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EXTENSIVENESS OF TEACHERS' USE OF GROUP DISCUSSION ON ENHANCING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN MOSHI MUNICIPALITY, TANZANIA

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ABSTRACT

The study focused on the extent to which Teachers' Use of Group Discussion Enhances English Speaking Skills among Secondary School Students in Moshi Municipality. Convergent design under mixed-methods used. Target population consisted of 15 public secondary schools, 15 heads of schools, 43 English language teachers, 2,023 Form Four students, and one Municipal Secondary Education Officer. Simple random sampling and stratified random sampling were employed to select 5 public secondary schools, 5 heads of schools, 43 English language teachers, 202 Form Four students, and 1 MSEO. Quantitative data were collected through questionnaires and an English subject proficiency test, while qualitative data were collected using interview guides. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. Teachers reported using group discussions to enhance students' confidence in speaking, pronunciation, vocabulary development, fluency, and their ability to clearly express ideas in English. The study concluded that the use of group discussion contributed significantly to the improvement of English-speaking skills among secondary school students in Moshi Municipality. The study recommended that teachers incorporate role-play activities more frequently into classroom instruction and training should be provided to help teachers design role-play scenarios that reflected real-life situations and practical language use.

KEYWORDS: Group Discussion, English Speaking Skills, Teaching Strategies, Classroom Interaction

INTRODUCTION

Language is a fundamental part of human life, functioning as a system that enables people to share thoughts, feelings, ideas, and information through sounds, symbols, or gestures. It is deeply embedded in daily interactions, ranging from casual conversations with peers to formal professional communication, making it crucial for both personal development and societal advancement. Beyond its role as a communication tool, language reflects culture, identity, and values, fostering a sense of belonging and mutual understanding among individuals and communities. In the educational context,

language serves as a vital medium for the transmission of knowledge, learning, and the preservation of cultural heritage (Gelişli, 2021).

English, as a global lingua franca, facilitates communication in diverse fields including business, science, technology, and education. With over 1.5 billion speakers worldwide, it dominates many countries and international institutions, bridging cultural and regional gaps through widespread use in media and online platforms (Mikasa, 2022). However, the prominence of English in education sometimes marginalizes non-fluent speakers, limiting their access to quality education and inclusivity. This situation is especially evident in secondary schools where English proficiency is critical for academic success and future opportunities.

According to UNESCO, approximately 244 million children and adolescents are out of school globally, while many attending schools fail to acquire essential skills, highlighting a serious global learning crisis (Conto et al., 2021). The increasing importance of English as a global communication tool poses challenges for educational systems in developing countries, where effective teaching methods are vital to improving learners' proficiency. In particular, the development of English-speaking skills among secondary school students remains a key area of concern. The evolution of the English language from its origins in the 5th century to its current status as a dominant global language illustrates its adaptability and widespread influence. Nearly two billion people speak English, yet only around 400 million are native speakers, which raise concerns about equitable access and the preservation of linguistic diversity (Finders et al., 2023). English is the preferred medium in education, especially in science, technology, medicine, and commerce, enabling global collaboration and academic communication. Nevertheless, traditional teacher-centered approaches often hinder natural language acquisition and active speaking skills development, underscoring the need for more interactive and student-engaging methodologies (Mering, 2022).

In several educational contexts such as the Netherlands and Belgium, structured group discussions and debates have been shown to significantly enhance secondary students' English-speaking abilities, improving fluency, accuracy, coherence, and lexical sophistication (Majidi et al., 2021). The interactive learning methods encourage students to articulate ideas clearly and organize their thoughts logically, contributing to overall language proficiency. This evidence supports the call for increased use of group discussion as a pedagogical strategy to improve English speaking skills.

Group discussion is a collaborative teaching and learning strategy where students actively participate by sharing ideas, debating, and negotiating meanings in a social context (Conto et al. 2021). Group discussion provides a dynamic platform for practicing English speaking skills by encouraging spontaneous communication, critical thinking, and peer interaction. Through group discussions, learners develop fluency and confidence as they engage in meaningful exchanges that mimic real-life communication situations. Research indicates that group discussions improve speaking accuracy, vocabulary use, and the ability to formulate coherent arguments, making them essential for enhancing

oral proficiency among secondary school students (Othman & Abu Bakar, 2020; Ahmed, 2021). Despite these benefits, many secondary school teachers underutilize group discussions due to large class sizes, limited training, and resource constraints, which affect the quality of English language instruction.

English speaking skills involve the ability to communicate effectively and confidently in spoken English, encompassing pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary use, grammar, and interactive communication (Oguntade, 2021). Mastery of speaking skills is essential for academic success, social integration, and future employment opportunities. However, secondary school students face challenges such as anxiety, lack of practice opportunities, and limited exposure to authentic speaking environments, which hinder their oral proficiency (Putra & Suzanne, 2022). Improving speaking skills requires active engagement through interactive activities like group discussions, debates, and role-plays that provide meaningful contexts for practice. The development of these skills fosters learners' confidence and competence in real-life communication, making it a critical focus in English language education (Othman & Abu Bakar, 2020; Ahmed, 2021).

In various African countries, interactive techniques such as group discussions have positively influenced English language learning outcomes (Oguntade, 2021; Nsenga, 2022). Despite these advances, challenges persist in East African schools where disengagement in classroom activities like debates and role-plays limits English language competence (Namusoke & Rukundo, 2022; Ssentanda, 2022).

