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# USING PAIR WORK AND GROUP WORK ACTIVITIES BASED ON COLLABORATIVE LEARNING TO ENHANCE PRATHOMSUKSA 6 STUDENTS' ENGLISH SPEAKING ABILITY

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## Abstract

The purposes of this research were to study and compare English speaking ability of Grade 6 students before and after using the collaborative pairwork and group work and to investigate students' attitude towards teaching English-speaking using pair work and group work activities based on collaborative learning. The sample consisted of 27 students studying in Grade 6 at Tessban 2 Mukkhamontri School, Udon Thani, under Udonthani Municipality in the first semester of the academic year 2023. They were selected using cluster random sampling. The research was a one group pretest-posttest design. Research instruments included 12 lesson plans, An English-speaking ability test and an attitude questionnaire. The experiment lasted twelve weeks, 2 hours a week, or 24 hours in total. The mean, percentage, standard deviation and t-test for Dependent samples were used for data analysis. The findings of this research indicated that the students' pretest and posttest scores examining of English-speaking ability were 66.03 percent and 81.32 percent respectively. The students' English-speaking ability was significantly different at the .01 level, and the mean

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score on the posttest was also significantly higher than that of the pretest. In addition, more than 70 percent of students gained a higher score on the English-speaking posttest, and the students' attitude towards teaching English-speaking using pair work and group work activities based on collaborative learning was at a very good level.

**Keywords:** Collaborative, Pair Work, Group Work, Speaking

## Introduction

In Thailand, the Basic Education Core Curriculum A.D. 2008 provides local communities and schools with a framework and orientation for preparing a school curriculum. Teaching and learning activities organized for all Thai children and youths at the basic education level aim to build essential knowledge and skills that are required in world-wide society. Young citizens will be empowered to looking forward further knowledge for continuous lifelong learning and development. The curriculum contributes to their development by giving them a better understanding communication and distributing something of themselves and others. They will be able to use foreign languages to communicate and access bodies of knowledge (Ministry of Education, 2008). One of the purposes of the Basic Education Core Curriculum is set a goal at enabling students to acquire communicative skills, the ability to have spoken exchanging, and a positive attitude toward speaking other languages. In order to achieve this goal, students need to be trained to properly spoken practice with a language form until they have enough skill and can be used to benefit individuals normally during conversation (Newton, 2018).

The Basic Education Office states that foreign language is an important ability that everyone needs to learn. Speaking ability is a dominant skill to qualify the language proficiency of the speaker which includes fluency, accuracy and

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negotiation in conversation. Moreover, understanding foreign languages builds the capacity to width-range knowledge. Richards (2001) states that speaking skill is a priority for second or foreign language learners which reveals students' success in language learning.

According to the Basic Thai Core Curriculum, English is a compulsory subject from the primary school to high school onwards. Even though most of Thai students spend many years learning English, the results are still questionable. As National Institute of Education Testing Service showed that around 495,000 of Prathomsuksa 6 students' English proficiency than a national standard scored on the Ordinary Educational Test (O-Net), in English average 43.55, 23.98 and 19.22 out of 100 in 20022, 2021 and 2020 respectively that it might state the Thai Students have lower than a national standard. Moreover, Noom-ura (2013) discovered that Thai students' English-speaking ability developing has a lot of aspects contributing a failure such as inappropriate teaching methods, anxiety in spoken language, and low language fundament. In addition, Littlewood and Yu (2011) stated that teachers teaching English typically instruct lessons through their mother tongue language in ESL classroom, emphasize English-speaking in structure rather than functions and conduct class without interaction among teacher-learners or learners-learners.

In order to enhance students' English-speaking ability at primary school level, collaboration, social interaction activities should be used. As Smith & MacGregor (1992) pointed out, collaborative learning is an umbrella covering approaches in term of joint intellectual efforts by learners-learners or teachers-learners. Similarly, Oxford (2011) stated that collaborative learning is an acculturative process which supports learners to become a member of knowledge communities they belong to with activities involving small-group work. Collaborative activities promote oral proficiency and establish a comfortable and low-threat learning environment in English-speaking classroom. In addition,

Davidson (1994) explained the five attributes of collaborative learning with pairwork and group work which are as follows: 1) a common task or a task of learning activities for small-group work, 2) small-group learning together, 3) cooperative behaviour, 4) independence and confidence, and 5) individual accountability and responsibility with aspects of face-to-face interaction, sociocultural rules, negotiation language and language process. Harmer (2015) stated that pairwork and group work allows learners to work and maximize their own learning and ideas for making meaningful speaking output which learning occurs.

