

The Effects of Classroom Participation Strategies on Students' Learning Outcome in English



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Abstract: This study aimed to examine the learning achievement of students in English using classroom participation strategies and also to explore students' opinions toward these strategies. The study was one group pretest- posttest design and employed a quantitative research method. Clustered random sampling method was used to select one section (36 students) of grade seven students out of four sections as research participants. The instruments for data collection were the learning achievement test, class test, and opinion questionnaire. The instruction lasted for three months. One month for each classroom participation strategy (classroom discussion, think-pair-share, and role-play). The data of achievement tests were analyzed and interpreted using inferential statistics t-test, mean and standard deviation. Most of the students scored high marks after the implementation of each strategy. The finding on students learning achievement test revealed the posttest scores of the students were higher than the pretest scores with the significant value, $p=0.00$. The finding revealed that the use of classroom participation strategies strengthened students' learning outcome in English. The finding from the opinion questionnaire revealed students had positive opinions towards classroom participation strategies with a mean of 4.62 and a standard deviation of 0.49. Therefore, classroom participation strategies enhanced students' learning outcome in English.

Keywords: effects, classroom participation strategies, learning outcome, English

1. Introduction

Classroom participation is vital to develop positive learning outcomes and develop the abilities of students. Lee (2005) stated that classroom participation usually means students communicating in the class: responding and questioning, making comments, and joining the discussion. It is when students are actively involved in some activities during a particular lesson or discussion. Classroom participation provides the platform for the students to participate enthusiastically in various activities, which ultimately enhance their content knowledge and acquire new skills. Furthermore, Dancer and (Kamvounias, 2005) mentioned that the student who participates actively displays improvement in their communication skills. It also inspires students to think and reflect on issues and problems. Active learning involves an interactive forum in which inquiries, participation, and critical thinking are essential (Paschal, 2002).

Therefore, to augment students' participation in activities teacher need to incorporate various classroom participation strategies. Classroom participation strategies develop and refine students' analytical skills and engage students productively in conversation with their peers. It enables students to acquire problem-solving skills, critical thinking and social skills. Small groups help students to interact effectively with their peers and develop social skills (Drakeford, 2012). Furthermore, Starmer, Duquette, and Howard (2015) stated that a higher level of student participation during the learning process, irrespective of where the class is being conducted, connected to better

performance and achievement with higher level of learning. Thus, classroom participation strategies allow students to build on their cerebral part, exhibit their understanding of the curriculum, develop confidence, and implement the theory. Moreover, classroom participation strategies facilitate students' learning through discussion, critical thinking and collaboration.

A lot of research have been carried out throughout the world using various classroom participation strategies, the studies revealed that classroom participation strategies enhance learning outcome of students. (Wright, 2014) stated that classroom participation and active engagement are both important mechanism for students' success in a diverse classroom settings. Therefore, the study was intended to find the effects of classroom participation strategies on students' learning outcome. The classroom participation strategies implemented were classroom discussion, think-pair-share, and role-play.

2. Significance of the problem

Schools in Bhutan encourage new ideas to enhance teaching and learning for the holistic development of the learners. Besides teaching and learning, schools also conduct various literary and cultural activities to develop various skills. However, most of the students lack classroom participation and they rarely participate in the classroom discussion as per teachers' record. Hence, affecting their communication skills and learning as a whole.

(Alshoraty, 2014) mentioned that the reasons for students not participating in the discussion are lack of

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preparation, low self-esteem, lack of communication skills, they prefer to listen, and they feel timid and shy to participate in the discussion. Similarly, through the researcher's observation, students lack classroom participation, they hardly share their ideas with their peers. Moreover, they face lots of problems comprehending the text. Their lack of classroom participation has led to problems such as difficulty in expressing their ideas, poor vocabulary, and unstructured language. Furthermore, (Lee, 2014) stated that students fear to participate in discussions due to lack of content knowledge, lack of English proficiency, and lack of motivation.