In Tanzania, efforts to improve English teaching have been ongoing since the late 1990s, aligned with global educational initiatives such as Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Sakata et al., 2021). However, the country's language policy, which uses Swahili in primary schools and English in secondary schools, poses challenges for learners transitioning to English-medium instruction. Teacher-centered approaches prevail in many classrooms, limiting students' speaking opportunities and contributing to poor performance in the Certificate of Secondary Education Examination (CSEE), where English results have declined (URT, 2023). Despite government initiatives to promote interactive teaching and allocate resources to support learner participation, English language proficiency remains low. This is partly attributed to teachers' limited use of group discussions, which restrict students' chances to practice and develop speaking skills (Mligo et al., 2019; Rodriguez-Segura et al., 2022). In Moshi Municipality secondary schools, the decline in English performance has been linked to teacher dominance in classrooms and insufficient student interaction. Therefore, investigating the extensiveness of teachers' use of group discussion on improving English speaking skills among secondary school students in Moshi Municipality Tanzania was vital.

Low engagement in learning English speaking skills among secondary school students in public secondary schools has become a growing problem, impacting not only academic interest but also students' confidence and communication abilities in English. The Tanzanian government has made

efforts to improve education quality by promoting interactive teaching methods and providing resources, with recent policy revisions and collaborations aimed at enhancing English language learning (URT, 2023). Despite these efforts, English speaking skills remain a challenge in secondary schools. This is partly because many students enter secondary school with Kiswahili as the primary language of instruction from their time in primary school (Hiza & Paschal, 2023). The dominance of English in instruction further marginalizes local languages such as Kiswahili, highlighting the need for inclusive teaching approaches that integrate interactive strategies group discussion to foster better English-speaking proficiency.

Various studies, including those by Mshana et al. (2024), Waziri et al. (2021), and Mugisha et al. (2023), have examined the effectiveness of the Integrated Skills Approach in improving English language proficiency in community schools. However, none among the reviewed studies comprehensively investigates the extent of teachers' use of group discussion to improve English speaking skills among secondary school students, particularly in public secondary schools in Moshi Municipality. Therefore, the current study investigated the extensiveness of teachers' use of group discussion in improving English speaking skills among secondary school students in Moshi Municipality, Tanzania.

RESEARCH QUESTION

To what extent do teachers use group discussion on enhancing English Speaking Skills among Secondary School Students?

Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it provides insights into how group discussion can improve English speaking skills among secondary school students in Moshi Municipality. By examining the extent of teachers' use of this method, the study highlights its role in enhancing student engagement, fluency, and communication. The findings will offer practical recommendations to teachers, policymaking, and stakeholders on promoting interactive English instruction and contributes to the existing body of knowledge to serve as a reference for future research aimed at improving language learning outcomes in Tanzanian schools.

Theoretical Framework

Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis

This theory was developed in the 1980s, with significant contributions made through Krashen's works, particularly his book "Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition" (1982). Krashen's Input Hypothesis became foundational in second language acquisition, emphasizing that learners acquire language most effectively when they receive comprehensible input language slightly beyond their current proficiency level. Represented by the formula " $i+1$ ", this concept suggests that learners progress when they understand language that includes elements just above what they already know (Sun, 2020). In the context of group discussions, this theory is highly relevant, as learners are exposed

to diverse language input from peers with varying proficiency levels. Such interactive settings provide opportunities to hear and respond to language that is slightly more advanced, thereby facilitating natural acquisition through meaningful communication.

Strengths of Krashen's Input Hypothesis

Krashen's Input Hypothesis is particularly valuable for its focus on natural language acquisition through exposure to meaningful and understandable input. It encourages communication in low-anxiety environments, which is vital in language learning. The theory aligns well with interactive methods like group discussion, as it promotes listening to and interpreting real-time language, which can be slightly more advanced than the learner's current level. These conditions foster language development by making learners active participants in authentic communication (Wang, 2024).

Weaknesses of Krashen's Input Hypothesis

Despite its strengths, the Input Hypothesis has been criticized for its limited focus on language output. It underemphasizes the importance of speaking and writing, which are essential for building fluency and reinforcing acquired input. Critics also point to a lack of empirical validation in some aspects of the theory, arguing that it may not fully address the diverse contexts of language learning, especially where interactive engagement and output are central to skill development (Alobaid, 2020).

Application of Krashen's Input Hypothesis

In the context of this study, Krashen's Input Hypothesis supports the use of group discussion as a strategy to improve English speaking skills. During group discussions, students are exposed to a variety of vocabulary, sentence structures, and communicative styles that are slightly beyond their current proficiency, encouraging natural language development. Group discussions create an interactive and low-stress environment where learners can absorb comprehensible input while building confidence in speaking. This aligns with the theory's core principle and underscores its relevance in exploring how teachers' use of group discussion influences students' English-speaking abilities in secondary schools.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Extent Group Discussion Improves English Speaking Skills among Secondary School Students

Group discussion is increasingly recognized as an effective technique in enhancing English speaking skills among secondary school students. It promotes interaction, active engagement, and confidence in verbal expression, providing students with a supportive platform to practice and develop fluency. Through structured exchanges, learners articulate thoughts, respond to peers, and build vocabulary in meaningful contexts.

