STUDENTS’ OPINION ON THE USE OF GROUP WORK IN INTERPERSONAL SPEAKING CLASS: A STUDY AT THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAM OF SATYA WACANA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

THESIS
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of The Requirements for the Degree of
Sarjana Pendidikan

Theodora Dyah Phitaloka
112010076

ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAM
FACULTY OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
SATYA WACANA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
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2015
Saya yang bertanda tangan di bawah ini:

Nama: THEODORA DYAH PHITALOKA
NIM: 112010076
Fakultas: Bahasa dan Sastera
Judul tugas akhir: STUDENTS' OPINION ON THE USE OF GROUP WORK IN INTERPERSONAL SPEAKING CLASS: A STUDY AT THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAM OF SATYA WACANA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
Pembimbing: 1. Debora Tri Ragawati, MA ELT.
2. Martha Nandari, MA.

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Saya yang bertanda tangan di bawah ini:

Nama: THEODORA DYAH PHITALOKA
NIM: 112010076
Email: 112010076@student.uksw.edu
Fakultas: Bahasa dan Sastra
Program Studi: Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris
Jadwal tugas akhir: STUDENTS' OPINION ON THE USE OF GROUP WORK IN INTERPERSONAL SPEAKING CLASS: A STUDY AT THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAM OF SATYA WACANA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

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[Signature]
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Theodora Dyah Phitaloka
112010076

Approved by:

Debora Tri Ragawanti, M A ELL
Supervisor

Martha Nandari, M. A
Examiner
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Supervisor

[Signature]
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Students’ Opinion on the Use of Group Work
In Interpersonal Speaking Class: A Study at The English Department
Of SatyaWacana Christian University

Abstract

The purpose of this present study was to find out what type of group work the students prefer most and the students’ opinion on the use of group work in Interpersonal Speaking class. The participants of this research were 17 students of English Language and Literature Faculty at SatyaWacana Christian University who were taking Interpersonal Speaking course in the first semester of 2015. The researcher collected data from the questionnaire. Through this instrument of data collection, the result of the study shows that most students in the class prefer Pairs Check and Think-pair-share type. They choose those types because of the simple type and multi-purpose media. In addition, the finding also indicates that the students perceive some benefits from group work in the term of engaging the students to speak a lot, helping the students to speak fluently in front of public, providing enjoyment and fun activities in students’ learning process, providing an easier learning through helping each other and working together and giving an opportunity for the students to share opinions and difficulties. However, the students opine that group work consumes too much time, makes noise, and gives less opportunity for them to ask the teacher.

Keywords: group work, types of group work, cooperative learning, advantages of group work, disadvantages of group work, students’ opinion
INTRODUCTION

Teachers have an important role for their students in gaining knowledge and improving their skills. In order to reach the goals, they should have a certain technique for active learning. In EFL classroom, most teachers are accustomed to applying group work technique as a cooperative learning in teaching especially in task and discussion activities. According to Anita Lie (2000), cooperative learning is a learning system that gives opportunity for students to work together in the structured tasks. The teachers usually ask the students to work in groups or pairs, give some questions, and let them share their opinion or discussion to the class. They believe that such group activities will promote some benefits for the students to improve their ability in academic and social context.

Over the past several years, group work tasks have been applied into classrooms in various cooperative learning classes. One of the examples is the most famous educator, Spencer Kagan, who has about 200 structures of small group techniques such as Timed-pair-share, Folded value line, Corners, Team statements, Blackboard share, Draw a gambit, and Paraphrase passport, Rally robin, etc. (Nakagawa, 2004). Those techniques have emerged as an important instructional practice in the field of L2 education. Many researchers have claimed that group work is beneficial to L2 learners by offering many and diverse opportunities of interacting directly with the target language (e.g., Doughty & Pica, 1984; Long, Adams, McLean, & Castafios, 1976; Pica & Doughty, 1985; Taylor, 1987).
In 1985, Long and Porter (1985) conducted a study and found that students engage in more negotiations for meaning in the small group than in teacher-centered, whole-class settings. This study indicates that group work improves the quality of student talk by increasing language practice opportunities. A study by Bejarano (1987) further supports the positive effects of small group cooperative techniques on students’ English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. After comparing 665 seventh-grade students’ academic achievement in English between the group work techniques and the whole-class method, he concluded that students in small groups make significantly greater improvement than those using the whole-class method on the test and on the listening comprehension scale. These findings show that the communicative approach involved in group work can facilitate second language learning.

In order to mention some other good effects of group work, Sugino (1994) also conducted a study with six Japanese learners of English and found that group work enhances their language use. The results of his study show that students would produce more words and communication units in content-focused task than in form-focused task. In another aspect, Sanchez (1982) in his study showed that group work can actually increase the students’ motivation and lessen the errors which may happen in group work process. He explained that his students in the class compete and correct each other to be the best group.