(Tesfaya et al., 2015) recommended multiple methods such as small-group discussions, watching videos and critiquing, writing, debates, role-play, chalkboard sessions, and practical exercises based on the applicability in the subject to enhance the competencies of students. Classroom participation strategies provide opportunities for the student to participate in various classroom activities. Classroom participation strategies also allow the teacher to understand the knowledge level of the individual student, as well as carry out meaningful classroom discussion. Therefore, classroom participation strategies such as classroom discussion, think-pair-share, and role-play would be a new approach to enhance students' classroom participation. Thus, augment various skills including social and communication skills.

3. Literature Review

This area explores the way forward of Bhutanese education system and its goals and strategies to achieve those intended plans through different waves. It also compares ideas and findings of different research to validate the ideas and critically relate to the current research. Moreover, it also underpins and explores the effectiveness of classroom participation strategies such as classroom discussion, Think-pair-share and role play.

According to the education blueprint of Bhutan clearly reflects the lack of basic competency of students. Thus, it focuses on improving the competency of students with diverse waves of strategies. The Ministry of Education (2014) stated that if children do not acquire competencies in English and Mathematics at the primary level, they will encounter learning challenges later. (Mocinic, 2011) stated that to achieve competencies, it is vital to use Learner centered teaching methods and procedures which focus on emotional and intellectual involvement of students in the learning process. Learners take the ownership of their learning with the integration of cognitive and practical activities. To have effective teaching, teachers need to use appropriate teaching strategies to suit diverse learners. (Biggs et al., 2007) defined good teaching as "getting most students to use the level of cognitive processes needed to achieve the intended outcomes that the more academic students use spontaneously" (p. 91).

Since there is a need to shift the way the teachers teach and students learn. A change in paradigm from a teacher-centered to more of a learner-centered would be required. Therefore, teachers need to engage learners in the active learning processes rather than the passive ones dominated by the lecture method. It is vital for the teachers to create a conducive learning environment that will motivate students to actively engage in classroom activities. Effective learning takes place in a conducive learning

environment. (Abdullah et al., 2012) stated that a conducive learning atmosphere encourages learning and makes both the teacher and learners feel contented, which ultimately leads to a constructive learning process. Indeed, teachers are to use various strategies to enhance effective classroom participation.

Classroom participation strategies encourage students to articulate their ideas and compare with the ideas and feelings of their peers. These approaches likewise improve students' confidence and develops positive interpersonal relationship with their peers. (Ferkany, 2008) stated that self-esteem is a crucial element of confidence and motivation students need in order to engage in and achieve educational pursuits. Thus, it develops a positive attitude towards learning. It creates a favorable environment that provides all students a platform to participate. Furthermore, classroom participation also provides feedback to the teacher. Students' interest and readiness to participate in a classroom through interaction will create a conducive classroom environment (Davis, 2009). Therefore, effective students' participation in various classroom activities needs to be guided by specific teaching goals.

4. Classroom participation strategies

4.1 Classroom discussion

Classroom discussion is a strategy where the teacher provides some questions and starts the discussion. (Ewens, 2000) stated that classroom discussion as a diverse teaching method emphasize active participation, dialogue, and two-way interaction. Learners are provided with the opportunity to express their ideas, knowledge, and experiences. Students with high self-efficacy actively participate in classroom discussions. Learners who are curious tends to participate more in the classroom discussion which ultimately augment their self-efficacy (Mahyuddin et al., 2006). Thus, if students' ability is improved, it will enrich their confidence level to become more active and speak more in the classroom.