Nhan et al. (2022) conducted a study on the implementation of debate—a form of structured group discussion as a technique to enhance the speaking ability of second-year English-major students at Dong Nai Technology University in Vietnam. The study used classroom action research with pre- and post-tests, observations, and questionnaires. Results indicated a significant improvement in students' speaking abilities, with mean post-test scores (7.0250) surpassing pre-test scores (5.5267). This finding suggests that structured group discussions like debate can significantly boost learners' speaking performance. However, the study focused only on university students and did not evaluate how other group discussion formats, such as open-ended discussions or peer dialogues, influence language proficiency at the secondary level.

Afri et al. (2021) also examined the impact of debate techniques on speaking skills through a classroom action research design involving two cycles. The study revealed an increase in students' speaking performance, with pass rates rising from 71% in the first cycle to 92% in the second. While the study showed that discussion-based approaches significantly improve verbal communication skills, it lacked a detailed exploration of the nature and frequency of student engagement during discussions and how that engagement translated to language mastery. The current study, therefore, goes further by examining the extent of student involvement in group discussions and how it correlates with speaking development.

Ajoke et al. (2020) explored the influence of co-curricular activities such as debate clubs and literary societies on students' achievement in English in Nigerian secondary schools. The study found that students actively involved in such discussion-based co-curricular activities performed better in English and demonstrated higher speaking fluency. However, the data relied solely on questionnaire responses, which can be prone to social desirability bias. Respondents may have provided favorable answers rather than accurate reflections of their actual experiences. To address this limitation, the present study employs both qualitative and quantitative methods including classroom observations and structured interviews to provide a more reliable understanding of how group discussions influence English speaking skills in the Tanzanian context.

Musfirah (2019) conducted a quantitative study in South Sulawesi to investigate the effectiveness of the debate method in improving speaking skills. Using pre-test and post-test analysis, findings showed a considerable increase in speaking performance, with post-test mean scores (2.470) being higher than pre-test mean scores (1.529). Additionally, the questionnaire results indicated that nearly 89% of students had high to very high interest in using debate for language learning. While the results affirmed the debate's value in language development, the study was conducted in a different cultural and educational setting. Therefore, its findings may not be directly applicable to Tanzanian secondary schools. The current study addresses this contextual gap by examining how Tanzanian teachers utilize group discussions in English language classrooms, specifically within Moshi Municipality.

Mtesigwa and John (2023) investigated the implementation of Competence-Based Language Teaching (CBLT) in Tanzania's lower secondary English classrooms. The findings revealed that while teachers are aware of communicative techniques such as drama, debate and role-play; most still rely on traditional teaching methods, including simple discussion formats. The study attributed this to challenges such as lack of training, large class sizes, and insufficient teaching resources. Though valuable, the study primarily used qualitative methods and did not provide quantifiable data on how frequently group discussions are used or how they directly impact students' speaking abilities. The current study builds upon these findings by combining both quantitative data (teacher and student surveys) and qualitative insights (classroom observations) to assess the extent and effectiveness of group discussion in enhancing English speaking skills.

Reviewed studies show that group discussion enhances students' English-speaking skills by promoting interaction, confidence, and fluency (Nhan et al., 2022; Afri et al., 2021; Musfirah, 2019). However, most studies focused on debate or co-curricular activities, not regular classroom group discussions, indicating a knowledge gap. Contextually, many studies were conducted outside Tanzania, limiting relevance to local classrooms. Few local studies, such as Mtesigwa and John (2023), mention discussion but do not assess the extent of its use in promoting English speaking, revealing a contextual gap, especially in Moshi Municipality. Methodologically, many relied on either quantitative or qualitative approaches alone, missing a balanced view of group discussion's effectiveness, thus showing a methodological gap. This study addresses these gaps by examining the extent to which teachers use group discussion to improve English speaking skills in public secondary schools in Moshi Municipality, using a mixed-methods approach.

8. DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The study employed a convergent design under a mixed-methods research approach, guided by Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis theory developed in 1982. The target population comprised 15 public secondary schools, 15 heads of schools, 43 English language teachers, 2,023 Form Four students, and 1 Municipal Secondary Education Officer (MSEO). Sampling techniques that were employed in the study included simple random, total population, and stratified random techniques to select 5 public secondary schools, 5 heads of schools, 43 English teachers, 202 Form Four students, and 1 MSEO. Quantitative data were collected through questionnaires and an English subject proficiency test, while qualitative data were collected through interview guides. The validity of the data collection instruments was ensured by MWECAU research experts in the field of educational curriculum and instruction. A pilot study was conducted in one public secondary school that was not part of the main study. The reliability of the quantitative research instruments was determined using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for Likert-scale items, yielding a value of 0.789 for the teachers' responses. The trustworthiness of qualitative instruments was ensured through triangulation. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and means. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically. In the study, the researcher adhered to ethical

considerations throughout various research procedures, including obtaining a research permit, securing informed consent, maintaining confidentiality and anonymity, and avoiding plagiarism.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The extent to which teachers use group discussion to Improve English Speaking Skills among Secondary School Students