Many researchers have also addressed Asian students’ attitudes towards or behaviors in group work and the results are various. Through interviews, Li and Campbell (2008) found that Asian students show positive attitudes towards group
discussions where they could interact with students from different cultural background, improve their English language skills, and promote their cultural understanding. In a brief conclusion, Joyce and Calhoun (2009) stated that this cooperative strategy can be used to solve the social and academic problems.

Besides the positive effects of group work activities, the other researchers, Howell, Elizabeth, Montuschi, and Olivia (2002) found some disadvantages of group work through their study. They mentioned that,

There is limited attention to individual members who may be in great need and time to spend developing a trusting relationship with the worker, inhibited members may not feel able to participate fully (the passive and dominant), and also it is a long activity to do. (p. 5)

Vincens (1995) also mentioned some demerits of groupwork i.e. sometimes, it may happen that the group members do not know the instruction or what they should do, do not want to make eye contacts with each other, and do not want to listen to each other. Furthermore, Green, Christopher, and Lam (1997) described that problems in group activity usually caused by the silent participant are easily known than those who created by “socially skilled and overly assertive group members” (p.138). If the heterogeneous groups are formed, the introverted personalities may feel crushed by the more expressive participants, and lose the little confidence in speaking, while the confident ones might feel that no satisfactory progress is being made, and so become bored and discouraged.

The last disadvantage of group work can be seen from the study conducted by Wong (2004) with 78 first year to four year Asian international undergraduate
students. He noted that Asian students prefer to work individually so that they can manage their own time and “have full control of the final product” (p.162).

Due to the potential of group work to facilitate and hinder students’ learning process and therefore, it is interesting to find out how the students of the English Language Education Program at Satya Wacana Christian University view the use of group work in their classroom context. This study aimed at finding students’ perceptions on the use of educational group work activity at Interpersonal Speaking class. For that purpose, this study will answer the following questions:

1. Which type of group work do the students prefer most?

2. What are the students’ perceptions on how group work hinders or facilitates the students’ learning process?

Later on, the writer hopes that this study will bring some benefits for the reader especially teachers in helping them to make a decision of which suitable and interesting type of group work will be taught.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

This section presents the definition, types, and the strength and weakness of group work.

**Definition of Group Work**
Since the concept of group work is fundamental to this study, it is necessary to briefly summarize the term of it. In this part, there are many researchers who define what group work is. First of all, we need to know what a group is. Forsyth (2006) in his article described a group as people who work together and are linked by the collaborative tasks that they must complete together, but in many cases they also become connected through a network of friendships and contradictions. Even, the people who are standing in a queue in a checkout counter are a group as they are briefly connected in a situation that demands cooperation, communication, and patience. In all of these examples, the members are linked together in a network of interpersonal relationships and Forsyth finally defined a group as two or more individuals who are connected to one another by social relationship.

After knowing the idea of what a group is, the definitions of group work are presented. According to Ferguson and Dianne (1999), “groupwork is a form of collective work where educators come together to share ideas, strategies, even possible solutions” (P. 6). Bhatia and Solanki (2012) added that group work is used to be defined as ‘pupils who working together as a group or a team’ or just ‘students working together in small groups’ (P. 2).

In 1990, Adams and Hamm, the generative linguist, proposed the similar idea that group work is a form of cooperative learning means that several people work together to finish a certain task or achieve a certain learning goal. The next definition is from Konopka (1963) as cited in Harte (2001) who defined groupwork as a method of social work that is used in order to “help individuals to
enhance their social functioning through purposeful group experiences and to cope more effectively with their personal, group or community problems” (p. 2).

Another definition is proposed by Brown (1994; Quoted from Harte, 2001, p. 2). He provided more comprehensive definition of group work that “groupwork provides a context in which individuals help each other and is a method of helping groups as well as helping individuals”.

The other researchers like Newsteter, Douglas, and Vidal also take a part on giving a definition of group work. Newstetter (1935) defined group work as an educational process emphasizing on the development and social adjustment of an individual through voluntary group association and the use of it as a means of modernize other socially desirable ends. Moreover, Vidal (2004) added the simple term of group work as “a spirit of communication, cooperation, coordination and commonly understood procedures” (p. 2). Finally, the last researcher is Douglas (2000) who stated in his book that “group work is what groups do and the work that specific individuals perform with group of people in, for instance, the creation of groups and as leaders, members, conveners and enablers, etc” (preface, xiv).

