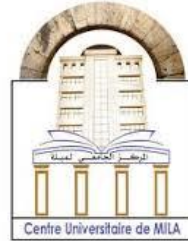


PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
Abdelhafid Boussouf University Center of Mila



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**The Role of Peer-led Conversation Club in Boosting
the English Language Learners' Speaking Skill: A
Case Study of Third-Year Students of English at the
University Centre of Mila**

*A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements of the Master Degree in
Didactics of Foreign Languages*

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Dedication

If there is anyone who is worthy of all my sincere gratitude, then it is Allah, the most merciful, the especially merciful. He who allowed me reaching this stage and level of knowledge. He who allowed me being powerful and stubborn enough to overcome all the obstacles along my studying career.

Another big appreciation is directed to myself for never giving up despite illness and every other overwhelming moment I had experienced while writing this dissertation.

At last, I thank my most beloved mother and father, my models in life, for bearing with me all those years, for schooling me, and for giving me everything they never had without asking for an exchange. I also thank my two sisters for being supportive and reflecting positivity in times of need.

NAILA

Dedication

*I praise my gratitude to Allah the Almighty, The Most Merciful, The Most Passionate
I dedicate this work to my beloved parents Kamal and Loubna, the strong walls that keep me safe
and warm. From the earliest moments of my life, you have been the steady pillars, providing not
just shelter, but a haven of love and support. Your sacrifices, your unspoken prayers you
whispered have shaped the woman whom I am today and gave me the power to sustain on this
journey. You are the ones to whom I owe everything beautiful in this life.*

*To my fiancé, Nidhal, your unwavering belief in me has been a constant source of warmth a
flame that lights my path.*

*To my sisters, Narmine, Alaaerrahmane, and Rafah, and my brothers, Aberrahime, and Djoud
Abdelouadoude, your presence is the cherished melody in the symphony of my life.*

Thank you all for being the silent architects of my success, and for the strength that fills my heart.

Nourelouyoune

Acknowledgements

Praise be to Allah, The all Almighty, The most Gracious, and The most Merciful.

First, and before everything, one ought to start by thanking Allah. Alhamdulillah for all his blessings along the long journey of writing this dissertation. He who provided us with patience, strengths, and consistency while conducting this research work. He who answered our prayers and lifted our spirits in times of doubt. Indeed, he is the one and only one. He to whom all gratitude and all praise belong.

Then we would like to thank our Professor Leila BELLOUR for supervising every step of writing this dissertation and offering guidance wisely whenever it was needed. Also, we thank all students who incorporated with us, especially the members of the club at Mila University Centre.

Another sincere appreciation is directed to the board of examiners of our dissertation's committee, the chairwoman Dr. Meriem ABID and the examiner Dr. Fouzia BENNACER. Their valuable insights and feedback have significantly added to the quality of our research.

Abstract

The speaking skill is of major significance as it is the real performance of one's competence in the language. The primary aim of this dissertation is to explore the role of peer-led conversation clubs in boosting the speaking skill among learners of English and to discover the effective key elements present in these clubs' setting that lead to such enhancement. This study focuses on two major hypotheses. The first is that peer-led conversation clubs help learners improve their speaking skill and the second is that some effective key elements required for this enhancement are present in these clubs' setting rather than ordinary speaking sessions. Causal comparative research, adopting a mixed method, is employed. A questionnaire is administered randomly to a sample of 3rd year English students at Mila University Center in addition to observing the clubs' setting in comparison to the ordinary speaking ones. The findings confirmed that the peer-led conversation club at Mila University Center contributes to the enhancement of speaking skill among 3rd year bachelor English students due to certain effective key elements present in the club's setting, such as a friendly atmosphere, peer support, freedom of self-expression, a suitable setting organization, and more student-oriented practices.

Keywords: peer-led conversation clubs, conversation club setting, ordinary speaking sessions, English language learners, speaking skill.

List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

MTT: Moderator Talking Time

OSS: Ordinary Speaking Sessions

PLCC: Peer-led Conversation Club

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

SS: Speaking Skill

STT: Student Talking Time

VI: Verbal Interactions

ZPD: Zone of Proximal Development

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Resumé

الملخص

General Introduction

1. The Content

In recent years, scholars and researchers are more interested in investigating and discovering the role of speaking clubs on language performance and the role they play in improving the quality and effectiveness of the learning process. Speaking clubs become a well-spread form of extracurricular activities available for practicing the speaking skill. They are arrangements in a casual setting where people with shared goals and interests meet regularly in order to perform some activities (Marinova-Todd, S. H., Marshall, D. B., & Snow, C. E., 2000, as cited in Abdala, 2021). Their atmosphere is fun, engaging, and stress-free for individuals to engage in communications (Abdala, 2021).

The peer-led conversation club is a new form of these speaking clubs that was formed by some English Students at Mila University Centre. It is casual meetups where individuals from different levels gather and practice their spoken language. The peer-led conversation club is the real embodiment of peer interaction activities available for further practicing the language among English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners, more specifically practicing the speaking skill. Furthermore, peer-led conversation club, as an extracurricular activity, provides learners with opportunities to practice the speaking skill with peers who share similar goals and interests. As stated by Ahmmed (2017) peer interactions promote language learning and self-expression among learners.

In Addition to different aspects of English related to structure and comprehension, peer interaction has a major impact on improving the speaking skill. The speaking skill has been overlooked in various educational establishments despite the increasing demand for it and its major importance (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017); especially for EFL learners. Additionally, learning the language's speaking skill is one of the most important aspects of learning a foreign language, and

the success in learning that particular language is measured by one's ability to perform conversations using that language (Nunan, 1991).

The speaking skill must be well developed in addition to other skills in order for learners to grantee more effective communication achievements with different audience (Boonkit, 2010). Therefore, its importance must be carefully regarded in a world witnessing a persistence spread of the English language. It is a complex skill as it transforms structures into functions. However, it is often ignored within numerous classes and syllabus, and it has never been a crucial part of teachers' exams nor adequately practiced inside and outside educational establishments (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017).

2. Statement of the Problem

Due to the globalization of the English language, the demand for being able to speak the language has increased. Nowadays, individuals' competence in any language is judged by their flexibility in engaging in various verbal interactions. Consequently, the least expectation from English learners is to be able to use the language orally in a variety of different contexts. Therefore, the focus on the speaking skill is highly recommended. Regrettably, ordinary speaking sessions within formal establishments become inadequate to cope with the phenomenon of English globalization. The latter issue led to the foundation of distinctive speaking activities in/outside of formal educational establishments. The peer-led conversation club is one available way for boosting the speaking skill. Having said that, we ask the question of whether the peer-led conversation club boost the English language leaners' speaking skill, and whether this club lies on some affective key elements that are absent in the ordinary speaking sessions.

3. Aims of the Study

This research aims to demonstrate the role peer-led conversation club at Mila University Centre play in boosting the English language learners' speaking skill in order to understand whether it contributes positively to the speaking skill improvement. The research work aims, as well, at discovering the effective elements present in the peer-led conversation club and absent in the ordinary speaking sessions at Mila University Center.

4. Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies on its contribution to provide a better understanding of how to enhance the speaking skill among learners of English as a Foreign Language, particularly through the peer-led conversation club. By demonstrating its role, this research seeks to provide valuable insights into whether such type of club can positively influence the improvement of speaking skill, more specifically among third-year students at Mila University Centre. Moreover, the study is significant since it informs the design and implementation of language learning programs, enhance the quality and efficiency of ordinary speaking sessions at Mila University Center, and potentially result in more dynamic and specialized approaches to teaching that integrates peer-led strategies and extracurricular activities.

5. Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are set:

1. Engaging in the peer-led conversation club help English learners at Mila University Centre to improve their speaking skill in comparison to those who do not attend.
2. Certain key elements required for improving the speaking skill are present in the peer-led conversation club sessions rather than ordinary speaking sessions at Mila University Centre.

6. Research Questions

The research questions for this research are:

1. Does the peer-led conversation club boost the speaking skill among English language learners at Mila University Centre?
2. What are the key elements that contribute to the enhancement of the speaking skill that are present in peer-led conversation club and absent in the ordinary speaking sessions at Mila University Centre?

7. Research Design

In order to achieve the objectives of this research, both quantitative and qualitative data collection tools will be used. A questionnaire is directed to third-year bachelor English language learners at Mila University Centre. In addition, observations on both the peer-led conversation club's setting and ordinary speaking sessions' setting organized by the department of foreign languages will take place to identify the key elements contributing to the enhancement of the speaking skill. Furthermore, a causal comparative research design is used, where the data gathered from both research means will be compared and contrasted. The selected design serves to guarantee looking upon the issue under study from distinctive perspectives and for the data to be more relevant

8. Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation contains two main chapters. The first one is theoretical, and it is titled "Enhancing the Speaking Skill through Peer-led Conversation Clubs". This chapter is further divided into three main parts along which the issue at hand is well elaborated. The first part deals with the definition of the speaking skill, significance of the speaking skill, and both subjective and objective factors affecting students' speaking performance. The second part deals with definitions of both English clubs and the peer-led conversation clubs, the significance of peer-led conversation

clubs, and the activities offered by the club at Mila University Centre. Whilst the third part reviews existing research works and their numerous findings, which support the subject matter under study. The second chapter is practical and entitled 'Data Collection & Analysis'. The latter presents the research means implemented, the adopted research design, the process of data collection, and both analysis and interpretation of findings. In addition, it addresses the limitations of this study and provides some pedagogical suggestions and recommendations.

Chapter One: Enhancing the Speaking Skill through Peer-led Conversation Club

Introduction

In the realm of teaching English as a second language, there are fundamental skills categorized into receptive skills, encompassing listening and reading, and productive skills, involving writing and speaking. Speaking is considered an important skill in learning. The first section of this chapter will contain a general overview of the speaking skill by dealing with certain important related elements. First, we will define SS. In addition, we will deal with its significance and factors that cause speaking difficulties for EFL learners, and then we will uncover some key elements for the successful enhancement of the SS. The second section of this chapter is going to deal with PLCC, the activities implemented, and their significance. Finally, the third section is devoted to reviewing some existing research on the effect of English/speaking clubs on the SS. A variety of sources was used in a variety of contexts to enrich and lay a strong foundation for the practical part.