The first research question for this study aimed to investigate the extent to which teachers use group discussion to Improve English Speaking Skills among Secondary School Students. To understand the concern, the required information was obtained by the researcher through questionnaires provided items to English language subject teachers to indicate the level of agreement with the given statement while the head of schools, and MSEOs were interviewed. The five-level Likert scale was employed to make the unit of analysis in which 1=Very Low Extent (VLE), 2= Low Extent (LE), 3=Moderate (M), 4=High Extent (HE), 5=Very High Extent (VHE), F=frequencies, P=Percentages. The rate of percentage described as ≤ 20 =extremely minority; 21-49= minority; 50-59=moderate; 60-69= majority; 71-89= very high majority; 90-99=extremely majority; 100= overwhelming majority (Taherdoost, 2019). The mean score > 3 for the item indicates that the teachers use group discussion to Improve English Speaking Skills and a mean score < 3 indicates that teachers use group discussion has not Improved English Speaking Skills while exactly mean score of 3 implies that teachers use group has improved or not improved English Speaking Skills (Chyung & Hutchinson, 2023). Responses for English language subject teachers were summarized in Table 1

Table.1. English Language Subject Teachers (TRs) Responses on the extent to which teachers use group discussion to Improve English Speaking Skills among Secondary School Students (n=43)

S/ N	Statement	VLE		LE		N		HE		VHE		Mean
		F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
1	I use group discussion to enhance student's ability to articulate ideas clearly in English.	2	4.7%	5	11.6%	9	20.9%	2	46.5%	7	16.3%	3.58
2	I use group discussion to enhance students' confidence in speaking English in front of an audience.	0	0.0%	5	11.6%	7	16.3%	2	46.5%	1	25.6%	3.86

3	I use group discussion as the teaching method to improve students' pronunciation in English.	0	0.0 %	3	7.0 %	8	18.6 %	1	39.5 %	1	34.9 %	4.02
4	I use group discussion as a teaching method to help students expand their English vocabulary.	0	0.0 %	3	7.0 %	5	11.6 %	2	46.5 %	1	34.9 %	4.09
5	I use group discussion as the teaching method to foster the ability to construct grammatically correct sentences in English.	0	0.0 %	5	11.6 %	7	16.3 %	2	46.5 %	1	25.6 %	3.86
6	I used group discussion to improve students' fluency in English.	0	0.0 %	5	11.6 %	8	18.6 %	1	32.6 %	1	37.2 %	3.95
7	I use group discussion as the teaching method to improve student' speaking accuracy	0	0.0 %	2	4.7 %	3	7.0 %	1	32.6 %	2	55.8 %	4.40
8	I use group discussion as the teaching methods to improve students' ability	0	0.0 %	1	2.3 %	8	18.6 %	1	34.9 %	1	44.2 %	4.21

	to use persuasive language in English.											
9	I use group discussion as the teaching methods to improve students' comprehension ability	0	0.0 %	2	4.7 %	3	7.0 %	2	53.5 %	1	34.9 %	4.19
10	Students participating in debates demonstrate improved problem-solving and critical thinking in English.	0	0.0 %	1	2.3 %	5	11.6 %	1	30.2 %	2	55.8 %	4.40
Average Mean Scores											4.05	

Source: Field Data (2025) 1=Very Low Extent (VLE), 2= Low Extent (LE), 3=Moderate (M), 4=High Extent (HE), 5=Very High Extent (VHE), F=frequencies, P=Percentages

Data in Table 1 indicates that a very high majority (62.8%) of teachers rated to a high and very high extent that group discussion enhances students' ability to articulate ideas clearly in English. In contrast, an extremely minority (16.3%) rated this to a very low and low extent, while a minority (20.9%) indicated a moderate extent. The mean score was 3.58, implying that many teachers perceive group discussion as an effective strategy for helping students express their thoughts, opinions, and arguments more clearly and confidently in spoken English. The very high majority rating suggests strong recognition of group discussion as a valuable approach for developing verbal expression and communicative competence. Conversely, the minority and extremely minority responses may reflect differences in classroom conditions, teaching preferences, or students' varying engagement levels. The moderate mean score further underscores a generally positive but somewhat varied perception of group discussion's role in improving spoken English skills. The researcher during a face-to-face interview with the Head of School HoS3 had this to say:

Group discussion is very useful in helping students express themselves. When students discuss in small groups, they become more comfortable and less afraid of making mistakes. I have seen that this approach encourages even the shy ones to try speaking. It helps them practice sentence

construction and pronunciation in a relaxed environment (HoS3 Personal communication, 11, February 2025).

Head of School 3 further added:

We are encouraging teachers to apply group discussion methods more frequently, especially in English lessons, because we've seen that students become more confident in expressing their thoughts, opinions, and arguments verbally. While some teachers are still transitioning from the traditional lecture style, ongoing staff discussions are helping to promote this interactive approach. It's a gradual process, but we've started noticing students participating more actively and speaking with greater clarity during lessons." (HoS3, Personal Communication, 11 February 2025).

The interview with HoS3 shows that group discussion effectively enhances students' ability to express their thoughts, opinions, and arguments in spoken English. It creates a supportive environment that builds confidence, encourages participation, and improves sentence construction and pronunciation. While some teachers are still adapting, increased staff collaboration is promoting wider use of this method to improve students' verbal clarity and fluency. The findings of the study are in line with those by Desy et al., (2025) who affirmed that, group discussions significantly enhance students' speaking skills in English by increasing their confidence, engagement, and ability to articulate ideas clearly.