Types of group work

According to Eggen and Kauchack (2012), there are four types of group work that can be used for teaching. They are:

*Think-pair-share*
According to Jacobs, Lee, and Ball (1995) and Kagan (1994), this group work type demands each of the students to think of the teacher’s questions and work alone by using some sources. Then, they pair and discuss their ideas toward the questions with their partner. After they get some answers, the teacher will ask them to share their thought about the answers of the question to the class. This strategy is effectively used in whole groups which are leaded by the teacher because it can stimulate the response from the students in the class and lettered them in the active roles cognitively. It also can reduce the self-dependence from the student that makes a problem in group work because it needs all members role. Moreover, this strategy is easy to be applied and planned. However, the students will not get a lot of information from this strategy because it is possible for others to be quiet or do not want to share their ideas and depend on the dominant one.

**Pairs check**

Kagan (1994) stated that this kind of group work demands an active role from the students to focus on the problems with the convergent answers. In here, the students are asked to work in a group of four which consist of two pairs. In each pair, one student will solve the problem while the other is coaching and then, they reverse the role. After that in every two problems, the pair has to check if they have the same answer as the other pair or not. This strategy is suitable for the students to learn how to evaluate other students because it gives some opportunities for them to practice to be accustomed to the problem. It also lets them compare the similarities and differences, understanding and explanation that
they hear from others. Anyway, this strategy may make them not really avoid the wrong answer because they only work in pairs.

**Combining pairs**

Kagan (1994) mentioned that this strategy of group activity uses learning pairs as a core of instruction unit. In this strategy, the teacher will ask one pair to share their answer to the other pairs. In here, the teacher asked the students to work in a group of two. Each group has to discuss the same problem. After that, the teacher will ask them to share their thoughts to another group and it means that there will be a new group which consists of four persons (work with different group). The member of the new group has to share their ideas toward the problem from the group before they gather in a new group. This strategy can be used in whole activities and task. The students will actively participate with their pairs and help them to improve their social skills in the bigger group. It can improve the students’ speaking skills and make them able to communicate in organized and coherent way. Besides those advantages, the students will also get some disadvantages such as there will be a dependent student who does not really participate in the group because he or she tends to listen to the most talkative student in the group and dominant student who always talk or share ideas.

**Teammates consult**

This type demands consultation between group members before the students decide the problem solving. In here, according to Kagan (1994), this strategy consists of four students in a group who are given the task from the
teacher to be solved. In each group, all members have to share their answer and then deal with only one answer chosen. After all of them agree with one answer, they have to answer the question by their own word. This strategy makes the students accustomed to seeing clarification and comparing with their own observation. It also prevents the student who is dominant to be the first person who offers the first solution. There is no dominant student, but then, it needs a long time to do because besides combining the groups, it also unites the best solution for the problem from other group members. There will also be misunderstanding in matching the answer and the best solution from the dominant student because his or her idea will be accepted by others.

**Advantages of group work**

There are some advantages of group work proposed by some researchers. Harmer (2007) stated that groupwork is increasing the amount of talking for individual students. This is because of the tasks in groupwork demand the students to speak up. It also encourages broader skills of cooperation and negotiation. In here, the students are prepared to evaluate each other’s performance both positively and negatively. Furthermore, Harmer also mentioned that groupwork promotes learner autonomy by allowing students to make their own decisions in the group without being told what to do by the teacher.

Long and Richards (1987) give statement in their book that “group work activities require patience and good listening patterns from the students. “They require attention sharing, turn-talking, and fair interruptions” (p.203). From this
statement, group work trains the students to be a patient, good listener, and good feedback giver.

A researcher, Murmanto (2007, p. 71) asserted that groupwork gives some positive effects for the students. He mentioned that groupwork can form the students into a responsible individual towards their group success. If an extra material has been studied in the groupwork task becomes a part of the prime material, the students will feel that all efforts are appreciated. The students will also have a high self-confidence because the students are trained and demanded to present the material.

The other researcher, Eggen and Kauchack (2012), affirmed the effects from group work that it can make the students have full of attention, learn about non-verbal instruction, understand different perceptions, be able to deal with disagreement (diplomatically), use their mind to create a word and make agreement statement and praises. Both of them also stated that groupwork can be used to increase the students’ ability of solving problems, help the students to understand the relation between the cause and the consequences in the sociology. Group work tasks can also be practiced to teach the students of how to plan an experiment in science and give feedback about written draft.

Besides building students’ academic and social skills, group work also gives an influence on some aspects such as the students’ emotions and attitudes. Based on humanistic education, Moskowitz (1978) as cited from Wright (2014) have a view that the relationship which students get from group activities
can actually reduce anxiety, increase confidence, give a positive attitude toward the second language, and encourage the students to take risks to learn a new language. At the same point, Shor (1992) added that group work can also reduce students’ dependence toward their teachers through the interaction and connection among the students and in this case, the students will also learn about team work.

The last benefit from groupwork is proposed by Vidal (2004). He stated that the cooperative learning of group work “can offer complementary and supplementary experiences, perspectives, and opinions for the learners, and can make the students motivated to think harder and more creatively” (p. 4).

It can be concluded that the use of groupwork in EFL teaching have many advantages for the students in increasing and improving their skills in thinking, communicating, interacting, negotiating, and problem solving.