1. Speaking Skill

1. Definitions

Speaking is highly crucial for the second language acquisition; so, when talking about it, it is not referred to only as the process of uttering words through the mouth. Instead, speaking is conveying meaningful messages through the mouth, using words (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). Moreover, Leong & Ahmadi (2017) explained that speaking enhancement plays a significant role as means of effective communication.

Speaking is an essential skill in any language whether it is in the first or the second language. Through speaking, individuals can measure their success in language proficiency (Nunan, 1991).

Gumperz (1999, p. 101) stated that speaking is cooperatively constructed, which is based on contributions, assumptions, expectations, and interpretations of the participants' utterances. This

perspective portrays communication as a collaborative effort, where participants actively shape meaning through assumptions, expectations, and interpretations, transforming speaking from an individual act into a collective endeavor influenced by contextual factors. This means that the richness of communication lies in these individuals' cooperative interplay and emphasizing the social nature of language. Shared understanding emerges through the collective engagement of all participants.

2. Significance of Speaking Skill

Throughout the history of foreign language teaching and learning, speaking has always been considered the most essential skill to be mastered because individuals who learn a language are referred to as speakers of that language (Ur, 1996). In language acquisition, speaking stands out as a pivotal skill because it enables learners to actively engage with the language in real-time interactions, helping them enhance their vocabulary and grammar and subsequently improve their writing abilities. Speaking allows learners to convey emotions and ideas, narrate stories, make requests, engage in discussions, and demonstrate various language functions. This interactive aspect is crucial as it takes place in real-time situations, allowing individuals to use words and phrases fluently, often without extensive conscious thought. It empowers them to construct sentences for authentic communication, reflecting their desire to use language for specific purposes (McDonough & Shaw, 1993). Boonkit (2010) explained that the SS must be well developed in addition to other skills in order for learners to grantee more effective communication achievements with different audience.

The importance of speaking extends beyond language learning and is integral to the success of individuals in their daily activities. Proficient language speakers have increased opportunities for employment across diverse organizations and companies, as highlighted by Baker and Westrup (2003). They asserted that individuals with strong English-speaking skills stand a better chance of

receiving quality education, securing good employment, and achieving career advancement. This viewpoint underscores the practical and essential role that speaking plays in facilitating meaningful interaction and achieving specific objectives.

3. Factors affecting students' speaking performance

In order for students to overcome different speaking skill's difficulties, factors responsible for affecting their speaking performance must be revealed (Tuan & Mai, 2015). According to the latter cited researchers, students' performance is affected by either the performance conditions or affective factors. Thanh (2020) reinvestigated these factors, and further classified them into subjective factors (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, accuracy, confidence, anxiety, listening ability and motivation) and objective factors (time pressure, planning, the standard of performance, feedback from teachers or peers and the amount of support).

Relevant factors to this study are selected to be tackled in the following paragraphs:

3.1. Objective factors

3.1.1. Time exposure. Being far from native English speakers or immersive language environments often hampers the development of natural conversational skills, hindering the ability to comprehend and respond spontaneously in real-life situations. Speaking is the main language skill; however, most people in EFL settings struggle to overcome their speaking problems because their exposure to contexts where speaking skill can be practiced is rare. Integrating activities that simulate authentic communication, such as role-playing exercises, language exchange programs, or conversational clubs, can help address this weakness. Additionally, encouraging interactions with native speakers through language immersion experiences or digital platforms can provide valuable exposure, bridging the gap between classroom learning and real-world language use. Hosni (2014) clarified that teachers believe in the importance of teaching speaking yet do not spend enough time on

that because of a shortage time. Priority is given to the coverage of textbook topics, which emphasizes teaching reading and writing rather than speaking.

3.1.2. Feedback from teachers and peers. The primary objective of feedback within the learning process is to positively enhance a student's performance. According to Reynolds (2006, as cited in Bani Younes, Z. M., and Albalawi, F. S.,2016), feedback is any reaction from an instructor concerning a student's performance or behavior. This response serves as a valuable tool by providing insights into progress and identifying areas for improvement, thereby guiding students on their learning journey. However, it is crucial to note that feedback, to be effective, must be constructive. Merely adopting a critical stance without offering clear guidance for improvement can be counterproductive and risk discouraging learners. According to Ur (1996), various factors contribute to difficulties in speaking, including inhibition, fear of making mistakes, apprehension of criticism, or inherent shyness. If continuous emphasis is placed on correction without a balanced approach, it may develop a sense of fear of making mistakes. Therefore, creating a cycle where the fear of receiving corrective feedback diminishes confidence. Consequently, it may lead individuals to disengage from class participation, ultimately resulting in a loss of language proficiency and motivation to speak over time. Therefore, instructors must approach feedback with a constructive and supportive mindset. Guidance, along with pointing out areas for improvement, can empower students to address challenges, fostering a positive learning environment that encourages active participation and continued language development. In this way, feedback becomes a catalyst for growth, nurturing confidence and motivation in learners.

3.1.3. The amount of support. The amount of support was introduced as one of the performance conditions that are parts of the external environment and can affect the learners' speaking skill and their oral performance in general (Nation & Newton, 2009, as cited in Tuan & Mai, 2015). Academically speaking, and in educational contexts, support, or as it is referred to as academic support, is a distinctive variety of instructional methods, academic services, or resources offered by schools to students in an attempt to help them score higher, catch up with their peers, and maintain the learning standards (Great Schools Partnership, 2013). Another important concept to be mentioned is Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The latter was introduced as part of the triecta within Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. The ZPD is defined as the distance between the student's actual level and the level of potential development that is determined through problem-solving under an adult's guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86, as cited in Kos, 2023). Furthermore, Kos (2023) stated that support provides learners with their actual needs, and appropriate support may result in independent performance. He added that learners might not understand tasks before they participate in them and support one another.

3.1.4. Topical knowledge. Most learners often feel unmotivated to express themselves and struggle to remember what to say. This phenomenon, as confirmed by Rivers (1968), is attributed to learners frequently finding themselves with nothing to say, probably because their teachers have chosen topics that are inappropriate for them or because they lack sufficient information about the chosen topics. This perspective serves to highlight the extent to which topic selection and background knowledge affect spoken performance. In a similar vein, Baker and Westrup (2003) observed the difficulty learners encounter when asked to articulate themselves in a foreign language. They noted that learners often lack

thoughts about what to say, struggle with selecting appropriate vocabulary, and grapple with using grammar correctly. These observations underscore the importance of providing learners with topics that are relevant to their interests, experiences, and language proficiency levels.

3.2. Subjective factors

Thanh (2020) expanded Tuan & Mai's (2015) affective factors to include linguistic-related factors, as they perceived them as subjective and differed from one student to another.

3.2.1. Affective factors. The complexity of learning is driven by the complexity of the learners' psychology, where different internal factors may hinder or boost the efficiency of certain knowledge and skills acquisition. Therefore, "without positive attitudes towards the speaking performance, the aim of speaking will not be obtainable for learners." (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017, p.38). Krashen (1982) confirmed that SLA process success or failure is influenced by various affective variables related to the learner's psychology. He placed them into three different categories: motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety.

3.2.1.1. Motivation. In the words of Nguyen Thi Thu (2022), motivation is the psychological factor that provides learners with a stimulus that generates an action. It plays a crucial role in realizing goals, especially, in the field of SLA. Furthermore, he elaborated that motivation is a pillarstone in the teaching-learning process, so it is impossible for demotivated learners to develop their speaking skill because of the absence of willingness to participate in activities with others, ask questions, and accept feedback. Therefore, various research work confirmed its major significance "It has been continually stressed through history that motivation has an important role in successful learning" (Mazouzi, 2013, p. 29).

3.2.1.2. Self-confidence. Nguyen Thi Thu (2022) highlighted the increasing significance of self-confidence in verbal communications, as it facilitates speaking both fluently and accurately in L1 and L2. Additionally, he defined this affective factor as the belief that something will work out and succeed. Therefore, students with high self-confidence will achieve positive outcomes because they are more likely to engage in communications and oral-production activities. On the contrary, students with low self-confidence who do not see themselves as capable of such engagements are more likely to avoid participating in speaking activities. Thus, it hinders their language performance enhancements and academic achievements.

3.2.1.3. Anxiety. It is proven that anxiety is a major psychological disadvantage that hinders students' oral performance because it results in physical and psychological problems. It affects motivation and concentration, increases error commitment, blocks students' real performance, and decreases the learning interest (Nguyen Thi Thu, 2022). Anxiety causes strong emotional reactions in learners, like shaking, panic, and nervousness. Those emotional reactions appear during speaking and put at risk the individual's sense of self, ego, and identity, which have been developed in their first language as sensible and intellectual (Horwitz et al., 1986, as cited in Nguyen Thi Thu, 2022).

3.2.2. Linguistic factors. They are factors related to the student's language itself, like grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, accuracy, listening ability and others. The following factors are selected to be further explained:

3.2.2.1. Vocabulary. Tuan & Mai (2015) elucidated that vocabulary is another linguistic factor, which refers to the number of words that a language learner knows and uses to express their ideas in communications instantly and easily. They also added that communication cannot be started if learners do not have their own sets of vocabulary;

“Without grammar, very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed” (Wilkins, 1972, as cited in Tuan & Mai, 2015, p. 23).

3.2.2.2. Fluency. Fluency is the individual’s ability to respond coherently by linking words and phrases, articulating clear sounds, and correctly placing stress and intonation in what is uttered (Hedge, 2000, as cited in Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). According to Thanh (2020), the role of fluency is to make communication smoother by reducing the need for pauses to consider grammar and mental translation from the first language to English. Moreover, he added that students need to possess quick reflections on the input from other speakers or materials.

3.2.2.3. Accuracy. The consideration of accuracy during the teaching-learning process ought to be emphasized in learning languages since it affects the speaking performance fluency (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). Accuracy is paying attention to the sentences’ correctness and language completeness at the level of several linguistic components, such as grammatical structures and pronunciation (Mazouzi, 2013).