In this research, the emphasis of Collaborative Learning has been recognized as instructional method that bring less anxious and more relaxed the learners are, the effective language acquisition proceeds and enhance students' speaking ability. Moreover, a number of studies have shown that pair work and small group work greatly enhances the learners' communicative use with positive environment. For instance, a study about the inquiry to engage students in active and effective in English classroom was conducted by Phan (2020) showed that group work provides more opportunities for language practices and creates a positive atmosphere in classroom for students for free interact that improve their communicative skills. Moreover, Alexandre (2018) has conducted a study of using pair work to promote students' oral interaction showing that the pair work benefited their confidence and speaking development with an increase in the amount of spontaneous interaction between peers. Furthermore, the relationship between the members of each dyad significantly influenced their interaction. It can be said that Collaborative pairwork and group work is an effective educational instruction to teach and learn through pairs or groups working together to achieve common goals, solve the problems, accomplish tasks, and invent products. With the efforts of Pairwork and group work and collaborative learning in teaching English speaking as mentioned above, the

researcher is interested in enhancing students' speaking ability using pairwork and group work activities based on collaborative learning with Prathomsuksa 6 students at Tessaban 2. In addition, the researcher would like to examine whether teaching English speaking through collaborative pairwork and group work to Prathomsuksa 6 students enhances their English-speaking based on the comparison of pretest and posttest and attempts to determine the Prathomsuksa 6 students' attitude towards the teaching of English-speaking using pair work and group work activities based on Collaborative Learning. The result of this study might be a guideline for teaching English speaking in Thailand in the future.

**Purposes of the Study:**

1. To study and compare English speaking ability of Prathomsuksa 6 students individually before and after learning English using pair work and group work activities based on collaborative learning higher than the prior score.

2. To investigate students' attitude towards learning English speaking using pairwork and group work activities based on collaborative learning of Prathomsuksa 6 students.

**Hypotheses of the Study**

1. The Prathomsuksa 6 students' posttest mean score on English speaking ability after studying English speaking using pair work and group work activities based on collaborative learning was higher than the criterion of 70 percent.

2. After studying English speaking using pair work and group work activities based on collaborative learning, the posttest mean score on English speaking ability of Prathomsuksa 6 students was higher than the prior score.

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**The Conceptual Framework**

In this research, the conceptual framework is divided into three main part; Before speaking ability, During speaking activity and After speaking activity. The model of teaching speaking using pair work and group work activities based on collaborative learning is adapted from teaching speaking cycle by Goh and Burns (2012) and the teaching steps of pairwork and group work by Harmer (2015).

**Research Methodology**

**1. Population and Sample**

The population was 120 students studying in Prathomsuksa 6 from Tessaaban 2 Mukkhamontri school, under Udon Thani Municipality in the first semester of the academic year 2023. The sample consisted of 27 students studying in Prathomsuksa 6 at Tessaban 2 Mukkhamontri School, Udon Thani, under Udon Thani Municipality in the first semester of the academic year 2023. They were selected using random cluster sampling.

**2. Research Setting**

This study was experimental resesrch with one group pretest-posttest design. It used the quantitative research. A diagram of the design is shown below:

$$T1 \quad x \quad T2$$

Symbols used in Experimental Design

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| T1 | means | Pretest |
| T2 | means | Posttest |
| X | means | Teaching English speaking using pairwork and group work activities based on collaborative learning |

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**3. Research Instruments**

3.1 An English peaking ability test: The test consisted of 10 oral questions interview individually from activities. The determination was examined from the scores of the English speaking ability test based on the specific speaking assessment criteria by Hughes (2003: 131-132) with five aspects: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension.

