optional. Following the completion of the consent form, they were also informed of their right to withdraw at any time and for any cause (see Appendix 2).

The interviewees were 6 English language lecturers at the Salahaddin University. They were all between 35 and 48 years of age, with post-graduate qualifications. The duration of their teaching experience ranged between 10 and 25 years. Each teacher was interviewed in a formal environment. The interviewer tried to make the interviewees feel comfortable by allowing them to break away from the main topics to allow them to think for themselves.

8.1.Data Analysis

The researcher then transcribed all of the interview's questions and responses from the recorder who then sent the transcript back to the teachers for review and to see if any views were changed or removed for ethical reasons. The researcher then summarized all the statements that answered the question posed by. The researcher then sorted the responses according to the types of responses. The researcher also sought to understand the teachers' views on working pairs. The interviewees were coded using LL1-7 symbols to avoid being identified from the analysis.

8.1.1. Whether or Not Use Pair Work in Speaking Classes?

During the interviews, the above-mentioned question was asked and all the teachers responded 'Yes, pair work can be used during classroom activities'.

8.1.2. Is Pair Work an Effective Strategy in Language Learning?

Here, nearly all the teachers agreed that pair work is an effective approach to language learning. Only one participant partially disagreed with the others stating that it does not always work.

8.1.3. What are the Challenges of Using Group Work or Pair Work?

All the interviewees agree on these challenges of pair work. Different levels of student engagement in the activity. Effective classroom management needs to achieve productive outcomes. Students make a lot of noise. It is difficult to observe each student while working. It cannot be made sure which language they speak (Kurdish language or English language). Some students do not like to work together. It is even challenging for lecturers to assess them fairly and individually.

8.1.4. How do the Lecturers Arrange Students for Speaking Activities?

When it comes to speaking activities, all participants pair their students based on their learning goals and the type of activity. Sometimes, they use random pairing to get students to engage with different classmates. Other times, they pair students based on their language skills or their individual needs to create a more balanced pair, learning style, and personality.

8.1.5. For language Production, which Pairing Strategy will be Preferred? And why?

All the interviewees have a similar idea to use mixed-ability pairs for language production. This strategy promotes peer learning as students support and learn from one another. This is to avoid making the tasks too simple or too complex, to collaborate and share knowledge and ideas with one another.

8.1.6. Why do you choose a High-Low or low-High Pairing Strategy? What are the Reasons for Choosing High-Low or Low-High for Language Production?

According to the interviews, using the high-low pairing strategy is preferred. Pairing a higher proficiency student with a lower proficiency student can create a supportive learning environment. The higher proficiency student can serve as a model and provide guidance, while the lower proficiency student can benefit from the language input and support.

8.1.7. What are the Advantages and Disadvantages of the Same Level and Mixed Ability Strategies when it comes to Language Production?

In the interviews, all the teachers agreed that students tend to say that the "same level" is not as effective as the "mixed strategy" because students with varying skill sets can learn from one another. And, the learning experience will be better and higher. Additionally, the advantages of same-level pairing strategy in language production include enhanced fluency development, as students can engage in more challenging conversations at their proficiency level. It also promotes a sense of camaraderie and shared experiences among peers. However, it may limit exposure to different language styles and hinder the development of negotiation and communication skills. On the other hand, challenges may arise in terms of communication difficulties and potential frustration for both higher and lower proficiency students. Teachers need to provide appropriate support and guidance to ensure effective language production in mixed ability pairs.

9. Findings and Discussion

Having understood the perceptions of students about the activities of learning a foreign language is significantly important. Based on the results and data findings of this study, most students agree that working in pairs gives them more chances to enhance their ability to speak and it really helps them to be more fluent in speaking. Students were very keen to join the pair work as activities vary from those in the regular classroom and are done differently at each meeting. This outcome supports Long and Porter's (1985) and Maher's (2012) view that pair work allows students to talk more in the classroom and gives them more control over the learning process. Students in pair work also encourage each other to talk about the specific topics and topics which were emphasized in the interviews, when one of the lecturers said *usually assign them tasks to be done in pair, such as recording an interview video with each other and tasks to be done in pair, such as in-class debate, or group discussion*. For speaking activities, all agreed that arranging students in various ways depending on the learning objectives and the nature of the task. Sometimes, using random pairing is to encourage students to interact with different classmates. Other times, they consider students' language proficiency levels or their specific needs to create more balanced pairs.