3.2.2.4. Listening ability. It is essential for EFL students to develop their listening ability in order to improve the speaking skill. Therefore, understanding spoken utterances guarantees the success of communication (Doff, 1998, as cited in Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). It can be concluded that students will not be able to reply if they do not understand what they are told. In addition, when a student talks, they produce meaningful words and sentences that require answers or comments from their peers, which is possible through the listening process (Tuan & Mai, 2015). Verbal communications promote the integration of speaking and listening in a way that reflects natural language use (Mazouzi, 2013).

2. Peer-led Conversation Club

1. Definitions

1.1. English-Speaking Clubs

A club is “an association of persons for some common object, usually jointly supported and meeting periodically” (Merriam-Webster, 2024). The integration of the clubs’ concept in education led to the emergence of what is known today as speaking clubs, which are more specifically labelled as language-speaking clubs in the field of SLA.

Holandyah, M., Marzulina, L., Erlina, D., and Angreini, N. (2024) introduced the English-speaking club as a community where individuals gather for the purpose of practicing English and improving their speaking skill. Moreover, they explained that English-speaking clubs are one of the most notable extracurricular activities available for students to boost their speaking skill. Extracurricular activities are optional programs that support learning but are not counted towards students’ academic performance (Lunenbugurg & Ornstein, 2008, as cited in Holandyah, M., Marzulina, L., Erlina, D., & Angreini, N., 2024). English clubs are comfortable environments for people with a united goal to learn English (Yusvita, L., Atmowardoyo, H., & Samtidar, 2024).

According to another definition, an English club is a casual setting where people meet for the purpose of practicing English for an hour or two (Paltridge, 2001, as cited in Abdala, 2019). Abdala (2019) stated that researchers illustrate in their studies that English clubs are regularly arranged activities.

Researchers have distinctively studied different types of English clubs based on the nature of the club available for investigation. In the context of this research, a new form of these speaking clubs is under study. The peer-led conversation club (PLCC) is a new type of these clubs, which was formed lately at Mila University Centre by some of the university students.

1.2. Peer-led Conversation Club

The peer-led conversation club, like any other English club, possesses the same concept and purpose. However, as the name insinuates, it is a club moderated by peers themselves, where peers lead discussions. In the field of education, peer-led discussions have been proven as valuable instructional strategy (Dorit Maor, 2008). Peer-led discussions are different from teacher-led discussions; the former provides a free, supportive environment for students allowing them to challenge other statements produced by their peers without feeling inhibited (Beach, 1974, as cited in Hsiung Liu, 2014b).

2. Significance of Peer-led Conversation Club

According to Austin (1994), the single most important environmental influence on student development is the peer group. He posits that getting involved in educational clubs and organizations influences and contributes to the development of college students. The essence of these clubs lies in creating an enjoyable and stress-free environment. This unique atmosphere becomes a catalyst for learners to overcome inhibitions related to speaking abilities. Learners, no longer hindered by the fear of judgment, feel empowered to present their opinions, share personal experiences, practice speaking, and seek constructive input from peers who are on a similar language learning journey. The inclusive and supportive nature of these conversational clubs transforms them into safe spaces where learners can express themselves freely. The exchange of ideas within this nurturing environment facilitates a more robust development of speaking skill. Learners not only benefit from the structured discussions but also from the informal interactions that naturally occur in these settings, contributing to a comprehensive and well-rounded language learning experience. The dynamic interactions that enrich the academic experience also prepare students for effective communication in diverse real-world scenarios.

3. Peer-led Conversation Club's Activities at Mila University Centre

At Mila University Center, the Peer-led Conversation Club is dedicated to fostering the development of speaking skill. The club employs various activities designed to create an engaging and supportive environment, motivating students to actively participate and enhance their speaking abilities. Here are examples of activities implemented at the PLCC:

3.1. Conversations

To make speaking easier, a technique like conversation is used as one of the most effective techniques to improve speaking skill. According to Celce & Murcia (2001), it is not adequate to have students produce lots of language; they must become aware of many features of a language to become competent speakers and interlocutors in English. One speaking activity that is particularly suited to this kind of analysis is conversation, the most fundamental form of oral communication. In this interactive setting, students not only engage in contextual learning but also benefit from the dynamic and real-life nature of conversations. The unpredictable nature of spoken language, replicated in conversational settings, enhances students' abilities to think on their feet, process information swiftly, and respond appropriately in any language.

3.2. Discussions

Celce and Murcia (2001) stated that discussion is probably the most commonly used in the speaking skills classroom activity. It is a common fact that discussion is a really useful activity for activating and involving the learners in the speaking process; it catalyzes learners to express their thoughts and opinions on various topics. This active engagement helps them practice articulating ideas, refining vocabulary, and enhancing overall fluency in spoken communication. Moreover, discussions encourage critical thinking as learners analyze and respond to the perspectives of their peers, fostering a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

3.3. Debates

Debates represent structured exchanges of arguments between individuals or groups who advocate differing viewpoints on a specific subject or issue. Engaging in debates offers a road to language development, encompassing critical thinking, vocabulary expansion, fluency enhancement, and confidence building. Zare and Othman (2013) stated that debate has the potential to improve speaking ability since the activity requires a lot of speaking practice and verbal discussions among debaters. Thus, by actively engaging in debates, students are required to think critically, analyze arguments, and express their opinions effectively in English. This process not only helps them expand their vocabulary and improve their fluency but also fosters confidence in using the language.

3.4. Storytelling

In 1992, According to Amru Bin As. (2016), the North Dakota Center for the Book began to promote storytelling and festivals (or “tellebrations”). They have stated that:

Storytelling is an art form through which we have preserved our heritage, passed on traditions, learned skills, and most importantly, developed our limitless imaginations. Storytelling is at the heart of human experience; a means by which we gain a better understanding of ourselves and our world (Storytelling On-line).
(North Dakota Center, 1992:212)

Storytelling stands as a flexible tool, not merely igniting our imagination but also significantly contributing to the development of diverse communication skills. Within an academic context, engagement with storytelling has gained recognition as an effective approach to enhancing speaking proficiency. This recognition extends seamlessly into peer-led conversation clubs, where the integration of storytelling emerges as a dynamic and effective strategy for refining learners' speaking skill as it creates a vibrant and engaging environment that not only promotes language

proficiency but also nurtures a sense of community among learners. By sharing personal narratives or collectively creating stories, participants in these conversation clubs can experience several benefits contributing to their speaking skill development.

3.5. *Gaming Sessions*

The incorporation of communication games, as explained by Harmer (2015), as cited in Elsa, H.-C., Cynthia, H.-C., & Paulina, E.-L. (2021), it aims at fostering communication among students. These games involve various activities such as solving puzzles, drawing pictures, or responding to proposed questions. This approach seeks to create an interactive and communicative environment to enhance language learning.

In alignment with this, Wright, Betteridge, & Buckby (2006, as cited in Ho, P. V. P., Thien, N. M., An, N. T. M., & Vy, N. N. H.2019), proposed that gaming serves as a valuable tool to motivate students to practice English. The immersive nature of games, according to their explanation, not only makes the learning process more engaging but also encourages active participation, potentially leading to enhanced language development. This supports the idea of utilising gaming activities as an effective method to improve overall student participation in language learning processes. Moreover, the insights of Nguyen and Pham (2018, as cited in Ho, P. V. P., Thien, N. M., An, N. T. M., & Vy, N. N. H.2019), shed light on the benefits of incorporating games in the speaking classroom. They emphasize that games provide a natural and enjoyable way for students to practice the language without necessarily being conscious of it. Additionally, the use of games in speaking classrooms facilitates increased student involvement in communication, offering quieter students opportunities to actively participate and improve their speaking skill. This multifaceted approach underscores the effectiveness of integrating gaming activities into language education to promote both engagement and speaking skill development.

3. The Effect of Speaking Clubs on the Speaking Skill

The effect of speaking clubs on EFL learners' speaking skill is a newly investigated subject matter in the field of second language acquisition (SLA). Several research studies from different contexts were conducted to address the influence of these clubs on the speaking skill. However, in the Algerian context, the topic remains unexplored, regardless of its recognition by many researchers and professors. In this section, various distinctive pieces of research concerning the previously mentioned subject matter are briefly presented.

Most of the existing works base their research on already-existing research as references. Wahyuniati et al. (2020) based their study on 10 students who joined the English-speaking club at the English Education Department at UIN Sunan Ample Surabaya. They designed qualitative descriptive questionnaires, which were distributed to students through Google Forms. The results of the study indicated that the students who joined these clubs had positive reactions and admitted feeling happy, and as a result, they were encouraged to practice their language more. They also expressed enthusiasm to speak in classrooms. Another important point was that students felt free to engage in discussions and communicate with others actively, which helped them to be more confident and critical thinkers.

In addition, Wahyuniati et al. (2020) highlighted in their findings the significance of practicing to improve any language skill, especially the speaking skill. Thus, speaking clubs provide learners with this opportunity.

Similarly, Abdala (2021) was interested in identifying the advantages of these clubs in promoting the speaking skill in the Saudi Arabia context. Additionally, he considered this point along with raising university English teachers' awareness of the importance of applying these clubs as a part of teaching. Abdala adopted the descriptive-analytic method in his research, and both a questionnaire and observation were used. He concluded that English clubs foster the students'

speaking skill, so they became motivated, self-confident due to the comfortable social environment. They also felt free from language anxiety and boredom, which mostly resulted from traditional classes' routine. The findings also showed an enhancement in student-student engagement.

Jayanti et al. (2022) based their research on the two previous ones. However, they studied the influence on a younger sample of learners at the level of the speaking skill components, mentioning grammar, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and pronunciation. Along with the club's speaking activities importance. Jayanti et al. (2022) addressed a group of 40 students who joined the Sixta Speaks Up as an English-speaking club at the Vocational High School. They collected data through a Google form questionnaire. The qualitative description of the collected data led researchers to conclude that the majority of students improved their speaking skill. Including their pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency in speaking English. The findings also showed that the club's activities boosted their speaking confidence.