**Disadvantages of group work**

While some researchers proposed the strengths of group work, others researchers investigated the group work’s weaknesses. The first one comes from Krasen (2003) who mentioned that in a whole class setting, the students are less likely to stop the entire class to ask the teacher. In this case, when students work in group, they will not necessary ask their teacher because they have already work with their friends.

Jacobs and Goh (2007) also gave some examples on the disadvantages of group work in their book by stating four weaknesses that group work activities could bring. The first, it is too noisy in the class and this can disturb other groups.
and classes. The second, sometimes when the students receive input from others, the input is likely to have errors in it. The last, teachers are considered as lazy teachers because students will work in a group while the teachers usually do not do anything.

In line with it, Swain (2007) also asserted that in a typical teacher-fronted class, only one person is speaking at a time, either the teacher or one student who the teacher called on. In order to support, Harmer (2007) also mentioned some disadvantages that group work is likely to be noisy, some students can feel uncomfortable of working with their partner or group, there will be a dominant and passive student, and it can take much time to organize.

Through the advantages and disadvantages of the use of groupwork in EFL teaching, some researchers point out how to use groupwork in order to minimize the problem that appears in this strategy. A groupwork activity should be enjoyable and interesting. It should not be boring and promote an interesting topic in persuading the students’ involvement. Furthermore, it should give the students a chance to learn and practice their skills in effective time allotment.

THE STUDY

This section consists of the context of the study, the participants, research instrument, and data collection procedure.

The Context of the Study

This study was conducted in the faculty of Language and Literature, SatyaWacana Christian University, Salatiga, Central Java, Indonesia. The main
The researcher chose this place was that most teachers in almost all courses often use group work in the teaching and learning activities.

The Participants

The participants of this study are the seventeen freshmen students of the Department of the Faculty of Language and Literature who were taking Interpersonal Speaking course. The reason of selecting the participants from speaking class was that they already experienced using group work for the speaking activities they do in the class.

The research instrument

In this research, the data was collected from questionnaires. The questionnaires items are open and close-ended questionnaire. The close-ended items are used to find out which type of group work participant prefer most and the open-ended items are used to see the students’ opinions on how group work can facilitate and hinder their learning. The close-ended items had four questions describing four types of group work (Think-pair-share, Teammates Consult, Combining Pairs and Pairs Check) and use likert scale for the students to state their preference (like-dislike preference). While in the open-ended questionnaire, there were two questions of why the participants prefer such group work type and how group work can facilitate and hinder learning.

Data collection
The data collection was done through some process. First, the researcher made a questionnaire which consists of some important questions that must be answered by the students. Second, the researcher did piloting to make sure if the questions on questionnaire are understandable enough for the participants. After that, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to the participants at the end of teaching section in every meeting.

Analysis procedures

The data were analyzed through some procedures. First, in a purpose of get the result from the students’ preference, the researcher counted the frequency of students who prefer certain group work type. Then, the students’ preference can be seen through it. In order to see the reason of why they prefer certain group work type, the researcher analyzed the students’ opinions on the use of group work in the questionnaire and categorize them into three (types, facilitate and hinder). After categorizing the data, the researcher classified the opinions of each category into emerging theme e.g. category: facilitate learning, theme: 1. Fun, 2. Challenging. Upon the classifying opinions, the result was analyzed to draw conclusions.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION
This section discusses the research findings in order to answer the research questions about "which type of group work does the students prefer most?" and "what are the students' perceptions toward the use of group work?"

Types of group work that the students prefer most

There were four types of group work used in this study. They are Combining Pair, Teammates Consult, Think-pair-share, and Pairs Check. The students’ preference can be seen in the following pie chart.

Figure 1: The students' preference on group work

The data show that the group work type mostly preferred by the students is Pairs check (53% students) and Think-pair-share (47 % students).

Students' opinion
This section is divided into three. The first one is students’ opinion on why they prefer certain type of group work (i.e. Pairs Check and Think-pair-share). The second one is students’ perception on how group work can facilitate learning. The last one is students’ perception on how group work can hinder learning.

**The simple type**

The first reason of why students prefer a certain type of group work is because of the simple type. Most of the student-participants in the class argued that both of Think-pair-share and Pairs Check are the easiest type of all. The reason is that they have the simpler step to be done rather than the others.