Discussion allows learners to experience varied perceptions and processes of autonomous discussion and develop synthesis, integration, and communication skills (Brookfield & Preskill, 2012). Classroom discussion not only develops students' social and communication skills, but also enhances their comprehension skills. (Ritznitskaya et al. 2001) stated that discussion about the text has the potential to develop comprehension, metacognition, critical thinking, and reasoning, as well as learners' ability to share, and support the argument. Several classroom discussion approaches enhance the communication skills of students, as well as significant improvements in comprehension. Furthermore, classroom discussions are effective at enhancing learners' literal or inferential comprehension, critical thinking and reasoning (Murphy et al., 2009).

4.2 Think pair share

(Sampsel, 2013) stated that Think pair share strategy in the classroom enhances student's participation, and develops the confidence to share their thoughts and ideas. It helps students to analyze information, improve communication skills and refine their thinking. Moreover, (Permedi et al., 2013) indicated that the Think-pair-share strategy develops students' communication proficiency and self-confidence. The Think-pair-share strategy also promotes different responses from the learners such as:

analytic, comparative, inferential, and evaluative reasoning (Street, 2002). The Think-pair-share strategy offers the forum for learners to listen to others' ideas and encourage them to respond appropriately. The Think-pair-share strategy aims to motivate students' energies and develop their abilities. It is an effective method used to support learners in deep thinking process, as well as providing an opportunity to practice articulating their thoughts and ideas with friends and teachers (Fauziyati & Istianah, 2013).

This teaching-learning strategy works in three phases: (1) Think- The teacher activates students' thinking with a question, prompt, or observation. The students should take a few minutes to THINK about the question; (2) Pair- Student pair up with their shoulder partner or face partner to talk about their answer. They compare their answers and identify the answers that is best, most convincing and most unique; (3) Share- After students talk in pairs for a few minutes, any pair would be ask to SHARE their thinking with the rest of the class (Robertson, 2006; Kagan, 2001) stated that by using the think-pair-share strategy teachers provide students with activities that promote collaboration and require accountability.

(Sampsel, 2013) revealed that Think-Pair-Share enhance classroom participation, improve their communication skills, improve their thinking ability, and have their own ideas. Think-pair-share strategy plays a progressive role in developing students' verbal communication skills and improve motivation to learn. Students would also learn to respect their friend's views or ideas. When students work together, they contribute ideas to achieve a common goal. (Cook et al., 2002) stated that the think-pair-share approach champions in providing fair and equal opportunity for all learners to be successful.

4.3 Role-play

It is the methods of cooperative learning. Role play strategy deals with the aspect of communication as it creates avenue for the student to interact with their friends. The small group setting provides learners with more opportunities for one-to-one interaction (Biggs, 2000). This technique is essentially the ways in which our students practice a variety of real-life spoken language in the classroom. (Aliakbari et al., 2010) stated that role play is effective in helping learners to upgrade their oral ability. Students have to take up the role and prepare to present, which ultimately develops their communication skills. (Qing, 2011) stated that role play will develop learner's awareness on different culture and develop communicative ability.

Students would explore of language to express their views and thoughts to communicate during the role play. It further helps learners to acquire speaking skills and oral fluency, which helps them to enhance their confidence level. (Shenet al., 2011) stated that role-play has a positive effect on improving students' speaking as it allows the students to practice with other students. (Kamerade, 2011) indicated that group role-play provides opportunities and encourages students to engage in communication with each other. Moreover, students also think that role play is informative, improves their understanding, and help them relate theory to practice. (Holtet al., 2006) stated that the role-play technique can be exciting and promotes learning, it can be used as an interactive communication within the students, to develop collaboration, and to have an interest in learning.

5. Research Methodology

5.1 Research Method

This study was quantitative with one group pretest-posttest design that aimed to improve the learning outcome of grade seven students in English using classroom participation strategies (classroom discussion, think-pair-share, and role-play). (Babbie, 2010) stated that quantitative research methods accentuate on measurements and the statistical analysis of data collected through samples, questionnaires, and surveys, or by manipulating pre-existing statistical data using computational techniques.