3.2 Lesson plans for teaching English speaking using pairwork and group work activities based on collaborative learning: There were 12 lesson plans for 12 weeks and 3 hours of each lesson plans.

3.3 The attitude questionnaire towards teaching English speaking using pairwork and group work activities based on collaborative learning consisted of 20 items in five levels which based on Likert's rating scales by Likert (1982).

**4. Data collection**

4.1 Conduct the pretest using an English speaking ability test before the instruction with 10 oral questions interviews.

4.2 Conduct the teaching program of 12 lesson plans for 12 weeks.

4.3 Conduct the posttest using the same English speaking ability test as the pretest; 10 oral questions interviews.

4.4 Distribute the attitude questionnaire to examine the attitude after learning English speaking using pairwork and group work activities based on collaborative learning.

The collected date from the pretest and posttest and attitude data were statistically analyzed and interpreted.

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**5. Data Analysis**

The following steps were implemented to analyze the data:

5.1 The researcher analyzed data to examine English speaking ability using mean ($\bar{x}$), percentage (%), and standard deviation (S.D.).

5.2 The researcher analyzed data to compare the English speaking ability of Prathomsuksa 6 students from the pretest and the posttest scores.

5.3 The researcher analyzed data to investigate the attitude towards teaching English speaking using pair work and group work based on collaborative learning using mean ($\bar{x}$) and standard deviation (S.D.) to interpret the meaning of the criteria's average as follows:

| Average score | | Levels of opinion |
|---|---|---|
| 1.00 – 1.80 | means | Strongly disagree |
| 1.81 – 2.60 | means | Disagree |
| 2.61 – 3.40 | means | Not sure |
| 3.41 – 4.20 | means | Agree |
| 4.21 – 5.00 | means | Strongly agree |

**Result of the Study**

**1. Result of the Study and Comparison of the English speaking ability Before and After**

The scores of the students' English speaking ability at Tessaban 2 Mukkhamonmtri school before and after studying English speaking using pairwork and group work activities based on collaborative learning are displayed in Table 1.

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**Table 1** The result of students' pretest and posttest score examining on English speaking using pair work and group work activities based on collaborative learning

| No. | Pretest score (250 total) | | Posttest score (250 total) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Score | Percentage | Score | Percentage |
| 1 | 160.33 | 64.13 | 204.66 | 71.60 |
| 2 | 188.34 | 75.33 | 217.67 | 81.86 |
| 3 | 205.34 | 81.13 | 191.67 | 87.06 |
| 4 | 175.00 | 70.00 | 172.34 | 76.66 |
| 5 | 138.34 | 55.33 | 179.00 | 68.93 |
| 6 | 145.00 | 58.00 | 166.67 | 61.06 |
| 7 | 126.33 | 50.33 | 202.33 | 66.66 |
| 8 | 176.67 | 70.66 | 230.34 | 77.86 |
| 9 | 208.33 | 83.33 | 212.66 | 92.13 |
| 10 | 210.67 | 84.26 | 196.00 | 77.60 |
| 11 | 85.34 | 34.13 | 175.66 | 42.25 |
| 12 | 137.00 | 54.80 | 181.34 | 59.33 |
| 13 | 93.34 | 37.33 | 180.33 | 43.33 |
| 14 | 157.34 | 62.93 | 212.66 | 72.13 |
| 15 | 198.34 | 79.33 | 217.33 | 85.06 |
| 16 | 140.00 | 56.00 | 224.33 | 63.33 |
| 17 | 201.67 | 80.66 | 120.34 | 89.73 |
| 18 | 95.33 | 38.13 | 187.00 | 48.13 |
| 19 | 162.00 | 64.80 | 208.66 | 74.80 |
| 20 | 183.00 | 73.20 | 172.34 | 83.46 |
| 21 | 138.34 | 55.33 | 244.34 | 68.93 |
| 22 | 213.33 | 85.33 | 177.67 | 97.73 |
| 23 | 124.33 | 49.73 | 202.66 | 71.06 |
| 24 | 169.67 | 67.86 | 218.67 | 72.53 |
| 25 | 204.67 | 81.86 | 244.34 | 87.46 |
| 26 | 213.33 | 85.33 | 217.33 | 97.73 |
| 27 | 169.67 | 67.86 | 204.66 | 72.53 |
| Mean | 159.19 | 66.03 | 203.32 | 81.32 |
| S.D. | 37.01 | - | 20.87 | - |

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As shown in Table 1, the students' pretest mean score on English speaking ability was 159.19 or 66.03 percent and the students' posttest mean score on English speaking ability was 203.32 or 81.32 percent respectively.