The findings also align with Lev Vygotsky's Constructivist Theory (1930s–1970s), which emphasizes that learning occurs through social interaction and the active construction of knowledge. In the context of public secondary schools in Moshi Municipality, when teachers use group discussions to engage students in meaningful dialogue, they create a collaborative learning environment where learners construct their understanding through peer interaction. According to Vygotsky's theory, students learn best when they operate within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) tasks they can complete with the help of peers or teachers. Group discussion serves as a practical scaffold, allowing students to express and refine their ideas in English, guided by more competent peers and teachers. This process supports learners in developing clearer articulation, improved sentence construction, and increased confidence in speaking. As a result, students become more active participants in their language learning journey, leading to better speaking outcomes and overall communication competence.

Data in Table 1 indicates that a very high majority (72.1%) of teachers rated to a high and very high extent that group discussion enhances students' confidence in speaking English in front of an audience. In contrast, extremely minority (11.6%) rated this to a very low and low extent, while extremely minority (16.3%) indicated a moderate extent. The mean score was 3.86, implying that many teachers view group discussion as a valuable strategy for fostering students' self-assurance in using English during public speaking situations. The very high majority rating suggests that group discussions provide a supportive and low-pressure environment where students can practice verbal expression, gradually improve their comfort and confidence when address peers or larger groups. On the other hand, the minority responses may indicate variations in teaching practices, student engagement, or

classroom dynamics. The relatively high mean score reinforces the general perception that group discussion contributes positively to students' public speaking confidence in English. The researcher during a face-to-face interview with the Head of School HoS2 had this to say:

Group discussion is one of the methods we encourage, especially in language subjects like English. It helps students become active participants rather than passive listeners. When students speak among their peers, they are more relaxed and willing to try even those who usually fear speaking in front of the class (HoS2 Personal communication, 07, February 2025).

Head of School 2 further elaborated:

We've seen that group discussions give students a chance to construct their thoughts and express them in English. It may not always come out perfectly, but that practice sharpens their confidence. It also builds teamwork, because they learn to listen and respond to others in English (HoS2 Personal communication, 07, February 2025).

Information in the interview indicates that group discussion is seen as a valuable method for enhancing students' confidence in speaking English before an audience. According to HoS2, group discussions shift students from being passive listeners to active speakers, creating a relaxed environment that encourages even the more hesitant students to participate. The practice of constructing and expressing ideas in English, even imperfectly, strengthens their confidence over time. Additionally, HoS2 emphasized that group discussions foster teamwork skills as students practice listening and responding to one another in English. This suggests that group discussions contribute both to building individual speaking confidence and promoting collaborative learning in language classes. The finding of the study are in line with those by Cempaka, (2024) who affirmed that, group discussions significantly enhance students' confidence, speaking skills, and self-efficacy in English, making them more active and proficient in communication.

Data in Table 1 indicates that a very high majority (74.4%) of teachers rated to a high and very high extent that they use group discussion as a teaching method to improve students' pronunciation in English. In contrast, an extremely minority (7.0%) rated this to a very low and low extent, while extremely minority (18.6%) indicated a moderate extent. The mean score was 4.02, implying that many teachers perceive group discussion as an effective strategy for enhancing students' pronunciation. The very high majority rating highlights strong confidence in group discussion as a useful method for helping students develop clearer and more accurate spoken English. On the other hand, the few moderate and low extent ratings may reflect individual classroom constraints, differences in student needs, or varied teaching preferences. The high mean score further reinforces the widespread belief in the value of group discussion for improving pronunciation skills.

The researcher during a face-to-face interview with the Head of School HoS5 had this to say:

Group discussions are very useful in improving students' spoken English, including pronunciation. When students are actively involved in discussion, they use English more, and

through that frequent use, they begin to improve how they pronounce words (HoS5 Personal communication, 03, March 2025).

Head of School 5 added:

In our school, English teachers are encouraged to create opportunities for students to speak group discussion is one of those methods. It's not only about speaking often, but speaking with purpose. When they explain their ideas or respond to others, they put more effort into how they speak (HoS5 Personal communication, 03, March 2025).

Information in the interview indicates that group discussions are regarded as an effective method for improving students' pronunciation in English. According to HoS5, active participation in discussions increases students' use of English, which in turn enhances their pronunciation through regular practice. The emphasis is not only on frequent speaking but also on purposeful communication, where students consciously work on how they articulate their ideas. HoS5 also pointed out that, encouraging teachers to create such speaking opportunities helps students become more deliberate in their speech. This suggests that group discussions support both the frequency and quality of spoken English, contributing to improved pronunciation. The findings of the study are in line with those by Prayudha, (2023) who affirmed that, using group discussion as a teaching method can significantly improve students' English-speaking skills, including pronunciation, fluency, and confidence.

Data in Table 1 indicates that a very high majority (81.4%) of teachers rated to a high and very high extent that they use group discussion as a teaching method to help students expand their English vocabulary. In contrast, an extremely minority (7.0%) rated this to a very low and low extent, while extremely minority (11.6%) indicated a moderate extent. The mean score was 4.09, implying that many teachers view group discussion as a highly effective strategy for enhancing students' vocabulary in English. The very high majority rating reflects strong support for the use of group discussions to facilitate exposure to new words and reinforce word usage through peer interaction. Conversely, the few teachers who rated it to a moderate or low extent may represent classrooms where vocabulary acquisition is approached differently or where students have limited engagement. The high mean score further confirms the general belief that group discussions contribute meaningfully to vocabulary development. The researcher during a face-to-face interview with the Head of School HoS2 had this to say:

Group discussion has really helped students improve their vocabulary. When students are discussing in groups, they are exposed to new words used by their peers. Even those who may not have strong vocabulary learn just by listening and trying to respond (HoS2 Personal communication, 07, February 2025).