A learning outcome test (class test) was developed to compare the learning outcome of the sample group before and after the implementation of each classroom strategy (classroom discussion, think-pair-share, and role-play). Pretest and posttest were conducted to find out the effects of classroom participation strategies. The researcher also used a survey questionnaire to find out students' opinions towards classroom participation strategies after the study. A multiple-choice question was used as the items are less susceptible to guessing making it more reliable means of assessment. Moreover, it is also easy to answer and easy to analyze data.

5.2 Research Design

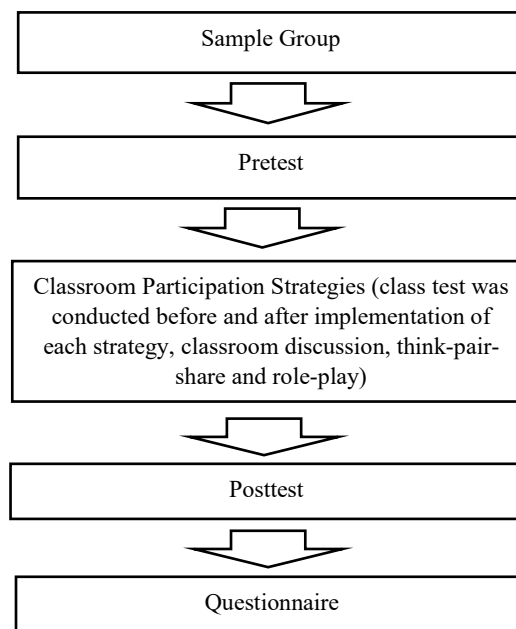


Figure 1 Research Design

5.3 Implementation of classroom participation strategies

Students were divided into six groups comprising of six students in each group. The activities were carried out as given below:

- 1) A pretest was conducted before the implementation of classroom participation strategies.
- 2) Posttest was conducted after the implementation of all three classroom participation strategies.

3)Finally, students were provided with a survey questionnaire to find out their opinion on classroom participation strategies.

5.4 Classroom discussion

- 1)The class test was carried out before the implementation of the strategy.
- 2)Teaching was carried out focusing on classroom discussion strategy. Students were provided ample opportunities for discussion in their respective groups related to the activity.
- 3)This particular strategy was focused for at least four weeks on three different topics.
- 4)The class test was carried out after the implementation of the strategy.

5.5 Think Pair Share

- 1)The class test was carried out before the implementation of the strategy.
- 2)Teaching was carried out focusing on the think-pair-share strategy. Students were provided ample opportunities to execute the think-pair-share strategy to carry out the activity.
- 3)This particular strategy was focused for at least four weeks on three different topics.
- 4)The class test was carried out after the implementation of the strategy.

5.6 Role Play

- 1)The class test was carried out before the implementation of the strategy.

- 2)Teaching was carried out focusing on role-play strategy. Students were provided with different topics in groups and carried out role-play in the class.
- 3)This particular strategy was focused for at least four weeks on three different topics.
- 4)The class test was carried out after the implementation of the strategy.

5.7 Validity and Reliability

The content validation of the research instruments were done with the help of two master teachers and one language teacher. Cronbach’s Alpha was computed for the achievement test and opinion questionnaire to find out the reliability of the questionnaires. The Cronbach’s Alpha (α) was 0.924 which indicated that the instruments were good and reliable.

6. Results

6.1 Analysis of test scores

The objective of the study was to find out the effect of classroom participation strategies on students’ learning outcome. To find the effects of classroom participation strategies, the researcher administered pretest and posttest to the sample group. A comparative statistical analysis was done using a one-sample t-test by comparing mean, standard deviation, and significant value. The Software Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used to compute pretest and posttest scores. The table below shows the comparison of pretest and posttest within the sample group.

Table 1 Pretest and Posttest Comparison

	Mean		Mean Difference	2-tailed significance	Standard Deviation	
	Pretest	Post test			Pretest	Posttest
Control group	4.86	11.31	11.31- 4.86= 6.45	.000*	4.7	3.7.