Student-student engagement is a concept that falls within a broader vine known as peer engagement or peer interaction. The latter was included in all works related to the subject matter under study; at times, it was implicitly but surely tackled. Ahmmed (2017) used quantitative analysis for the close-ended questionnaire's data that was collected from 50 participants, ranging from second-year to master's students. He concluded that students who practice peer conversation improve their speaking skill regularly. Furthermore, he recommended practicing the English speaking skill with peers outside classrooms to become more fluent speakers.

Bage, S. R., Aderlaepe, and Agustina, S. (2021) designed a causal-comparative study on the students of the English Department at Halu Oleo University. Students were categorized into two different groups of 19 students per group: those who joined the conversation clubs and those who did not. The findings showed that students who joined the clubs scored higher than students who did not. The first reason was traced back to the time of practice, and the second was the clubs'

members, which varied from peers and juniors to seniors. The study's authors also explained that the presence of native speakers and the various club activities are significant reasons as well.

Other studies approached the topic differently, where the learners were selected using a purposive sampling technique and interviewed through semi-structured interviews to investigate the familiar environment peers create in clubs that consequently have an impact on language practice and enhancement.

On one hand, Holandyah et al., (2024) selected three student participants from an English-speaking club at SMA Negeri 11 Palembang. The data's thematic analysis indicates the clubs helped the students practice their speaking skill in a supportive environment through a variety of speaking activities. For example, conversation, storytelling, speech, debate, etc. Moreover, the authors explained in their findings that club members experienced friendship. Peer discussions provided emotional and moral support for the learners' views and opinions, which further raised their confidence to speak English and express their thoughts equally.

On the other hand, Suriyah, E., and Mazulfah. (2022) interviewed six students who joined the communicative English club at Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Salatiga in Indonesia. In the findings, the students had improved their English as they got more opportunities to practice the language in a supportive environment. Additionally, the students considered using different materials that can be obtained from the environment and experience rather than usual written grammar materials.

The study of speaking clubs' influence among learners with peers on the speaking skill is one of the newest topics of research. Mostly, gained popularity in the Indonesian context. Yusvita, L., Atmowardoyo, H., and Samtidar (2024) conducted one of the latest research works. They determined how the clubs' community affects the English performance at MTSN 1 Makassar. Similar to other researchers, they opted for a qualitative descriptive method. Nevertheless, adopted

both interviews and an observation checklist. Based on the results they had, the clubs influenced the students' language performance through the distinctive club activities and the motivating environment it provides.

Yusvita et al. (2024) concluded four areas of improvement in the students' language performance. The first area is the speaking skill, and they supported the conclusion with the opinion of Malu and Smedley (2016), who explained that learners in these contexts possess the opportunity to learn theory as they listen to their peers and practice it at the same time. The second, self-confidence, which was a shared point in the majority of the research works. The third one, vocabulary. It was explained by the researchers that different clubs' activities recommend different kinds of vocabulary and that students imitate their peers' vocabulary while trying to form sentences. Last, motivation to learn English, which resulted from the comfortable and supportive environment the student experienced in these clubs.

Conclusion

The presented research reveals several key findings. Firstly, all research findings agree on the role of different types of clubs in improving the speaking skill. Secondly, it confirms that self-confidence is a certain outcome among students who participate in the conversation clubs due to regular practice and peer verbal interactions. Additionally, it identifies a decrease in affective factors like anxiety and boredom and an increase in the frequency of the students' engagements because of peer support and freedom of expression. Moreover, the research uncovers a friendly and comfortable social atmosphere that overwhelms the clubs' atmosphere. Finally, it highlights the significance of various club activities in improving distinctive components of the speaking skill, mentioning vocabulary. These points collectively conclude the importance that speaking clubs play in improving the speaking skill, along with demonstrating the various areas that these clubs influence through the numerous affective elements present in their environment.

Chapter Two: The Field Work

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to find out whether Peer-led Conversation Clubs improve the English language learners' speaking skill. The aims are to understand the role the Peer-led Conversation Club at Mila University Centre plays at the level of third-year English language learners' speaking skill and to discover the effective key elements present in the club setting that lead to this enhancement. For these aims to be achieved, two data collection tools were selected by collecting students' perspectives and observing the clubs' setting in comparison to the ordinary speaking sessions provided by the foreign languages department, a mixed-methods approach is adopted for conducting this research. Moreover, this dissertation's chapter is devoted to presenting the gathered data and its interpretation. By the end, answers to the previous research questions will be obtained and the hypotheses will either be confirmed or declined.

1. Methodology

This case study adopted a mixed-method approach to uncover the role PLCC plays in boosting 3rd-year English language learners' speaking skill. Additionally, a causal comparative research design is adopted. Causal comparative research is a type of research design that is utilized to compare a variable (the object of the research) between distinctive subjects and find a causal relationship without providing treatment to the investigated variables. In other words, a causal comparative design looks for differences and/or similarities between two or more groups. This methodology does not need to control the grouping variable directly. Therefore, it cannot be manipulated (Bage, S. R., Aderlaepe, & Agustina, S., 2021). Based on this research design, students' perspectives along with careful observations on the club setting were considered while conducting this dissertation.

First, quantitative research was done through the questionnaire. The latter was delivered to students at the end of their tutorial sessions at Mila University Centre. Both students who attended the PLCC sessions and those who did not attend answered the first and the second section of the questionnaire. However, only the students who attended the club answered the third sections.

The questionnaire consists of 20 questions. The questions vary from multiple (5) and single-choice (5), Yes/No (5), Agree/Disagree/Neutral (4), and one open-ended question. A total of 79 students responded to the questionnaire of around 200 3rd year bachelor students at the University Centre of Mila.

The gathered data from the students' questionnaire was statistically analysed using different Excel statistical graphs, including comparative histograms, pie charts, and bullet charts.

Second, qualitative research was done through comparative observations in both the PLCC setting and the OSS setting at Mila University Centre. The observations were conducted in person at the university, adopting a designed checklist that used a Likert rating scale (Always/Often/Sometimes/Rarely/Never). The designed checklist consists of three different sections. The first section is devoted to a general observation of the setting management (6 items), the second section deals with a general observation of the learners' engagement during oral interactions (6 items), and the third one is concerned with a general observation of the learners speaking performance (9 items).

A total of 10 sessions were observed (5 sessions at the PLCC were attended and observed, and concerning the OSS at the Foreign Languages Department, 5 sessions were attended and observed in three different groups that were selected randomly). The data gathered from the observations were presented using comparative statistical tables.

The gathered, analysed, and interpreted data from both the questionnaire and observation are presented in the following section.