Head of School 2 further explained:

Our English teachers guide students to use topic-specific words during discussion. For example, if they're discussing a story or passage, the teacher introduces some key words first. Then the students try to use those words during the discussion. That kind of reinforcement works well (HoS2 Personal communication, 07, February 2025).

Information in the interview indicates that group discussions are viewed as a valuable strategy for expanding students' vocabulary in English. According to HoS2, this method exposes learners to new vocabulary through peer interaction, allowing even less proficient students to learn by listening and engaging in conversation. HoS2 also highlighted the role of teachers in guiding discussions by introducing key terms related to the topic beforehand, which helps students apply new vocabulary in context. This approach reinforces word usage and promotes deeper understanding. The responses suggest that group discussions are effective in supporting vocabulary growth through both exposure and structured practice. The findings of the study are in line with those by Amalia, (2022) who affirmed that, group discussions are an effective method for improving English vocabulary and speaking skills by promoting active engagement, exposure to diverse perspectives, and providing opportunities for practice and feedback.

The findings also align with Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1980s), which emphasizes that language is acquired through exposure to comprehensible input language slightly above the learner's current level. In the context of public secondary schools in Moshi Municipality, using group discussion exposes students to new vocabulary used by peers in meaningful contexts. This interaction provides natural and understandable input that supports vocabulary acquisition. According to Krashen, such input promotes internalization of new words without direct instruction. As a result, group discussion effectively expands students' English vocabulary through authentic and engaging communication.

Data in Table 1 indicates that a very high majority (72.1%) of teachers rated to a high and very high extent that they use group discussion to foster the ability to construct grammatically correct sentences in English. In contrast, extremely minority (11.6%) rated this to a very low and low extent, while extremely minority (16.3%) indicated a moderate extent. The mean score was 3.86, implying that many teachers recognize group discussion as a useful strategy for enhancing students' grammar accuracy through spoken interaction. The very high majority rating suggests that teachers observe improvements in students' sentence construction when collaborative dialogue is encouraged, as it exposes learners to varied sentence structures, vocabulary, and peer feedback. On the other hand, the undecided and low ratings may reflect challenges such as inconsistent implementation, large class sizes, or varying student language proficiency. The relatively high mean score affirms that group discussion is generally viewed as an effective instructional method for developing grammatical competence in English. The researcher during a face-to-face interview with the Head of School HoS4 had this to say:

Yes, group discussion is helpful when it comes to sentence construction. In a group, students don't just speak they try to explain their views, and that encourages them to build full sentences. Over time, they become more aware of grammar rules, like subject verb agreement and proper use of tenses (HoS4 Personal communication, 19, February 2025).

Head of School 4 added:

Our teachers give students practice questions that require long responses. Before the discussion, the teacher may even review a few grammar rules. Then during the discussion, they

observe and give corrections where needed. It's a continuous learning process (HoS4 Personal communication, 19, February 2025).

Information in the interview shows that group discussion plays a role in helping students construct grammatically correct sentences. HoS4 highlighted that expressing views during discussion prompts students to form complete sentences, which enhances their awareness of grammatical structures such as subject verb agreement and tense usage. Teachers also support this process by introducing grammar points before discussions and providing corrective feedback during the activity. This structured approach creates ongoing opportunities for students to refine their grammar through guided practice, indicating that group discussions are useful in developing grammatical accuracy. The findings of the study are in line with those by Shahzad et al., (2024) who affirmed that, group discussions can effectively enhance English grammar skills by fostering engagement, confidence, and practical application of grammar knowledge in both speaking and writing contexts.

Data in Table 1 indicates that a majority (69.8%) of teachers rated to a high and very high extent that they use group discussion to improve students' fluency in English. In contrast, extremely minority (11.6%) rated this to a very low and low extent, while extremely minority (18.6%) indicated a moderate extent. The mean score was 3.95, implying that many teachers consider group discussion an effective method for enhancing students' ability to speak English smoothly and continuously. The majority rating highlights that frequent peer interaction during group activities offers students opportunities for spontaneous speaking, which contributes to improved fluency. Conversely, the moderate and low extent responses may reflect differences in classroom environments, teaching strategies, or student engagement. The relatively high mean score affirms the general perception that group discussion is a valuable instructional approach for fostering spoken fluency in English. The researcher during a face-to-face interview with the Head of School HoS4 had this to say:

During these sessions, students go beyond simply answering questions they actively express opinions, defend their ideas, and engage by asking one another questions. This interactive environment helps students practice speaking more freely and naturally, which contributes to improving their fluency in English (HoS4 Personal communication, 19, February 2025).

Municipal Secondary Education Officer (MSEO) had this to say:

At the municipal level, we keep encouraging heads of schools and teachers to prioritize student engagement in English through such participatory methods. Fluency comes from practice, and group discussion provides that platform consistently (MSEO Personal communication, 14, March 2025).