For language production, almost all the teachers preferred a combination of pair work and small group discussions. For instance, pair work allows for focused and intensive practice, while small group discussions provide opportunities for more diverse perspectives and collaborative learning. This combination ensures a balance between individual practice and interactive language use. According to Yule and Macdonald (1990), pairs with a dominant high proficiency member engage in less interaction than those with a non-dominant high proficiency member.

In addition, students' attitudes were positive towards mixed-levels. Many students reported improved English performance after being mixed and felt more confident when performing in front of pairs. Students with varying levels of ability can learn much from each other. The learning experience will also be improved and increased. This aligns with Filatove (2015), who argues that that student ought to blend high and low levels in the classrooms and vice versa. Similarly, this aligns with Harmer's (2001), who argues that the support given by higher-level students to lower-level students during pair work motivates them to interact and engage with each other. As a result, the interviewees share the same view with the students when choosing a mixed ability pair. This allows mutual benefit, where a higher-level student can help a lower-level student and create a supportive learning dynamic.

As shown in the interview, while there are benefits of using pair work, there can also be challenges. In pair activities, there may be imbalances in participation, with some students dominating the conversation while others remain passive. Teachers need to monitor and ensure equal participation among all students. Another challenge could be language proficiency differences: - In mixed ability pairs, students with different language proficiency levels may face challenges in communication. Higher proficiency students may feel frustrated, while lower proficiency students may struggle to keep up. It may be due to having difficulties in the activities for lower-level students and vice versa it may be too easy for higher level students. Teachers need to provide support and scaffolding to address these differences. The other challenge is social dynamics: Pair work can also be influenced by social dynamics, such as conflicts or lack of collaboration. Teachers need to create a positive and inclusive classroom environment to mitigate these challenges. However, Hill (2004) found different results when demonstrating that pairing results in classroom noise, which has a negative impact on students' ability to learn. Similarly, (Hill, 2004; and Skrzynski, 2005) also found that students may switch the activity to the first language, especially when they are speaking the same language. As one of the respondents to the interview said that *it cannot be made sure what language they use in their conversations*.

Generally, the results of the questionnaire and interviews indicated that the students were highly interested in English, that they responded favorably to the idea that working in pairs improved their performance, and that there is a strong correlation between student motivation and the learning environment.

Limitations and Future Study

Although, this study proposed several advantages and found out some important aspects in pair work activities, there are still limitations within this study. One of the limitations is the number of participants was restricted to conduct this study due to the time constraints. Another limitation faces pair work is to teach speaking skill in a large class that it is difficult to arrange students to pair during class activities. Furthermore, the participants were chosen in only one college, and with diverse locations, the findings could have varied. Moreover, one student may speak more than the other while the other listens during pair work, leading to an uneven distribution of speaking time. Due to these limitations, it is suggested that more similar study is needed to be conducted to find out better results. It is recommended that pairing strategy should be more studied to know whether the pair should be mixed the high-, medium-, and low-level students or be separated. Another future study is to observe the classrooms when students pair during the activities to enhance its effectiveness in improving student learning outcomes. Moreover, future research could address the impact of group work specifically. As group work provides the environment for English language students to engage in social interactions and build relationships.

Conclusion

The primary goal of this study was to evaluate and analyze the benefits and drawbacks of pair work, as well as to highlight the significance of working in pairs to determine whether or not these activities help students meet their learning objectives. According to the study, the majority of the interviewee does not think that pair works increase students' subject knowledge. This could be inspiring students to advance their academic skills and knowledge. However, pair work has better learning objectives than individual work and whole class instruction. It is therefore advised that students would rather work in pairs with their closest friends. Nevertheless, it is helpful to switch up the students' pairs so they can learn from one another's experiences and help more advanced students. On the other hand, it is preferable for educators to let students collaborate with classmates on their own terms. It is also preferable for educators not to take on the role of "controller" in the classroom. The majority of students want more chances to communicate in their target language during class, and they also want teachers to get involved in their pairs activities without taking charge.