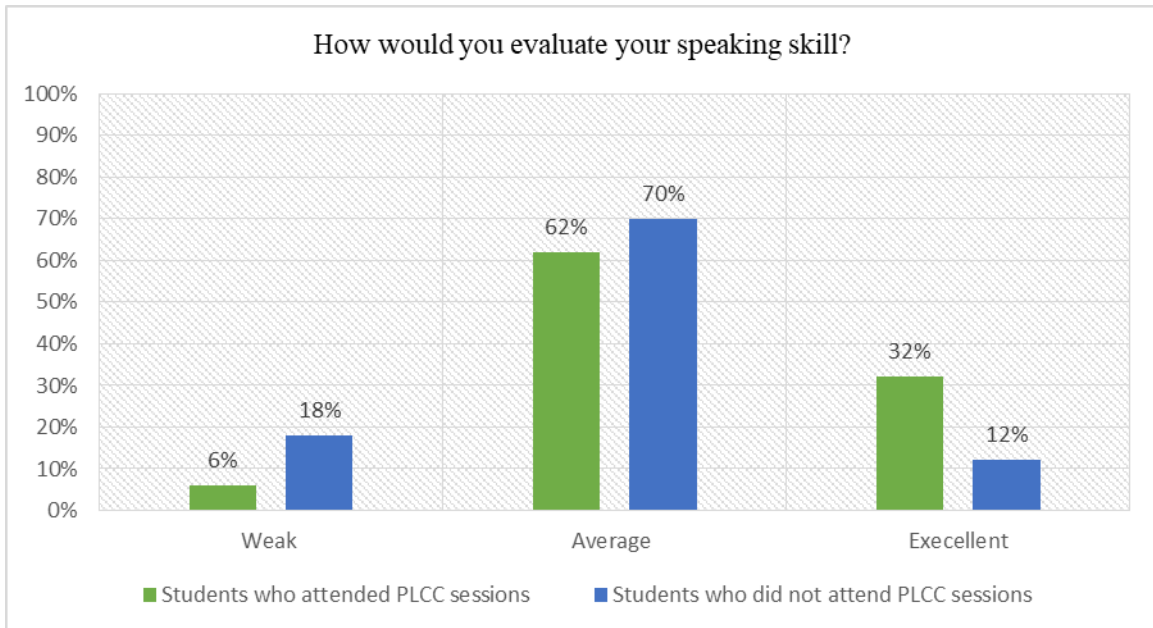
2. Result and Interpretation

2.1. The Students' Questionnaire

Section One: Speaking Skill

Figure 1

Students' perceptions of their speaking skill proficiency

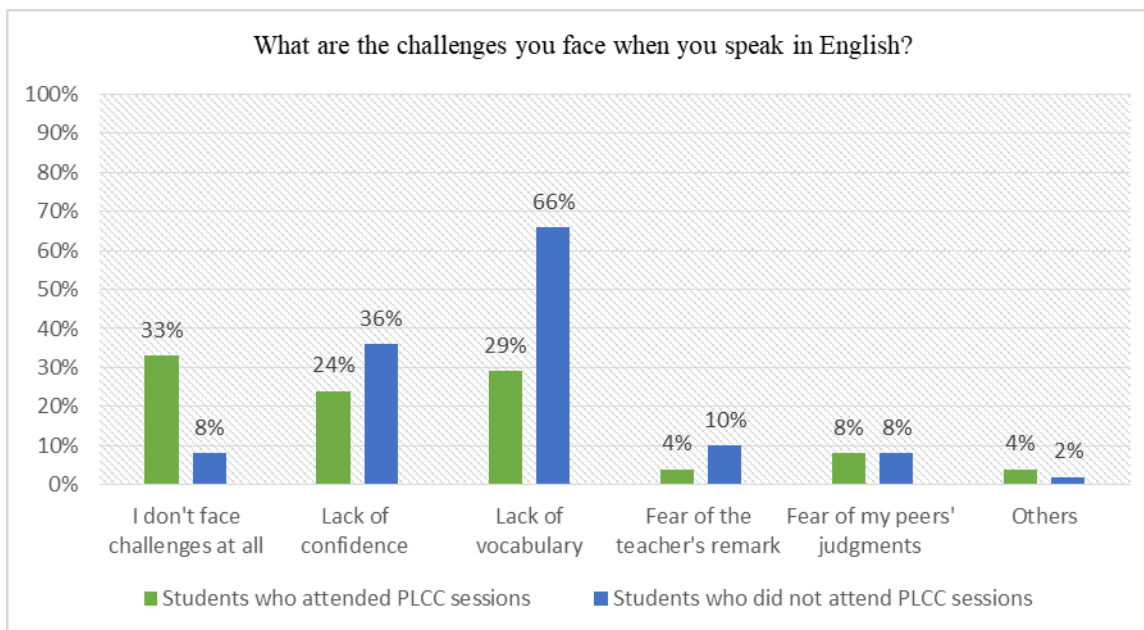


The above chart presents a causal comparison between the responses of students who attended PLCC sessions and those who did not. The chart reveals that the majority of the students, who attended the club's session, 62%, evaluate their speaking skill as average. Differently, 70% of the students who did not attend the club's sessions evaluate their speaking skill as average. While 32% of those who attended PLCC sessions believe they possess an excellent level, only 12% of those who did not perceive it as excellent. Moreover, only 6% of students who attended PLCC sessions evaluate their speaking skill as weak, while the percentage reached 18% for those who did not attend the sessions.

It is possible that the students who attended PLCC sessions get more opportunities to practice their speaking skill; also, the frequent exposure and usage of the target language improve other aspects of their speaking performance and communicative skills.

Figure 2

The challenges faced by the students when speaking in English



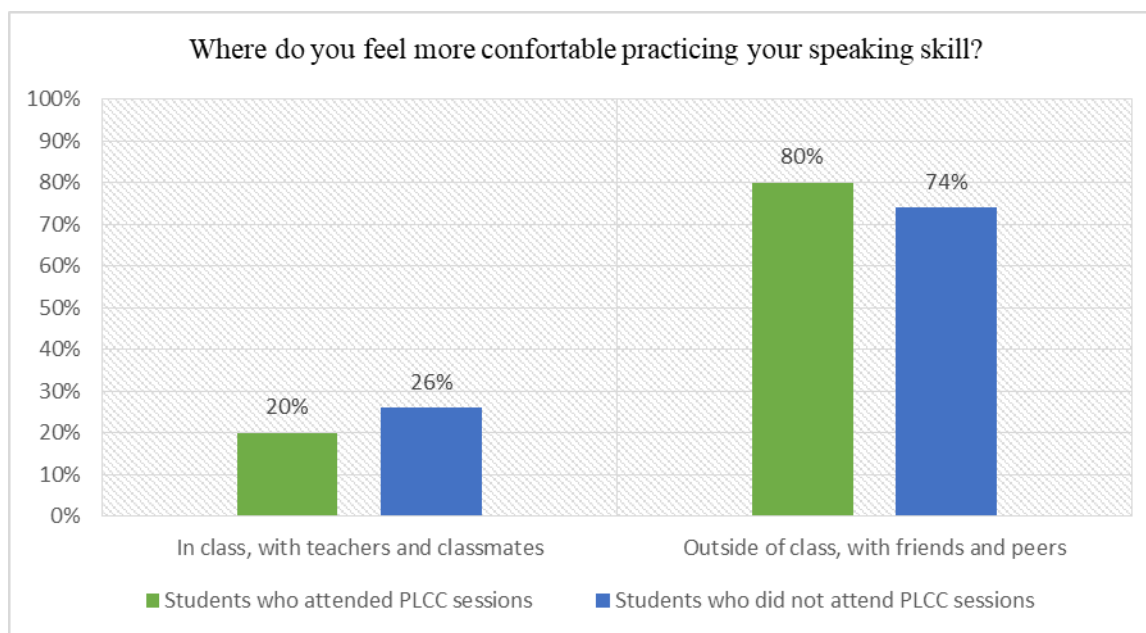
According to Figure 2, students' experiences with speaking English vary depending on whether they attended PLCC sessions or not. Among those who participated, 33% stated they do not face any challenges, while this percentage is only 8%, among non-attendees. Another 24% of students who attended PLCC sessions reported lacking confidence, compared to 36% of those who did not attend. Moreover, a percentage of 29% of the attendees feel they lack vocabulary compared to relatively higher percentage of 66% of non-attendees. When it came to fearing teachers' remarks, only 4% of attendees expressed concern, whereas the percentage reached 10% among those who did not attend PLCC sessions. Interestingly, the fear of peers' judgments was consistent for both

groups, at 8%. These findings suggest that PLCC sessions have an impact on confidence and vocabulary; however, further investigation is necessary to better confirm this.

When learners were asked to add other reasons, those who attended PLCC highlighted a lack of experience in speaking skill and difficulty becoming accustomed to speaking. These responses underscore the value of structured speaking practice and the need for opportunities to develop fluency and confidence in various verbal interactions. Participants who did not attend PLCC sessions identified self-judgment as a significant challenge when speaking in English. This acknowledgement highlights the psychological barriers that learners may encounter, such as fear of making mistakes or feeling insecure about their language proficiency.

Figure 3

The students' preferred context for practicing the speaking skill



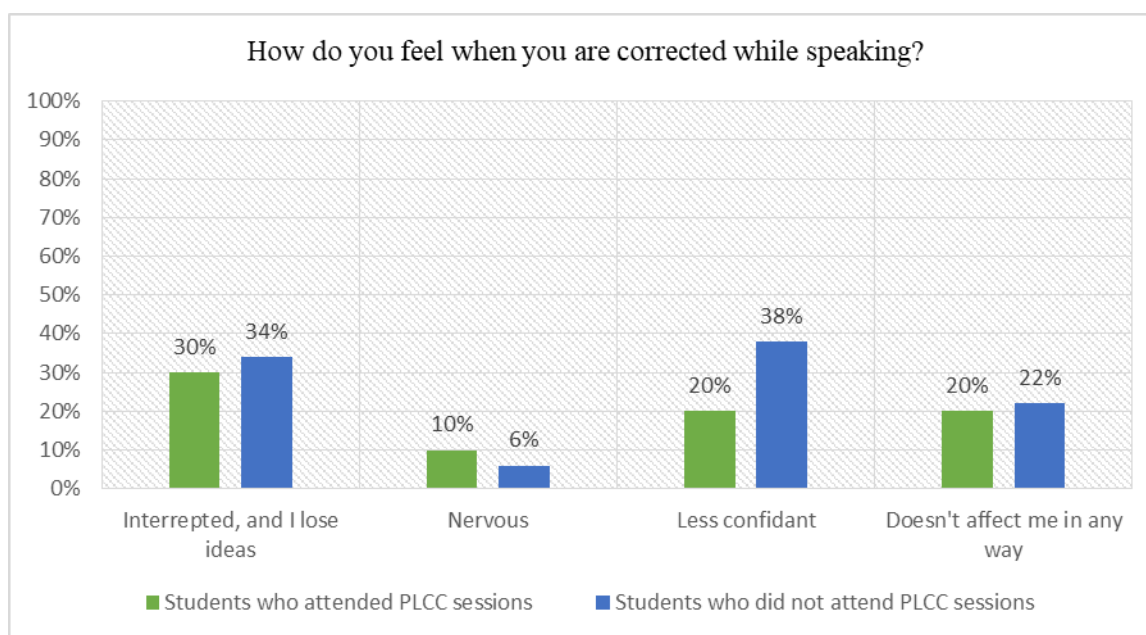
According to Figure 3, 80% of the students who attended PLCC sessions and 74% of those who did not reported that they feel more comfortable practicing their speaking skill when they are outside of classrooms, with their friends and peers. As the percentages are presented above, 20% of learners who attended the club's sessions feel more comfortable practicing their speaking skill

inside classrooms with teachers and classmates. The latter context was also found more convenient by 26% of the learners who did not attend PLCC sessions.

It is quite interesting that even those 3rd year students who did not attend the club's sessions (the vast majority) perceive practicing the speaking skill with friends and peers outside of classrooms as more comfortable. It is possible to say that they might have participated in different kinds of clubs found outside the university or they might have formed their own speaking groups with friends and more trusted peers.

Figure 4

Students' attitude towards being corrected



The above chart reveals that among students who attended PLCC sessions, 30% reported that they feel interrupted when corrected, whereas 34% of non-attendees exhibit a similar perception. In terms of feeling nervous whenever corrected, the data indicates that 10% of attendees and 6% of non-attendees reported experiencing nervousness. Regarding feeling less confident after being corrected, notably, 38% of non-attendees express a decrease in confidence, contrasting with only

20% of attendees. These differences may indicate varying levels of speaking confidence influenced by PLCC session attendance. Interestingly, the response to "doesn't affect me in any way" demonstrates a similarity between attendees and non-attendees, since 20% of attendees claimed correction had no effect on them and 22% of non-attendees shared this perception.

This question was not answered by 20% of the students who attended the sessions, claiming that they possess a perfectly neutral attitude towards being corrected. One may conclude that attendance at PLCC sessions may influence students' attitudes towards correction, particularly at the level of their confidence and their willingness to tolerate correction on their language-learning journey.