*The step in Think-pair-share is easier to be done so that it will not consume too much time*

(the source of data was from the questionnaire; participant 3 and 4)

*it has a simple step so we can end the class on time*

(the source of data was from the questionnaire; participant 11)

The procedure of Think-pair-share type is very simple. In the class, the students are asked to think of a problem from the teacher, work in pair and then share their idea related to the problem solving. The next student also argued the similar case.
I love this group work because it is simpler to be applied and does not have to do a lot of things but can cover all materials

(the source of data was from the questionnaire; participant 15)

The procedure of Pairs Check type is also simple and easy to be applied. It actually has a similar step like Think-pair-share. Besides working in pairs, the students then are asked to share their idea of the problem solving to a new pair and vice versa and finally, they must check whether all members in the new pair have the same ideas or not. This procedure will not make confusion because the students only work in pair and need to find the other pair. From all of those statements, the students argued that Think-pair-share and Pairs Check are more effectively applied in their class because they are the easiest step and they do not need a long time to do.

Multi-purpose media

Group work is an appropriate media for the students to express themselves and feel free sharing their ideas. This will be needed in speaking class and be needed by those who love speaking because the procedures in Think-pair-share and Pairs Check require the students to find a problem solving, speak up or utter their thoughts and listen to their partner. During these activities, the students are asked to think of a problem and then work in pairs. After that, they share their ideas and listen the other ideas of how to solve the problem and finally find a solution together. The first purpose of this is that by sharing and listening to each
other, they will practice speaking and at the same time build their attention toward others. The second, these type can be used to give advice for others. The procedure of these types makes the students to give some idea to fix a problem and it is the context of giving advices to help others in finding the way to solve the problem. This idea is brought by the students in the Interpersonal Speaking class when the teacher applied Think-pair-share and Pairs Check. They think that in these two types, they are given many opportunities to share their opinions or ideas. Moreover, the ones who are willing to give some advices are allowed. The others who like to motivate and help their friends are pleased with these types. All of them apparently love sharing, motivating and helping. In the questionnaire, three students stated,

*from this group work, I can share my opinions many times*  
(the source of data was from the questionnaire; participant 5, 6, and 7)

*I can give advice for my friends and I like it*  
(the source of data was from the questionnaire; participant 15)

*Pairs Check let me motivate and help others and I love help people*  
(thesource of data was from the questionnaire; participant 3).
In these group work types, the students in the class are given an opportunity to speak individually in front of the class. They automatically learn to pay attention to what others are saying. At this occasion, they will grab or gain some new words from their friends and may imitate it to speak in the same way as their friends speak. In the questionnaire, some students wrote,

*I can improve my vocabularies by listening to my friends when they are talking*  
(the source of data was from the questionnaire, participant 7 and 8)

*I can improve my vocabularies because moral dilemmas from Pairs Check make me to find a new words that I don’t know*  
(the source of data was from the questionnaire, participant 17).

From the statements above, I can conclude that group work is the best media for the speaking class students to enrich their vocabularies and interaction skills through speaking and working together.

*Students’ opinion on how group work can facilitate the students’ learning*

The student-participants admitted that group work can facilitate their learning in terms of the following reasons:
a. Engaging the students to speak a lot

This strength is clearly reflected in Combining Pairs which appeared when the students were asked to share their ideas to a different group and when the teacher called the individuals of each group to share or explain the result of group discussion. By sharing their thoughts, the students will talk more to create sentence per sentence.

_We can be more active in speaking and can improve our speaking skills_

(the source of data was from questionnaire, participant 1 in Combining Pairs)

This statement shows that group work helps the students to improve their speaking skills by talking a lot. In the first meeting, the teacher applied Combining pairs type and gave a topic “whose Saturday”. The teacher asked the students to be active to speak as the students have to share their thoughts toward the discussion in dealing with the problem given from the teacher related to the topic given. Thus, the students must be able to talk.

This advantage is also reflected on Teammates Consult type. It was reflected when the students are asked to ask their friends about someone’s information such as name, physical appearance and hobby by using a picture. In here, the students need to consult every answer they have to all members in the group for making sure that their answer is correct.

_this group work trains us to speak more_
From what the students did in class, this group work type completely gave
an opportunity for the students to speak more and more. Most of the students in
the class talked because they needed to find information from their friends related
to the task they had. All of them had to speak up and if they did not do that, they
would not complete their task.

Similarly, this benefit can be found in Think-pair-share type too. It
was seen when the students shared their ideas about problem solving from the
problems given by the teacher. In the class, each of individual talked and shared
his or her thoughts because the teacher asked the students to give more than two
solutions.

*we can talk a lot because this group work makes us share our own opinions*

(thesource of data: questionnaire, participant 3 in
Think-pair-share)

From this statement, it is obvious that this group work type let the
students to be active in speaking. The researcher observed the students in the
class and found that all students spoke and gave their participation. They were
paired and given different problems per group. The members in each group
thought of how they solved the problem and then shared their opinions about it.
That was why they would talk a lot. By doing those activities, the students were
trained to improve their speaking skills unconsciously. This finding is similar with the finding from the study which was conducted by Sugino (1994) and Harmer (2007).

b. Helping the students to speak fluently in front of public

The second merit can be found in Combining Pairs type. This type demands the students to share their thought to all students in the class. They have to face their friends while sharing. In this case, the students must have courage to speak in front of people and they are demanded to speak fluently so that their opponent will understand their thoughts or what they are talking about.