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*Appendix I: Questionnaire Sample***Informed consent form****“Exploring the Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Pair Work in the Foreign Language Learning Classrooms at Salahaddin University-Erbil”**

In this article, I'm asking the students to fill in this Attitude Survey. It's about the pros and cons of using pair works and how it impacts student's performance. I'd appreciate it if you could fill out this questionnaire for my article. It's called: Exploring the Pros and Cons of Using Pair Work in the Second Language Learning Classroom at Salahaddin University. I want to know your thoughts on this topic. There's no right response as this is not a multi-question test. I just want to know what you think. I will use this survey as part of my academic studies. If you have any comment, Please enter your answer after the scale in the space provided.

Do I have to take part?

Your participation is voluntary. You are under no obligation to continue with the study after you leave.

Benefits: By giving people a better understanding of the history and culture of our region, it is hoped that the study's findings will benefit the community.

Who will be aware that I took part in this research study?

All responses to the anonymous questionnaire will be kept strictly confidential. The records will only be accessible to me.

What risks are associated with this study?

There are none that are anticipated when taking part in this research. Participants are free to leave the study at any time if they feel uncomfortable doing so.

I am aware that participation is completely voluntary and that I can stop at any time, for any reason.

I consent to participate in the research mentioned above.

To get in touch with the researcher with any queries or worries regarding this study, please get in touch.: [Qani Nasih Najim]

Mobile No.: (009647504256873),

Email:qani.najim@su.edu.krd

Guidelines:

1. Take time to carefully read each statement.
2. In the column where your perspective aligns the most, place a √.

A- Kindly respond to the following inquiries:

1. Age? Years old.
2. Gender? Male
 Female

3. How do you assess your proficiency in speaking English?

a. Beginner b. Pre-intermediate c. Intermediate d. Pre-advanced e. Advanced

4. In English classrooms, students are given chances to practice.....

a. Individual work only b. Pair work only c. Group work only d. All

5. How would you like to participate in the activities during the English lessons?

a. Individual work b. Pair works

B. Please indicate what your attitude

Strongly	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly
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would be toward Pair works:	Disagree		agree nor disagree		Agree
1. My learning opportunities will be enhanced when I speak to a colleague.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Speaking to a colleague in the classrooms increases my confidence.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I prefer working in pairs rather than in groups.	1	2	3	4	5
4. While listening to a colleague speaking English, I easily get bored.	1	2	3	4	5

C. Please indicate what your attitude would be toward The Impact of Different Pair Work Approaches on Students' Comfort Level:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. When working in pairs, I feel more comfortable to be paired up with students at a higher-level.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I perform better when I work with students who are at a same-level during speaking.	1	2	3	4	5
3. When it comes to pair work, I enjoy working with a lower-level student.	1	2	3	4	5

D. Please indicate what your attitude would be toward The Language Production during different Pair work Strategies:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. During pair work, my language production is better, if my partner is a lower-level student.	1	2	3	4	5
2. During pair work, my language production is better when I speak with a student at the same level.	1	2	3	4	5
3. During pair work, my language production is better when I talk to a higher-level student.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix II: Interview Sample

Lecturers' semi-constructed interview

Esteemed colleagues,

I really value your participation in this interview. This is aimed at doing an article entitled Exploring the benefits and drawbacks of implementing pair and group work in the second language learning classes at Salahaddin University.

First Section: the use of pair work in the classrooms:

1. Do you use pair work in speaking classes?
2. Do you think that pair work is an effective strategy in language learning?

3. What are the challenges of using pair work?

Second Section: A number of pairing strategies in terms of students' production:

4. How are speaking activities with your students organized?

5. What is the best pairing strategy for language production? And what are the reasons?

6. Why do you choose a High-Low or low-High pairing strategy? What are the reasons for choosing High-Low or Low-High for language production?

7. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the same level and mixed ability strategies when it comes to language production?