Figure 5

The effect of evaluation on students' speaking performance

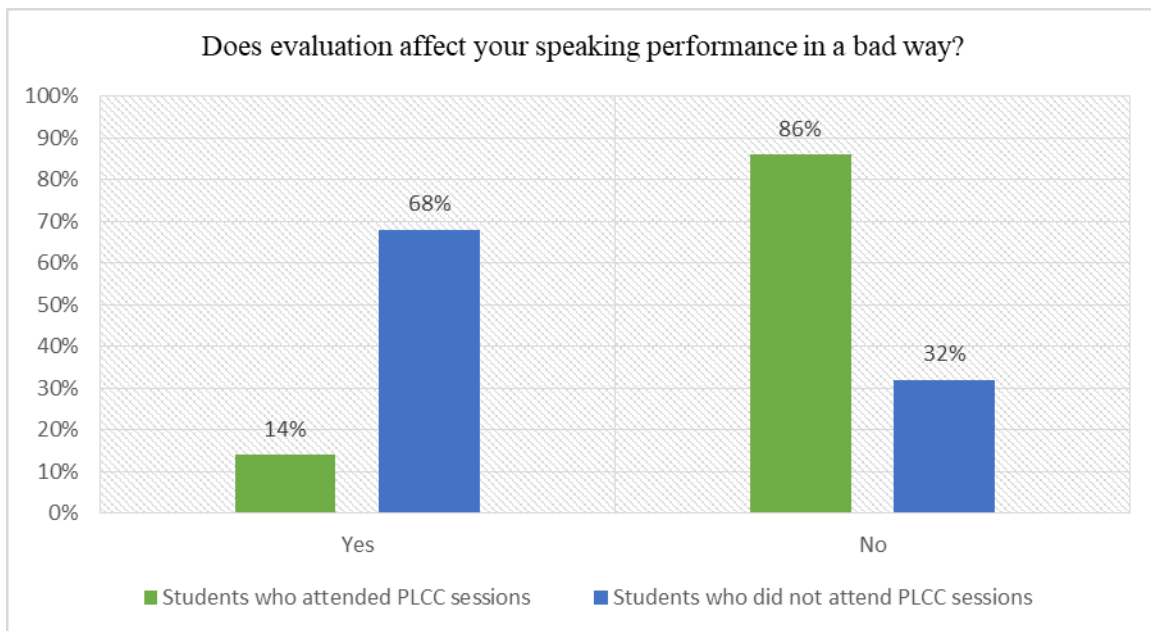
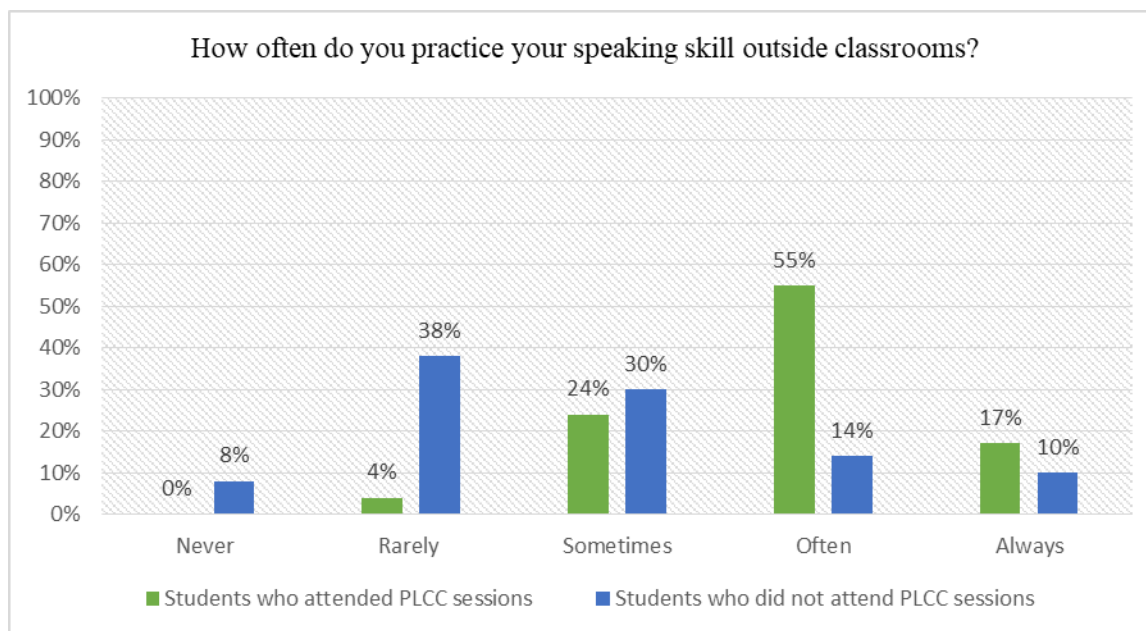


Figure 5 reveals that among students who attended PLCC sessions, only 14% feel that evaluation negatively affect their speaking performance, whereas a significant majority of 68% of non-attendees answered with a yes. Differently, the overwhelming majority of students who attended PLCC sessions (86%) expressed that evaluation do not have any effect on their speaking performance, while mainly 32% of non-attendees shared this view.

When learners were asked to justify their answers, some among those who attended the club's sessions reported that evaluation is a crucial part of their learning process, serving as a mechanism for identifying and correcting mistakes. This point of view emphasizes the constructive nature of feedback and its role in improving the speaking skill. Others acknowledged feeling nervous in response to evaluation and its negative effects on their performance because of academic expectations and pressure. On the contrary, those learners who did not attend the club's sessions indicated that evaluation negatively affected their speaking performance shared similar feelings of nervousness and discomfort. They expressed concerns about being punished for errors by scoring badly, missing opportunities to contribute, and fearing their peers' judgments. These responses highlight the significance of creating supportive and encouraging learning environments that lower anxiety and foster confidence among students to use their speaking skill.

These findings suggest that engaging in PLCC sessions may contribute to a more positive perception of evaluation's influence on the speaking skill or a rise in confidence to face the process of evaluation successfully. Further investigation could explore the factors underlying these perspectives and the potential role of PLCC sessions in shaping students' attitudes concerning evaluation.

Figure 6*The speaking skill practice frequency outside classrooms*

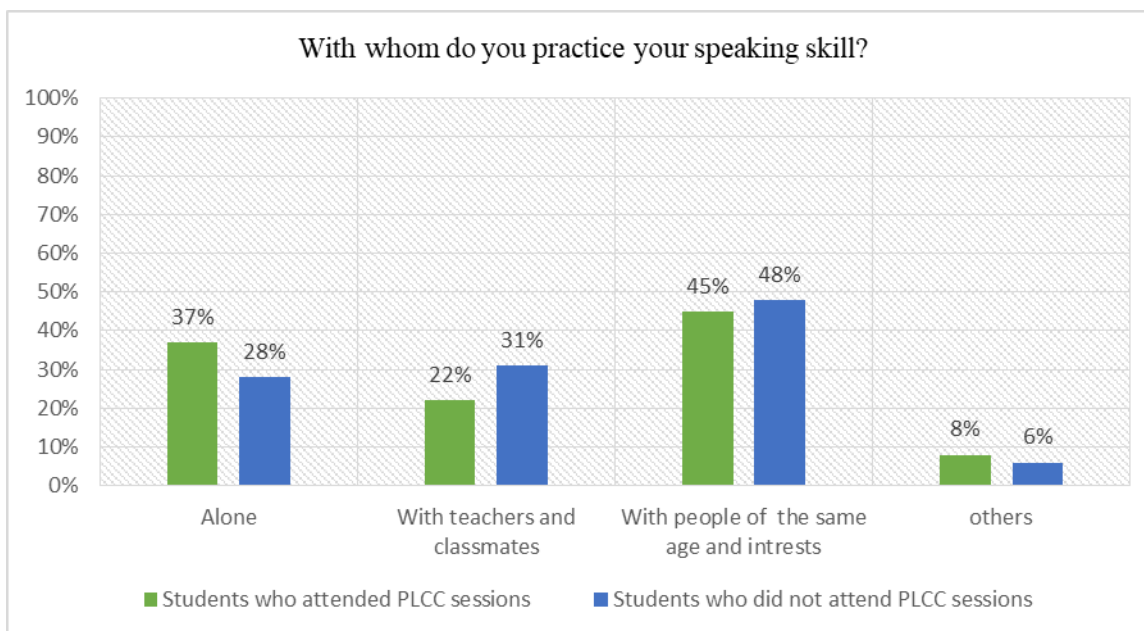
According to the findings presented in the above chart, 55% of the students who attended PLCC sessions often practice their speaking skills outside of classrooms, 24% of them sometimes practice their speaking skill outside of the classroom, and 17% of the students reported that they always do, while only 4% of them rarely practice the skill outside classrooms. Differently, 38% of the students who did not attend PLCC sessions rarely practice their speaking skill outside classrooms, and 8% of them never did. Nevertheless, 30% of those students sometimes practice the speaking skill in other contexts rather than just the classroom; 14% and 10% of them often and always do.

It can be concluded that PLCC provides the learners with more opportunities to practice their spoken English. Individuals will master the speaking skill by training the speaking skill (Tarigan, 2013, as cited in Wahyuniati et al., 2020). Furthermore, PLCC sessions allow the exchange of ideas, the sharing of knowledge, and the expression of feelings, all of which are actual practices of

abstract input and already-acquired theories. According to Abdelmageed and Omer (2020, as cited in Jatanti et al. 2022), students ought to be provided with operational knowledge of foreign languages instead of isolated theory. Actual and frequent practice boosts the speaking skill.

Figure 7

Students' preferred partners for practicing the speaking skill



The above chart reveals that 37% of students who attended PLCC sessions stated that they practiced their speaking skill alone, whereas 28% of non-attendees stated so. Additionally, 22% of the attendees reported that they practiced their speaking skill with teachers and classmates, while it was slightly higher, 31%, among non-attendees. Interestingly, this choice was never selected alone but was in addition to one of the other options. The majority of students from both groups reported practicing their speaking skill in clubs with people of the same age and interests, a percentage of 45% of attendees and 48% of non-attendees.