The interviews reveal that group discussion is widely regarded as an effective strategy for enhancing students' fluency in English. HoS4 highlighted that these sessions encourage students to move beyond rote answers by expressing opinions, defending ideas, and engaging in dialogue, which fosters more natural and spontaneous use of the language. This active participation helps students practice speaking freely, thereby improving fluency. Similarly, the MSEO emphasized the critical role of consistent practice, noting that group discussions provide a reliable platform for students to regularly use English

in meaningful ways. Together, these insights indicate that group discussion creates an interactive learning environment that supports ongoing language practice, which is essential for developing fluency among secondary school students. The finding of the study is in line with those by Mejía and Llor, (2024) who affirmed that, using group discussions significantly improve students' English-speaking fluency, confidence, and collaboration skills.

Data in Table 1 indicates that a very high majority (88.4%) of teachers rated to a high and very high extent that they use group discussion as a teaching method to improve students' fluency in English. In contrast, an extremely minority (4.7%) rated this to a very low and low extent, while extremely minority (7.0%) indicated a moderate extent. The mean score was 4.40, implying that group discussion is widely regarded by teachers as a highly effective strategy for enhancing students' fluency. The very high majority rating reflects strong confidence in group discussion as a method that promotes smooth, natural, and confident speech among learners. On the other hand, the small proportion of moderate and low extent responses may indicate differences in classroom dynamics, teacher facilitation, or students' engagement levels. The high mean score further affirms the overall belief that group discussion plays a key role in developing spoken fluency in English. The researcher during a face-to-face interview with the Head of School HoS1 had this to say:

When students engage in group discussion, they get more chances to practice speaking correctly. They become more conscious of how they form their sentences especially when others are listening. That awareness helps them improve their speaking accuracy over time (HoS1 Personal communication, 03, February 2025).

Head of School 5 had this to say:

Group discussion allows students to apply grammar rules while speaking. It's not just theory anymore they are using the language in real situations. With the teacher's guidance and peer feedback, students gradually learn to speak more accurately and confidently (HoS5 Personal communication, 03, March 2025).

Information in the interview shows that group discussions are perceived as a practical and effective way to improve speaking accuracy. HoS1 emphasized that students become more aware of sentence structure when speaking in front of peers, which encourages them to focus on correct usage. HoS5 supported this by noting that group discussions shift grammar from theory to practice, allowing students to internalize rules through real-life communication. Both heads underscored the importance of teacher support and peer feedbacks in refining students' spoken accuracy, confirming that group discussions are instrumental in building precise and confident English speech. The finding of the study is in line with those by Hoque et al., (2024) who affirmed that, Group discussion is a highly effective strategy for improving students' oral communication skills, and the majority of students believe it contributes to their enhanced language proficiency.

Data in Table 1 indicates that a very high majority (79.1%) of teachers rated to a high and very high extent that they use group discussion as a teaching method to improve students' ability to use persuasive language in English. In contrast, an extremely minority (2.3%) rated this to a very low and

low extent, while extremely minority (18.6%) indicated a moderate extent. The mean score was 4.21, implying that many teachers consider group discussion an effective strategy for developing students' persuasive language skills. The very high majority rating shows strong confidence in group discussion as a tool for enabling learners to practice and refine persuasive expressions through peer interaction and argumentation. Meanwhile, the few moderate and low extent ratings may reflect differences in teaching approaches, classroom participation, or learners' ability to engage in persuasive dialogue. The high mean score reinforces a generally positive perception of group discussion as a method for enhancing persuasive communication in English. The researcher during a face-to-face interview with the Head of School HoS2 had this to say:

Group discussion is very useful in helping students learn how to be persuasive in English. When they have to convince others in the group, they start thinking about how to organize their thoughts and use strong, clear language. It pushes them to go beyond simple responses (HoS2 Personal communication, 07, February 2025).

Head of School 3 had this to say:

We encourage teachers to include topics in group discussion that require students to argue a point or support an opinion. That way, they naturally begin to use persuasive words and expressions. With practice, their confidence and ability to persuade in English improves (HoS3 Personal communication, 11, February 2025).

Information in the interview suggests that group discussion plays a valuable role in helping students develop persuasive language skills. HoS2 emphasized that the need to convince others in a discussion prompts students to structure their thoughts more clearly and use stronger language. HoS3 added that selecting discussion topics that require argument or justification encourages the natural use of persuasive expressions. Both statements reflect the belief that regular practice in group discussions supports students in becoming more confident and effective in using persuasive English. The findings of the study are in line with those by Gaffar, (2024) who affirmed that, Implementing Small Group Discussion can significantly improve students' ability to convey opinions orally in English, increasing their confidence and interaction among peers.

Data in Table 1 indicates that a very high majority (88.4%) of teachers rated to a high and very high extent that they use group discussion as a teaching method to improve students' comprehension ability. In contrast, an extremely minority (4.7%) rated this to a very low and low extent, while extremely minority (7.0%) indicated a moderate extent. The mean score was 4.19, implying that many teachers consider group discussion an effective strategy for enhancing students' understanding of English language materials. The very high majority rating reflects strong teacher confidence in the use of group discussions to help students engage more deeply with content, interpret meaning, and clarify concepts through peer interaction. On the other hand, the small proportion of moderate and low extent responses may reflect challenges related to classroom environment, facilitation skills, or varying levels of student participation. The high mean score further affirms a general consensus that group discussion contributes meaningfully to the development of students' comprehension skills in English. The researcher during a face-to-face interview with the Head of School HoS3 had this to say:

Group discussion gives students the chance to process what they've read or listened to and then explain it in their own words. That process really improves comprehension. When they discuss in a group, they also get to hear how others understood the same material, which deepens their understanding (HoS3 Personal communication, 11, February 2025).