ليكوئينهوه له سوود و زيانه كاني به كارهيتاني بهيهكهوه گفتوگو كردن له پوله كاني فيربووني زماني بياني له زانكوئي سهلاحه دين-ههولير

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پوخته

ئهم تويزينهوه به ليكوئينهوه له لايه نه باش و خراپه كاني به كارهيتاني كاري بهيهكهوه به دهكات له وانه كاني فيربووني زماني بياني له زانكوئي سهلاحه دين. ئامانجي تويزينهوه كه دياريكردني كاريگهري بهيهكهوه كار كردنه له سهه راره زوووه كاني قوتايان و گوپيني هه لوئسته كانيان به رامبهه راريگهريه كاني به كارهيتاني بهيهكهوه كار كردن له چالاكييه كاندا. بو سالي خوئندي 2023-2024، كومه ليك پرسيار دروستكرا و 47 خوئندكار به شدارييان ئيدا كرد له به شي زماني ئينكليزي له زانكوئي سهلاحه دين- كوئيزي پهروه رده ي بتههوتي ههولير. پرسيارنامه و چاوييكيه وتي تومار كراوي دهنگي به كارهيترا بو كوئندهوه ي داتا. دواي شيكردنهوه ي وه لاهه كاني ليكوئينهوه كه، ده ركهوت كه هه لوئستي خوئندكاران باشتر بووه و زياتر نه ريني بوون ده رباره ي چالاكييه كاني كار و زور گرنگيان پندههدين. له گه ل ئه وه شدا، ته ركيزي سهههكي ئهم تويزينهوه به له سهه ر لايه نه باشه كان و ئامانجه كاني جووته كاني كار كردنه، ههروهه ئه و ئاسته نكانه ي كه قوتايان پوو به پرووي ده بنه وه له كاتي ئه نجامداني چالاكييه كاني كار كردني جووت. له ئه نجامي ئهم ليكوئينهوه به ده، ده تواني ئه و ئه نجامه به ده ست به نيتر ئه كه خوئندكاره كان هه ست به ئاسووده ي ده كه ن به به كارهيتاني ئيكه له بهك له كاري جووت له گه ل گفتوگوئي گروبي بچووك بو به رهه مه يتاني زمان. بو به تويزينهوه كه ده ريخستوه كه كار كردني جووت كات و ده رفه تي زياتر ده دات به فيرخوازه كان بو به كارهيتاني زماني خويان و قسه كردن و هاو به شكردني بير و بيرو كه كانيان. ههروهه ها فيرخوازه متمانه ي زياتر به فيربووني زمانه كه ي هه به و ده تواني ئه ركه كاني خو ي به ر ئه به بات.

وشه سه ره كيه كان: كاري جووت- كاري گروبي- وانه كاني ته واوي پول- پول نهرتي- كاري تاكه كه سي.

استكشاف مزايا و عيوب استخدام العمل الثنائي في فصول تعلم اللغات الأجنبية في جامعة صلاح الدين - أربيل

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ملخص

تبحث هذه الورقة في إيجابيات وسلبيات استخدام العمل الثنائي في فصول تعلم اللغات الأجنبية في جامعة صلاح الدين. الهدف من البحث هو تحديد تأثير العمل في أزواج على تفضيلات الطلاب وتعديل اتجاهاتهم نحو آثار استخدام الأزواج في الأنشطة. للعام الدراسي 2023-2024، تم عمل مجموعة من الاستبيانات وشارك فيها 47 طالبا في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية في كلية التربية الأساسية بجامعة صلاح الدين - أربيل. واستخدمت الاستبيانات والمقابلات المسجلة صوتيا لجمع البيانات. بعد تحليل إجابات الاستطلاع، وجد أن مواقف الطلاب قد تحسنت وكانوا أكثر إيجابية بشأن أنشطة العمل الزوجية وكانوا مهتمين جدا بها. ومع ذلك، ينصب التركيز الرئيسي لهذه الورقة على إيجابيات وسلبيات وأهداف أزواج العمل، بالإضافة إلى التحديات التي يواجهها الطلاب عند أداء أنشطة العمل الزوجي. نتيجة لهذه الدراسة، يمكن استنتاج أن الطلاب يشعرون بالراحة باستخدام مزيج من العمل الزوجي مع مناقشات جماعية صغيرة لإنتاج اللغة. لذلك، وجدت الدراسة أن العمل الثنائي يمنح المتعلمين الفرديين مزيدا من الوقت والفرصة لاستخدام لغتهم الخاصة والتحدث ومشاركة أفكارهم وأفكارهم. أيضا، يصبح المتعلم أكثر ثقة في تعلم لغته ويكون قادرا على إدارة مهامه.

الكلمات المفتاحية: العمل الثنائي، العمل الجماعي، دروس الفصل بأكمله، الفصل التقليدي، العمل الفردي.