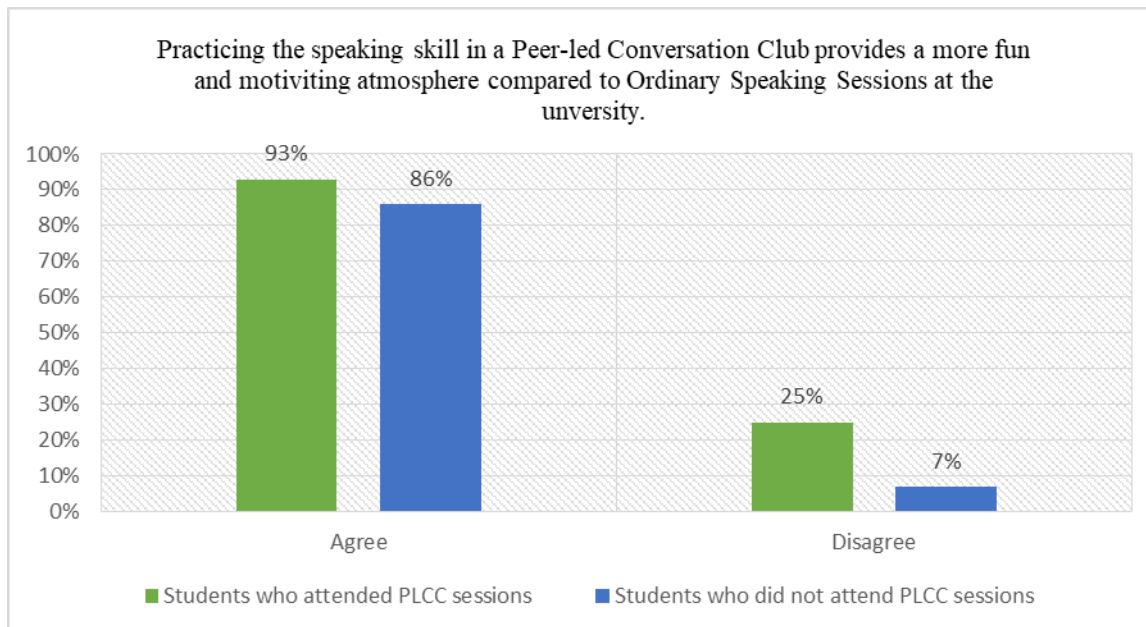
When learners were asked to specify other individuals with whom they practice their speaking skill, the responses from both groups included conversations with foreign friends, family interactions, and speaking in English with their siblings. Interestingly, all the additional answers fall within the peer option. Conversing with foreign friends offers opportunities for cross-cultural exchange and language immersion, while interactions with siblings provide a familiar and comfortable environment for language practice. Interestingly, these additional avenues for speaking skill practice fall within the peer option.

This suggests that both groups are equally interested in practicing their speaking skill in social settings where they interact with peers who share similar interests. Furthermore, the data analysis indicates variations with whom the students practice their speaking skill, with certain differences observed in individual practice and classroom-based practice with teachers, but both attendee and non-attendee groups demonstrate similar preferences for practicing speaking skills in social settings with peers.

Section Two: Peer-led Conversation Club

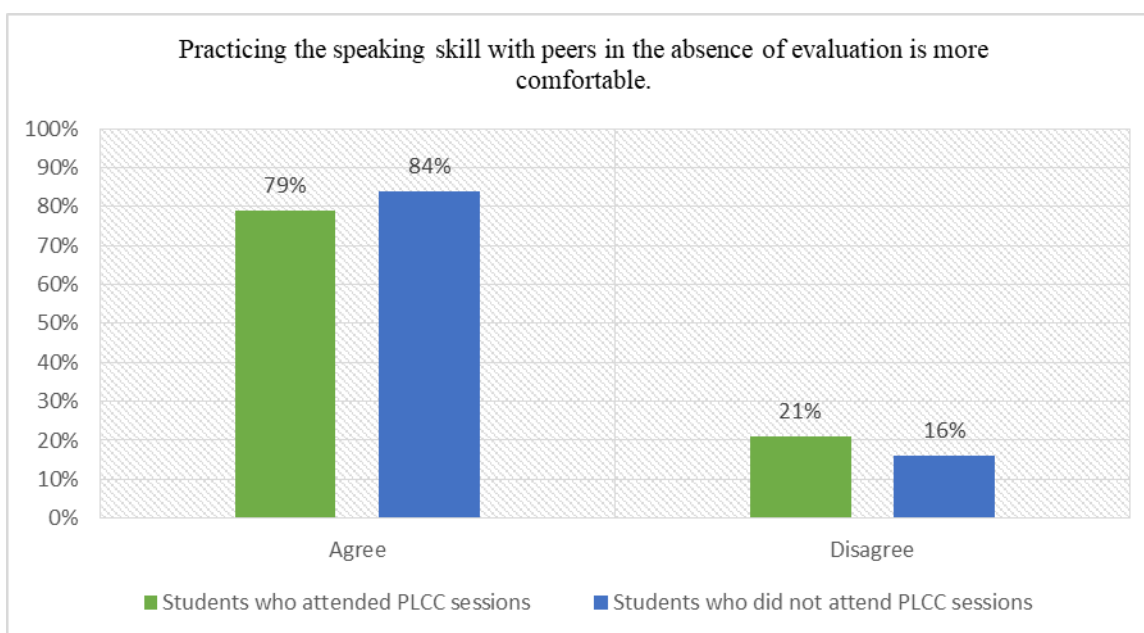
Figure 8

PLCC in comparison to OSS



The eighth figure reveals that the vast majority of 93% of the students who attended PLCC sessions agree that practicing the speaking skill in PLCC provides a more fun and motivating atmosphere compared to OSS at the university, and only 7% disagree with the statement. Interestingly, 86% of the students who did not attend PLCC sessions agree with the statement, while 25% of them disagree. Similar to Figure 3, it is concluded that learners, including those who did not attend the club's sessions, do possess a positive attitude towards the peer-led club, as they may have attended different ones outside of the university context or probably formed their casual ones with friends.

Learners who attended PLCC highlighted the sense of freedom and lack of judgment, enabling them to speak more freely without fear. This supportive atmosphere contributes to creating an enjoyable and motivating environment for practicing the speaking skill. Surprisingly, participants who did not attend PLCC also agreed and explained their choice by talking about the stress-free and friendly atmosphere offered by clubs for practicing the speaking skill. These findings suggest a shared recognition of the club's conducive atmosphere for the speaking skill development and promoting motivation towards learning.

Figure 9*The effect of evaluation*

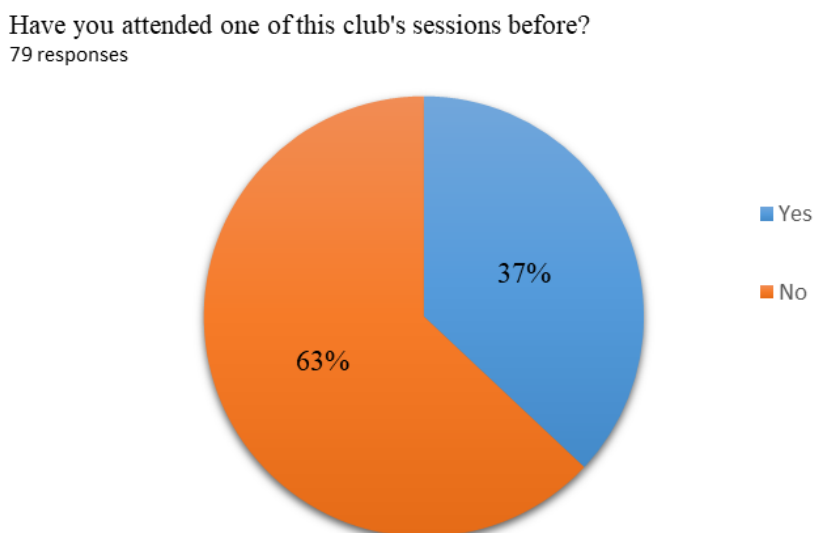
On the one hand, Figure 9 reveals that 79% of the students who attended PLCC sessions agree that practicing the speaking skill with peers in the absence of evaluation is more comfortable. The remaining 21% disagree with the statement, as they believe evaluation creates no discomfort for them while practicing their speaking skill. On the other hand, the overwhelming majority (84%) of the students who did not attend PLCC sessions agree that the absence of evaluation makes the practice of the speaking skill with peers more comfortable, while only 16% of them disagree with the statement.

When they were asked to justify their answers, learners who attended the club's sessions justified their agreement by highlighting that the absence of judgment and fear of poor marks contribute to a more comfortable experience. Similarly, those who did not attend the club's sessions supported the statement, reporting feelings of relaxation and reduced stress. However, a minority from both groups disagreed, emphasizing the significance of evaluation for identifying weaknesses

and ensuring improvement. These justifications reflect diverse perspectives on the role of the explicit process of evaluation on the learners speaking performance.

Figure 10

Number of the students who attended the clubs sessions



The above pie chart reveals that the majority (63%) of third-year students answered with a no; they did not attend the club's sessions before. The remaining (37%) of the students reported that they have attended the club's sessions.

When the students were asked why they did attend and why they did not, those who had attended PLCC sessions before often justified their attendance by expressing an interest in trying something new and enjoying the combination of learning and fun in the club environment with friends and people with same interests. Differently, those who had not attended PLCC sessions justified their response by mentioning affective factors, laziness, and a not having free time to attend.

Figure 11*Reasons that prevent students from attending PLCC*

If "never" what are the reasons that prevent you from attending?

79 responses

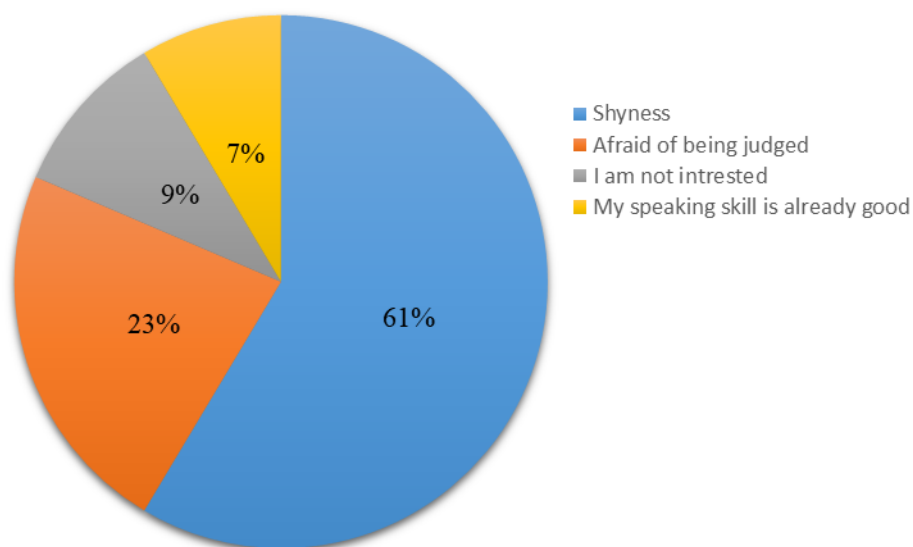


Figure 11 presents the percentages that prevented 63% of students from attending the club's sessions. The majority (61% of the students) chose shyness as the reason preventing them from attending PLCC sessions. The next highest percentage, 23%, reported that they are afraid of being judged. Interestingly, only 9% are not interested in joining the club, and only 7% believe their speaking skill is already good.