It can be seen that some students had gained great improvement between pretest and posttest. The researcher analyzed and compared the mean score of English speaking ability before and after using pairwork and group work activities based on collaborative learning of 27 students at Tessaban 2 Mukkhamontri using English speaking ability test. The score of the posttest were analyzed using one-sample t-test to find mean standard deviation percent and comparison of the students' English speaking and set criteria of 70 percent and the pretest and posttest were compared using t-test for dependant samples. The results are shown in Table 2 and Table 3.

**Table 2** Mean, Standard deviation, Percentage, and a Comparison of the Students' English speaking ability after studying English speaking using pairwork and group work abilities based on collaborative learning.

| Examination | N | $\overline{X}$ | S.D. | Percentage | t |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Posttest | 27 | 203.32 | 20.87 | 81.32 | |

**p-value 0.1

As shown in Table 2, the students' posttest mean score on English speaking ability was 203.32. The result explained that the students' English speaking ability after studying English speaking using pairwork and group work activities based on collaborative learning was significantly different at the 0.01 level. The posttest scare was significantly higher than the set criterion of 70 percent or 81.32.

**Table 3** Comparison students' ability scores on English speaking ability before and after learning English speaking using pair work and group work activities based on collaborative learning.

| Examination | N | $\overline{X}$ | S.D. | Percentage | t |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pretest | 27 | 159.19 | 37.01 | 66.03 | |
| | | | | | 6.63* |
| Posttest | 27 | 203.32 | 20.87 | 81.32 | |

** Significantly different at the .01 level

As shown in /table 3, the students' pretest mean score was 16.86 and that of the posttest mean score was 203.32. The mean acore on the posttest was higher than that of the pretest significantly different at .01.

**2. Results of an investigation of Students' Attitude towards Teaching English speaking using pairwork and group work activities based on collaborative learning**

The last research questions: what is students' attitude towards studying English speaking using pair work and group work activities based on collaborative learning? The attitude questionnaire used a five-point Likert's rating scale, ranging from positive to negative, using strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree and strongly disagree. The mean and standard deviation were used to analyse students' attitude towards teaching English speaking using pair work and group work activities based on collaborative learning. The result of the study is shown in Table 4.

**Table 4** An investigation of students' attitude towards teaching English speaking using pairwork and group work activities based on collaborative learning.

| Attitude Test | N | $\overline{\text{x}}$ | S.D. | Attitude Level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Students' attitude towards teaching English speaking ability using pairwork and group work activities based on collaborative learning | 27 | 4.66 | 0.27 | Very Good |

From the table above, the mean score of the students' attitude towards being taught English speaking using pair work and group work activities based on collaborative learning was 4.66, a very good attitude level. This result may be explained by the fact that students practiced the activity themselves. This activity was run step by step and it made students take responsibility for their work. The students were asked to work in collaborative works and utilize the structure as a guide as peer or group members' suggestion during the tasks. Students had fun and were enthusiastic about what their next work would be. The students had a good attitude about learning English speaking using the pairwork and group work activities based on collaborative learning. Furthermore, pair work and group work activities help the students gain confident and be motivated enough to do the activities and develop speaking ability naturally for use not just inside the classroom but also outside the classroom in any situation which they may in. The finding in table 4 reaffirms with the teaching English speaking using pair work and group activities based on collaborative learning can developed the English speaking and social effectively. It brought students to work together that they feel free to talk, lower their anxiety and forget their limitation during the activities.