*I think group work really helps us in how we speak fluently*  
(the source of data: questionnaire, participant 4 in Combining Pairs).

Another example of this benefit is also found in Think-pair-share type. It showed when each student in a group utters their thought in front of the class.

*Through this group work, we can learn how to speak more and speak well*  
(the source of data: questionnaire, participant 5 in the third meeting)

The activity such as sharing in front of the class can help the students to be brave uttering their opinions and at the same time learning to speak fluently. The fact of being judged by people makes them speak well and fluently. This finding
is similar with the finding from the study which was conducted by Murmanto (2007). It is very effective to be applied in speaking class.

c. Providing enjoyment and fun in the students’ learning process

The potential of group work in providing enjoyment and fun in students’ learning process can be found in all types of group work such as Combining Pairs, Teammates Consult, Think-pair-share, and Pairs Check. In the group work activities, the students do lots of speaking activities, do a little game like guessing friends’ ideas and play with their imagination.

*I am having fun in the class because I do lot of speaking in groups*

(the source of data: questionnaire in Combining Pairs: student 6)

This statement shows that the student loves to speak and this is why he or she feels the fun. Another example from Teammates Consult types, a student answers,

*it is fun because I can talk more and maybe it is such a challenge to try guessing my friends’ utterance*

(the source of data: questionnaire: participant 7 in Teammates Consult).

This statement indicates that the student loves talking and considers the task through group work as a challenge to guess or try to understand what others
are saying. Doing the challenge and conversation with friends is something enjoyable.

Furthermore, the benefit can also be found in Pairs Check. One of the students wrote on the questionnaire sheet,

*it is fun because we can use our imagination to give a better advice*

(the source of data: questionnaire in Pairs Check: participant 8)

This statement describes that the student feels fun because Pairs Check lets him or her use imagination to think of a problem. The creative and interesting activities that students do in group work make them feel comfortable and fun.

d. **Providing an easier learning through helping each other and working together**

In here, group work facilitates the students to have easier learning especially in doing the task from the teacher. The students are able to help each other and work together to reach their goal. This benefit is reflected in all types since all of them provide learning activities through helping each other and working together. In Combining Pairs, one of the students stated,

*we can work together to break the problem quickly and find the conclusion easily*
(the source of data: questionnaire, participant 9 in Combining Pairs)

The same advantage was also reflected on Teammates Consult type. A student stated,

*group work makes us easy to do assignment from the teacher because we do everything together*

(the source of data: questionnaire, participant 10 on the second meeting)

*we can solve any problems easily if we work in a group*

(the source of data: questionnaire, participant 11 in Pairs Check)

Those three statements from the students prove that group work makes an easier learning because the students are able to help each other and work together to solve some problems from the teacher. This is because group work does not let the students to do all the tasks individually. In other words, it groups the students to work together with their friends to do the tasks from the teacher and generally, something which is done together is easier than that which is done individually.
e. Giving an opportunity for the students to share opinions and difficulties

The main advantage of group work is that it provides an opportunity to share the students’ opinions and difficulties. It is reflected in some types when the students share their opinions and difficulties to their friends. It trains the students to be open-minded about what they think and feel of something with their friends and at the same time, it makes the quiet one talk bravely. This benefit is very important for the students to improve their speaking or communication skills. The benefit of group work as giving an opportunity for the students to share their opinions and difficulties can be seen in Think-pair-share type. A student in the third meeting stated,

*we can share everything about the ideas that we had*

(Source of data: questionnaire of Think-pair-share type, participant 12)

This was seen when the students in the class were asked to utter what they think to solve some problems from the teacher.

Similarly, the same advantage was also seen from Pairs Check type on the fourth meeting. A student wrote,

*we can share our advice and problems to another*

(Source of data: questionnaire of Pairs Check type, participant 13)
This statement was seen from the activities of the students in the class when they shared their problems to their partner and give some advices in order to give help for their friends to solve their problems.

In a brief summary, there are five advantages of group work and they are:

1. Engaging the students to speak a lot
2. Helping the students to speak fluently in front of public
3. Providing enjoyment and fun atmosphere in the students’ learning
4. Providing an easier learning through helping each other and working together
5. Giving opportunity for the students to share opinions and difficulties

Students’ opinion on how group work can hinder the students’ learning

The result from this research finding shows that group work does not only facilitate the students’ learning but also hinders the students’ learning and the hindering things that were found makes group work not maximally and effectively used. There are three points of the disadvantages from group work and they are:

a. Consuming too much time

This limitation appears in almost all group work types. This is because group work needs so much time to be applied i.e. for about 30 minutes until one hour long or even more than that. For one hour class, a teacher should prepare
group work for 15 until 30 minutes because it will give time for the teacher to explain some materials for the students. This weakness can be seen from the students’ opinions on group work through the questionnaire. In the first meeting, a student stated,