Municipal Secondary Education Officer (MSEO) had this to say:

Group discussion helps students move from passive learning to active engagement. When they share and respond to ideas in English, it means they have to understand the content first. We encourage schools to use this method often because it builds comprehension through interaction and reflection (MSEO Personal communication, 14, March 2025).

Information in the interview indicates that group discussion plays an important role in developing students' comprehension skills. HoS3 emphasized that the act of rephrasing information and hearing different interpretations deepens understanding. MSEO pointed out that comprehension improves when students actively engage with content, rather than just receiving it passively. Both views highlight how interaction and reflection during group discussions reinforce comprehension, making it a highly valued teaching strategy in English language instruction. The finding of the study is in line with those by Suparman, (2024) who affirmed that, using group discussions as a teaching method effectively improves students' reading comprehension and engagement.

The findings also align with Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1970s), which emphasizes that learning occurs through observation, imitation, and modelling within social contexts. In the context of public secondary schools in Moshi Municipality, when teachers use group discussion as a teaching method to improve students' comprehension ability, students learn by observing how peers interpret and explain ideas. This social interaction allows learners to model effective comprehension strategies, such as summarizing, questioning, and clarifying. According to Bandura, such observational learning reinforces cognitive processes and encourages active participation. As a result, group discussion enhances students' comprehension by promoting shared understanding and reinforcing learning through peer modelling and feedback.

Data in Table 1 indicates that a very high majority (86.0%) of teachers agreed and strongly agreed that students participating in debates demonstrate improved problem-solving and critical thinking in English, while extremely minority (11.6%) were undecided, and an extremely minority (2.3%) disagreed. The mean score was 4.40. This implies that debates are very effective in improving students' problem-solving and critical thinking skills in English. The very high majority response underscores the strong belief in the effectiveness of debates for fostering critical thinking. The small number of undecided and negative responses may reflect variations in the implementation of debates in different contexts. The high mean score suggests a very strong positive perception of debates for enhancing problem-solving and critical thinking skills. The researcher during a face-to-face interview with the Head of School HoS3 had this to say:

Debates challenge students to think beyond simple answers. They are required to reason, defend their positions, and respond to counterarguments. This builds both their problem-

solving and critical thinking skills especially because they have to do all that using English (HoS3 Personal communication, 11, February 2025).

Head of School 4 had this to say:

We've seen that students who take part in debates tend to be more analytical. They don't just memorize they evaluate, question, and come up with solutions. Using English to do this sharpens their language and thinking at the same time (HoS4 Personal communication, 19, February 2025).

Information in the interview shows that debates are seen as a powerful tool for promoting both cognitive and language development. HoS3 emphasized how debates compel students to reason critically and respond strategically, which builds problem-solving skills in English. HoS4 supported this by noting that debate participants demonstrate deeper analytical thinking, moving beyond rote learning to evaluating and generating ideas. These insights confirm that debates provide an interactive and intellectually stimulating environment that enhances students' ability to think critically and express solutions effectively in English. The finding of the study is in line with those by Chen et al., (2024) who affirmed that, participating in debates improves students' critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills, as well as their ability to express complex ideas logically in English.

Generally, the average mean score of all items was 4.05, indicating a very high majority rating among teachers that group discussion is an effective teaching strategy for improving students' English-speaking skills in public secondary schools in Moshi Municipality to the high extent. This high average score suggests a strong consensus among educators that group discussions foster critical aspects of speaking such as pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, speaking accuracy, and confidence in public speaking. Moreover, it facilitates deeper engagement through peer interaction, enabling learners to practice persuasive language, sentence construction, comprehension, and critical thinking in a supportive environment. The findings of the study align with those by Desy et al. (2025), Cempaka (2024), and Prayudha (2023), who affirmed that group discussions significantly enhance students' English-speaking abilities by promoting confidence, pronunciation, fluency, and interactive learning. Additionally, studies by Gaffar (2024) and Hoque et al. (2024) support the view that group discussions help develop oral communication and persuasive skills, while Suparman (2024) and Chen et al. (2024) highlight its impact on improving comprehension and critical thinking through active participation and collaboration.

CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

The use of group discussion contributes to improving English speaking skills among secondary school students in Moshi Municipality to a high extent. The study revealed that regular use of group discussions fosters increased student confidence, fluency, vocabulary, and pronunciation, thereby enhancing their ability to articulate ideas clearly in English. Group discussions promote active participation, peer interaction, and provide a supportive environment that encourages all students, including shy ones, to practice and improve their speaking skills. To enhance teachers' job

performance through rewards, school heads should provide both financial and non-financial incentives, such as praise, certificates, and small tokens of appreciation. Schools should establish clear and consistent reward systems that recognize teacher effort and achievement, fostering a sense of value and commitment. Education authorities should support schools with resources and guidelines to ensure fairness and sustainability in reward practices.

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