**Conclusion and Discussion**

Conclusion

1. The students' pretest and posttest mean scores on English speaking ability were 159.19 or 66.03 percent and 203.32 or 81.32 percent respectively. The students' posttest mean scores in English speaking ability was significantly higher than of the pretest and the mean score on the posttest was higher than the set criteria of 70 percent. Teaching English speaking with pairwork and group work activities based on collaborative learning improved students' ability to generate conversation appropriate, comprehend turn taking, pronounce and improve vocabulary and develop grammar structures, both pairwork and group work activities boosted their confidence in speaking English and understanding in conversation.

2. The students' attiude towards teaching English speaking using pairwork and group work activities based on collaborative learning was at a good level. It revealed students' positive reception of the mrthod, emphasizing its suitability for learning English speaking. Visual aid and pairwork and group work were valuaed for organizing activities swiftly. Enhancing enjoyment before practice significantly improved students' speaking influency and comprehension the conversation.

Discussion

1. The students' English speaking ability after studying English speaking using pairwork and group work activities based on collaborative learning was sigcantly improved with a mean score greater than 70 percent. The study aligned with Xalmurzayevna et al. (2021) in that peer and group interactions took a significant role in developing learners' English-speaking skill through social skills, such as turn-taking and discuss with their groups. Results indicated significant improvement, with pretest and posttest score increasing from 40.49 percent to 76.95 percent respectively. Posttest scores exceeded a

70 percent criteria, reflecting a positive students' attitude towards this instruction. The finding supports the first research hypotheses of the the study.

2. It was found that teaching English speaking using pairwork and group work activities based on collaborative learning could improve Prathomsuksa 6 students' English speaking ability. Their pretest snd posttest score were 66.03 and 81.32 percent, respectively. This supports the idea of Almanafi & Alghatani (2020), who stated that the attitudes are cognitive and effective, that is, they are related to thoughts as well as to feelings and emotions. The finding showed that most of learners acknowledged that participating pair or group work is particularly useful and to help them to improve their speaking skills and facilitate their communication.

3. The result of investigation of the Prathomsuksa 6 students' attitude towards teaching English speaking using pairwork and group work activities based on collaborative learning was at a good level. The study also echoes Gharbi & Zahi (2021) who stated that the use of group and pair work strategies helped alleviate and reduce the speaking anxiety of foreign language learners and encouraged them to use the target language. The students might like teaching English speaking ability by using pair work and group work activities based on collaborative learning and showed their attitude on their success of the posttest scores after the instruction.

**Recommendation**

    **1. Recommendation from this study**

From the study, the development of English-speaking ability using pair work and group work activities based on collaborative learning, the students had good English-speaking ability and very good attitude toward teaching English speaking. To support activity in teaching English speaking using pair work and

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group work activities based on collaborative learning, the researcher recommends as follows:

1.1 From the research results, it was found that the students' English-speaking ability after studying English speaking using pair work and group work activities based on collaborative learning was higher than prior. This was caused from the result that teaching English speaking using pair work and group work activities based on collaborative learning helped students to gain vocabulary and sentence structure while learning in the gathering attention, inputs provided, conducting practices to assign tasks in the exercises, language focus to improve their language usage in task and exchange with group members, repeating tasks in worksheet 2 from commendation of the teacher, and report to summarize their own understanding through worksheets as individuals or groups stage to the class, and evaluates their understanding in feedback session. Moreover, English teachers should apply collaborative pairwork and group work to teach English speaking to improve students' English-speaking ability.

1.2 From the research results, it was found that the students' attitude toward teaching English speaking using pair work and group work activities based on collaborative learning was at a very good level. This was caused from the result that the students loved doing activities using pair work and group work activities based on collaborative learning. Collaborative pairwork and group work provided activities that let students have prior knowledge to exchange information with members or peers and discuss with classmates to check their own information correctly before moving to next task. Moreover, the students could answer the questions in each worksheet separately. Thus, collaborative pairwork and group work should be promoted in teaching English speaking by English teachers.

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## 2. Recommendations for further study

This research can help develop Collaborative Pairwork and Group Work for the next researcher's project. This should also be extended to further research into the use of Collaborative work in pair and group with other levels of students: primary school students, as well as college students. This study should be conducted to investigate its effect on other English skills such as critical reading or creative writing.

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