

**EFFECTIVE SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
THROUGH GROUP WORK IN TERTIARY LEVEL ESL CLASS ROOM**

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The tertiary level ESL learners with little or no exposure to the target language enter the universities with low proficiency in speaking and listening skills. Among the various language learning strategies learning through group work is found to be a significant approach in supporting the development of speaking skills. It affords learners the opportunity to listen to the language being spoken by a number of their peers and also to speak the language in a guided and structured way. The objective is to find out whether learning through group work increases effective second language learning opportunities. The data were procured from pre- and post- test performances in group work activities based on speaking proficiency of the participants, the teachers' observation and the literature review. The findings prove participating in group learning increases the proficiency in speaking skills. The study shows that learning through group work gets rid of the learners' inhibition in speaking. Group activities provide the opportunity to speak in smaller formations, and build the confidence with the learners' oral skills.