*it is wasting time because it leads too much debate each other*

(the source of data: questionnaire on Combining Pairs, participant 1)

*we talk more so that it is wasting time*

(the source of data: questionnaire on Think-pair-share, participant 2)

The last example also appears in the last meeting. The last participant stated,

*it took a long time to think an advice and make the member to accept the advice. We didn’t have time to finish the other members’ problem*

(the source of data from questionnaire on Pairs Check, participant 3)

Those three statements show that group work consume too much time for the members to think, to discuss, and even to debate. In addition, this finding is
similar with the finding from the study which was conducted by Harmer (2007) and Howel, Elizabeth, Montuschi, and Olivia (2002).

b. Making noise

The second weakness of group work is making the unpredictable noise. The noise can appear because the students in the class are demanded to speak a lot and sometimes their voice can be heard by their neighbor-class. This can offend the activity of teaching at that time and it is possible that students cannot concentrate because of the interruption from others. This limitation actually happens to almost all of group work types. In Combining Pairs, a student stated,

_I don’t like this group work because the class becomes so noisy!_  
(the source of data: questionnaire; participant 4)

This also appears on Think-pair-share because someone explained,

_it is too much play at class and the class is too noisy so I don’t have enough concentration_  
(the source of data: questionnaire; participant 5)

_we cannot stop talking because of this group work so it makes the class very crowded and I don’t like it!_  
(the source of data: questionnaire; participant 6)

This limitation is actually the same like what Hammer (2007) and Jacobs and Goh (2007) have mentioned in their book. In addition, sometimes, teacher
cannot deny that it can happen. If a class is facilitated using a device to reduce noise, it may not be a problem anymore.

c. Giving less opportunity for the students to ask the teacher

The last limitation of group work is giving less opportunity for the students to ask the teacher. It can be seen in almost all types of group work. By conducting group work, it means that the students work with their friends almost all the times. It will give fewer occasions to ask their teacher if they find difficulties as they will just ask their friends about the problem solving. It will be a trouble if their friends do not know how to solve their difficulties. The students even do not know which one is the correct or wrong answer. As all group work applied in every meeting, most of the students in the class were busy talking and communicating with their friends or finish the task from the teacher. They forget the teacher and do not have time to consult their answer to their teacher. In contrast, they ask arguments from their friends which is not really the right one. Like in the second meeting, a student gave an explanation,

we cannot know whether we are correct or not when we are speaking
because we just talk naturally with friends in a group

(the source of data from questionnaire on Teammates Consult, participant 7)

In the third meeting, a student also felt the limitation of asking the teacher as she wrote,
the material didn’t easy to be understood because there are many vocabularies that we didn’t know. We couldn’t ask the teacher because we were focus to our group

(the source of data from questionnaire on Think-pair-share, participant 8)

The student in the last meeting also complained about the same thing as on his writing, we do not know if our grammar and answer is correct or not because the teacher wants us to talk with friends

(the source of data from questionnaire on Pairs Check, participant 9).

From those statements, the effect of having less opportunity to ask the teacher makes the students say a wrong pronunciation when they are speaking, unable to improve their vocabularies, and check their grammatical mistakes when they are speaking. This finding is similar with the finding from the study that was done by Krasen (2003).

In a brief summary, there are three disadvantages of group work, they are:

1. Consuming too much time
2. Making noise
3. Giving less opportunity for the students to ask the teacher
CONCLUSION

This study aimed at finding the students’ perceptions on the use of educational group work activity at Interpersonal Speaking class. For that purpose, this study answered the following research questions:

1. Which type of group work do the students prefer most?

2. What are the students’ perceptions on how group work hinders or facilitates the students’ learning process?

Based on the analysis of the finding of this study, it is proved that group work can be used in the class activities as a valuable tool for the students to improve their skills and help them deal with the course they join because it has many advantages. The experiment which demands the students to choose which type of group work they prefer was successfully done and the result of the students’ preference showed that the students prefer two group work types i.e. Think-pair-share and Pairs Check. The reason for this is that those kinds of group work are the simplest type and multi-purpose media of all.

According to the students, there were five standing points of advantages on the group work’s role. Conducting group work activities engages the students to speak a lot, helps the students to speak fluently in front of public, provides enjoyment and fun activities in the students’ learning process, provides an easier learning through helping each other and working together and gives an opportunity for the students to share opinions and difficulties. Through group work, the students improve their speaking skills, be brave, fun, be open-minded,
and the most important is they find it easy to do the tasks from the teacher. Those aspects crucially support the students’ learning process and it may create the better learning.