*Significance level (p): <0.05 significant

The mean of pretest and posttest are 4.86 and 11.31, the mean difference is 6.45 as indicated in the above table. The Standard deviation is 4.7 in the pretest and 3.7 in the posttest respectively. The significance value (p) 0.00 represents that there is a statistically significant increase in scores of the posttest than the pretest.

Furthermore, to find the effectiveness of each strategy class test was administered before and after the implementation of each strategy (classroom discussion, think-pair-share, and role-play). The class test was conducted out of 20 marks and later converted into 5 marks.

Table 2 marks obtain in percentage for each strategy

Classroom participation strategy	Marks obtained in percentage (below 3)		Marks obtained in percentage (above 3)	
	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
Classroom discussion	75%	33.3%	25%	66.7%

Think-pair-share	80.6%%	8.3%	19.4%	91.7%
Role-play	61.1%	19.4%	38.9%	80.6%

Table 2 shows, 66.7% of students score more than 3 marks after the implementation of the classroom discussion strategy. 91.7% of students score more than 3 marks with the implementation of the think-pair-share strategy. 80.6% of students score more than 3 marks after the

implementation of the role-play strategy. Most of the students score more than 3 marks after the implementation of the classroom strategies. This indicates that the classroom participation strategies used are effective.

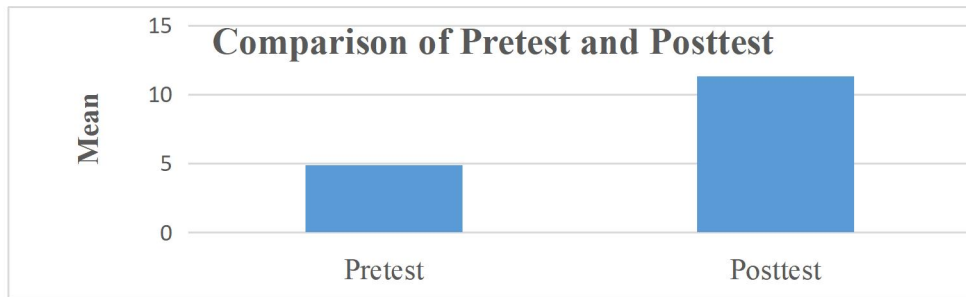


Figure 2 Comparison of pretest and posttest

6.2 Analysis of students’ opinion questionnaire

The objective was to explore students’ opinions towards classroom participation strategies. The data for the questionnaire was collected through a five-point Likert scale; the rating scale is as follows: 5- Strongly agree, 4- Agree, 3- Neither agree nor disagree, 2- Disagree, and 1-

Strongly disagree (Vagias, W.M, 2006). The questionnaire was administered after the intervention to find out the opinion of the students towards the classroom participation strategies. Mean and standard deviation was calculated for all the statements. The result is presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Mean and Standard Deviation of students’ opinion questionnaire

Sl.no	Statement	Mean	Mean	S.D	Opinion level
1	Classroom participation improved my vocabulary	36	4.67	.478	Strongly Agree
2	Classroom participation improved my speaking skills	36	4.67	.478	Strongly Agree
3	Classroom participation helped me to understand the lesson better	36	4.64	.487	Strongly Agree
4	Classroom participation encouraged me to express my views	36	4.53	.506	Strongly Agree
5	Classroom participation helped me to build a good relationship with my friends	36	4.64	.487	Strongly Agree
6	Classroom participation helped to build confidence	36	4.75	.439	Strongly Agree
7	Classroom participation helped me to interact with my teacher	36	4.64	.487	Strongly Agree
8	Classroom participation helped me to interact with my classmates	36	4.58	.500	Strongly Agree
9	Classroom participation motivated me	36	4.67	.478	Strongly Agree
10	Classroom participation helped me to make the right decision	36	4.53	.506	Strongly Agree
11	Classroom participation helped me to learn	36	4.61	.494	Strongly Agree

	the lesson in-depth				
12	Classroom participation kept me alert throughout the lesson	36	4.53	.506	Strongly Agree
13	Classroom participation helped me to improve my writing skills	36	4.53	.506	Strongly Agree
14	Classroom participation helped me to improve problem-solving skills	36	4.53	.506	Strongly Agree
15	I like when my friends share their views	36	4.75	.439	Strongly Agree
	Total		4.62	.487	Strongly Agree