However, some negative effects are found in the types of group work which is conducted in the class by the students. There are three hindering things which should be reduced. The first one is consuming too much time because sometimes, it needs a lot of time to be conducted. The next weakness is making noise and it may disturb the students’ or the others’ concentration. The last limitation of group work is giving less opportunity for the students to ask the teacher. This should be considered by the teacher to open direct questions from the students. If it does not, the students may be in the wrong direction and it can be fatal for them and it is possible that the students will gain wrong understanding about the material.

As the pedagogical implications, there should be some considerations for the teachers when they want to use group work activities in the class. The first one is that the teachers should consider an interesting topic which relates the material in a meeting. The second is that the teachers should choose the best type of group work which is fun and fit the material or topic on each meeting because it will have a different kind of topics and some topics may not be suitable for some types. The next, the teachers should be sure that they have to create an effective time allotment so that it will not be too short or too long. The fourth is that the teachers should give a clear instruction in order to make the students understand what they will do or have to do. Finally, the teachers should be flexible in
accepting some questions from the students and discussion in order to make the
students stand on the right direction and understand what they really discuss. If
those entire steps have been done by the teachers, the group work activities will
run smoothly and successfully.

In relation to this study, further study can be conducted considering
that this study has a limitation aspect since the researcher found that some
questions in the questionnaire are not truly answered deeply by the participants.
Fortunately, the researcher also supported the data from the observation conducted
in the class. Therefore, for further study it is important to do a deep interview to
get more information and better result related to the students’ opinion about group
work.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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References:


Ferguson & Dianne. (1999). On Working Together: Groupwork, Teamwork, and


APPENDIX
QUESTIONNAIRE

A. Questionnaire of Students’ Preference

NIM :

Dear English Department Students,

I am interested in researching students’ preference toward general types of group work and I would be very grateful if you would kindly spare a few minutes of your time to fill out this questionnaire. This research is expected very useful because it will bring a benefit for EFL teachers to be more aware of using group activities so that the students will follow the learning process as well as their improvement in the second language learning. Please be honest and feel free to give your opinion because there is no right or wrong answer and it will not affect your grade. Many thanks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The types of group work</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>IX</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Combining pairs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Students work in pairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Discuss the problem together</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Are combined with another pair</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Share thoughts from the first and the later pair</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Get the agreement of fixed problem solving</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<p>| Teammate s consult     |      |     |   |    |   |
| - Students work in a group of four| |     |   |    |   |
| - All members in group discuss | |     |   |    |   |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Think-pair-share</th>
<th>Pair check</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Listen and consult each member’s answer</td>
<td>- Students think about the problem</td>
<td>- Students work in a group of four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Each individual decide one answer that is considered right</td>
<td>- Pair up with friend</td>
<td>- The group is divided into two: pair A &amp; B</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- At the end, students work individually answer question</td>
<td>- Share thoughts each other of how to fix the problem</td>
<td>- Pair A &amp; B discuss the same problem (A solves the problem and B coaches)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>based on the answer chosen from one of the members</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Reverse the role</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- At the end, the members check if they have the same answer or not</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The description of each type
Based on the type of group work in each week above;

1. Which type of group work that you most like?
   The answers: ............................................................................................................

2. What is your reason of choosing the type of group work in the question number one if your compare with another type?
   The answers: ............................................................................................................
   ............................................................................................................................

3. What are the advantages from the type of group work that you choose in the question number one if you compare with another type?
   The answers: ............................................................................................................
   ............................................................................................................................
   ............................................................................................................................

4. What are the disadvantages from the type of group work that you choose in the question number one if you compare with another type?
   The answers: ............................................................................................................
   ............................................................................................................................
   ............................................................................................................................

Demographics information
Age :
Length of studying English :

If I need more information on your questionnaire, could I contact you for an interview?
Please put a check (√) □ yes □ no
If you say yes, complete the following information:
Name :
Phone Number :
Email :

Thank You
B. Questionnaire of Students’ Opinion

Dear English Department students,

I am interested in researching students’ preference toward general types of group work and I would be very grateful if you would kindly spare a few minutes of your time to fill out this questionnaire. This research is expected very useful because it will bring a benefit for EFL teachers to be more aware of using group activities so that the students will follow the learning process as well as their improvement in the second language learning. Please be honest and feel free to give your opinion because there is no right or wrong answer and it will not affect your grade. Many thanks.

Please give the answer to the questions below.

1. How does the type of group work that is used by your teacher facilitate your learning process?
   The answers: .............................................................................................
                                                                                         .............................................................................................
                                                                                         .............................................................................................

2. How does the type of group work that is used by your teacher hinder your learning process?
   The answers: .............................................................................................
                                                                                         .............................................................................................
                                                                                         .............................................................................................
Demographics information

Age :

Length of studying English :

If I need more information on your questionnaire, could I contact you for an interview?

Please put a check (√) □ yes □ no

If you say yes, complete the following information:

Name :

Phone Number :

Email :

Thank You