Note: Satisfaction level on individual items in the questionnaire: (0.00-1.50) = Strongly Disagree, (1.51-2.50) = Disagree, (2.51-3.50) = Neither Agree nor Disagree, (3.51- 4.50) = Agree, and (4.51-5.0) = Strongly Agree

The above table shows that all the statements in the students' opinion questionnaire survey fall on the scale of 'strongly agree' which indicates that students have positive opinions towards classroom participation strategies.

7. Discussion

The findings of the study were:

- 1) Classroom participation strategies strengthened students' learning outcome.
- 2) Students also had positive opinions towards classroom participation strategies.

It was found that classroom participation strategies were effective as students were encouraged to take active participation in all the activities. Moreover, students scored good marks with the use of classroom participation strategies. (Tran, 2013) stated that students in cooperative learning groups learn more as students are engaged in interaction with their peers and teacher. Classroom participation strategies augment students' communication skills, social skills, and comprehension skills. The structured procedures intricate in classroom participation strategies develop pro-social skills and increases self-esteem in students (Jenkins et al., 2003).

Further, classroom participation strategies encourage students to interact with their friends and develop an interest in the topic. Classroom participation strategies promote conducive learning environment as all the activities were student-centered, students felt free to interact and discuss with their classmates and engaged more toward exploring of knowledge. Therefore, it enhanced students' learning. (Biggs, 2000) stated that there is a wide range of motivational and social benefits due to interaction in the classroom. These include: interacting with friends seems more interesting than listening to lectures, improving communication skills, rising self-awareness, and also helps in understanding and forming relationships. This approach further alleviates the inattentiveness issue that is caused due to more lectures by the teacher, at the same time allows students to proceed with information and discuss meaning that is focused on the verbal interactions (Anderson et al., 2011).

Even though classroom participation strategies had lots of benefits but active participation among all the

students is compromise during the group activity. Therefore, teachers need to be vigilant and there should be effective monitoring. Classroom participation strategies need proper planning according on the dynamic nature of the activities.

8. Conclusion

It can be concluded that classroom participation strategies strengthened students' learning. It has also helped student understand the content and motivated them to participate in the class and enhanced their self-esteem as it was student centered approach. Students were given equal opportunities to participate in the activities and none were left out. Students got ample opportunities to share their ideas, develop collaboration and cooperation, and enhanced teacher-student relationships Furthermore, it encouraged students in writing, expressing their views, critical thinking, productive discussion, and understanding of the content.

Moreover, the performance of students was better with the implementation of various classroom participation strategies. The formative and summative assessment also depicted that each student was given equal opportunities and helped make their own judgment about their learning.

Therefore, classroom participation strategies helped students understand their peers as they interact actively in various activities. Classroom participation strategies enhanced students' engagement in the activity. Classroom participation strategies improved learners' critical thinking skills and comprehension skills.

Based on the findings of the study following recommendations have been made:

- 1) Classroom participation strategies were found to be students' centered approach. So teachers could use this approach to augment students' learning outcome.
- 2) This study recommends that the lesson should be well planned while using classroom participation strategies.
- 3) This study recommends that the group formation has to be done based on diverse learners.
- 4) Further research may be conducted to study and investigate the effectiveness of classroom participation strategies on students' learning outcome in other subjects.

5) Research may be carried out to examine the effectiveness of classroom participation strategies on students' learning outcome with other grades.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest to this work.

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