It could be suggested that the majority of the students are blocked by shyness and the fear of other people's remarks concerning their proficiency or the way they use English in speaking. Both reasons may contribute to raising certain affective factors, such as anxiety, which aligns with shyness and fear. The students were asked to add any other reason if there were any, but no one did.

Section Three: Peer-led Conversation Clubs' Impression on Learners

Figure 12

Students' motives behind attending the club's sessions

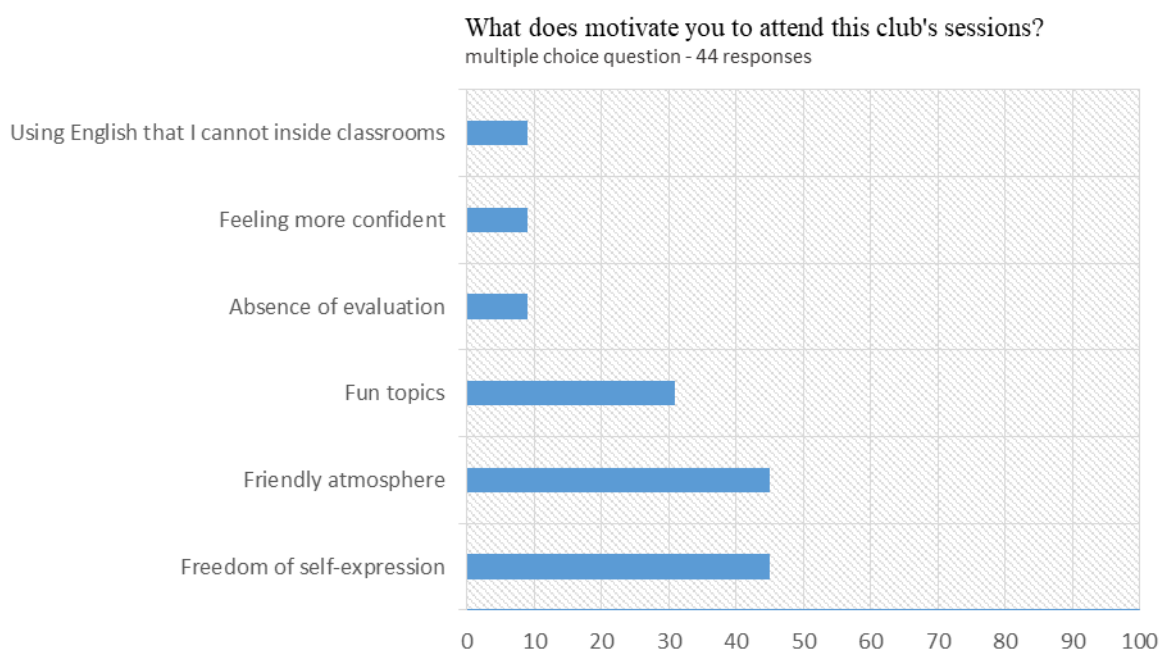


Figure 12 reveals that an equal percentage of 45% of the students stated that they are motivated mostly by the club's friendly atmosphere and freedom of self-expression, which indicates the suitable social aspect of the club for speaking skill enhancement. Wahyuniati et al. (2020) also stated that the overwhelming majority of the students enjoy the speaking club environment.

The chart also reveals that only 9% of the students who attended the club's sessions are motivated because they can use English, which they cannot use inside classrooms. Similarly, another 9% feel more confident, indicating a desire to seek personal proficiency enhancement. Another 9% of the students are motivated by the absence of evaluation, indicating a preference for a non-judgmental environment. Furthermore, 31% of the students are motivated by fun topics, highlighting the importance of engaging content for learners' participation.

When the learners were asked about any other additional reasons that motivated their attendance at PLCC sessions, some of them mentioned feeling free to express themselves without any judgment, thus avoiding feelings of inferiority. These responses emphasize the importance of creating a supportive and non-judgmental atmosphere to encourage learners to practice their speaking skill and thus improve it.

Figure 13

Students are more talkative in PLCC than in OSS

I am more talkative in the Peer-led Conversation Club than in the classroom.
29 responses

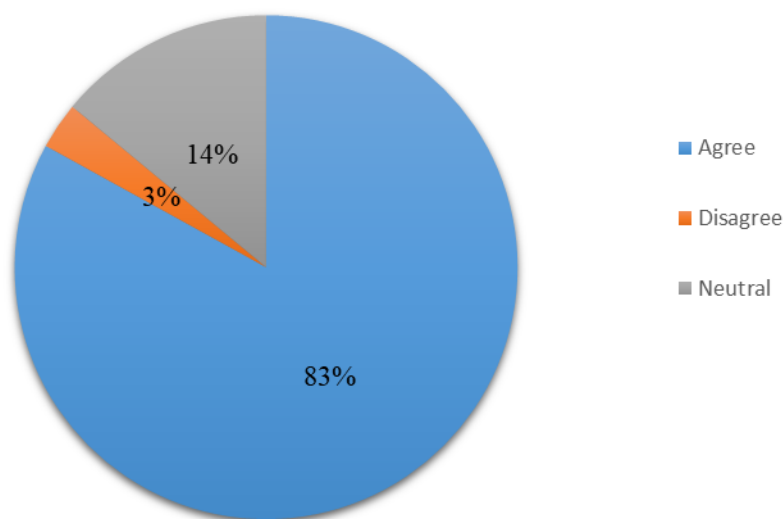


Figure 13 shows that an overwhelming majority (83%) of the students agree that they are more talkative in peer-led conversation clubs. Another 14% remain neutral, as they are possibly equally talkative in both settings. Only 3% disagree with the statement. These findings support the perception among 3rd-year students that the peer-led conversation club at the University Centre of Mila promotes increased talkativeness compared to ordinary oral sessions.

Figure 14

The main area of the students' speaking skill that PLCC improves

The Peer-led Conversation Club sessions help me improve my speaking skill in terms of:
29 responses

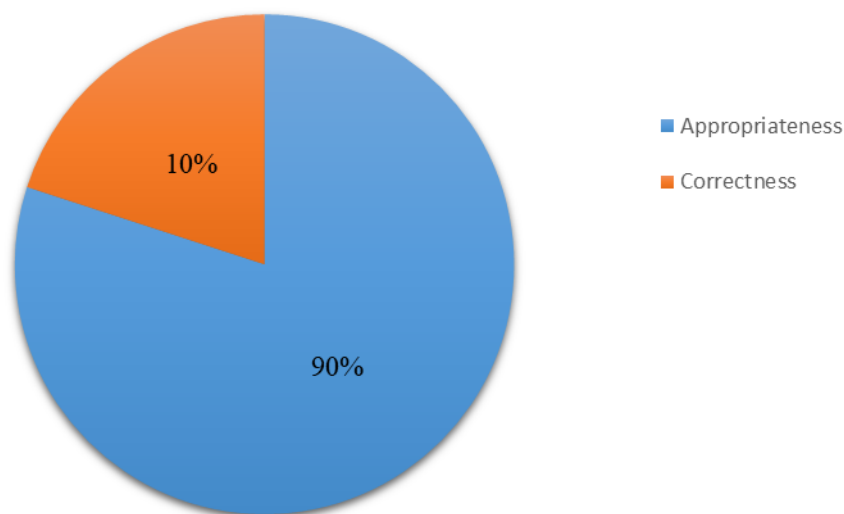


Figure 14 shows that a significant majority of 90% of the respondents identify "appropriateness" as the main aspect PLCC improves at the level of their speaking skill. This suggests a strong emphasis on refining language use in distinctive social and communicative contexts to ensure appropriateness in shaping ideas and producing meaningful utterances according to the context of verbal interactions (VI). In contrast, only 10% reported that the club's sessions help them improve their speaking skill's correctness, which indicates less focus on grammatical accuracy within the PLCC framework. These findings underline that PLCC mostly aims at improving the learners' linguistic appropriateness rather than grammatical correctness. Thus, the consideration of integrating PLCC as an extracurricular activity would provide a broader pedagogical approach for teaching the speaking skill.

Figure 15*Peer feedback*

Have you been corrected by one of your peers during conversations before.

29 responses

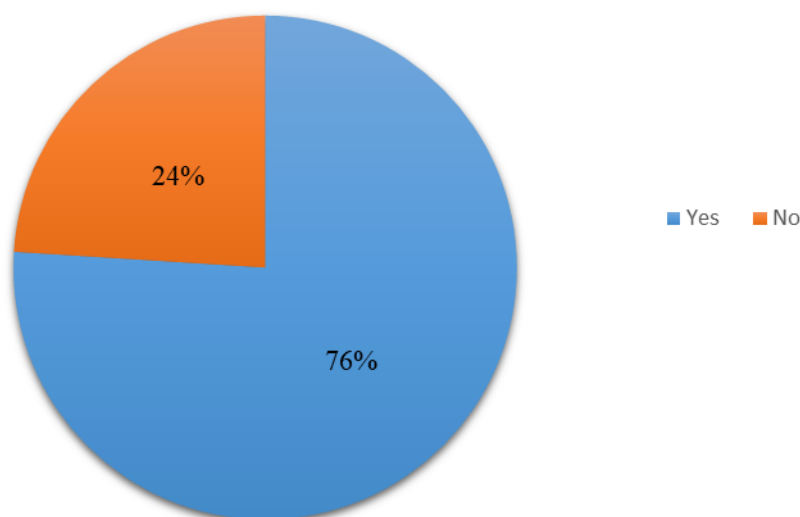
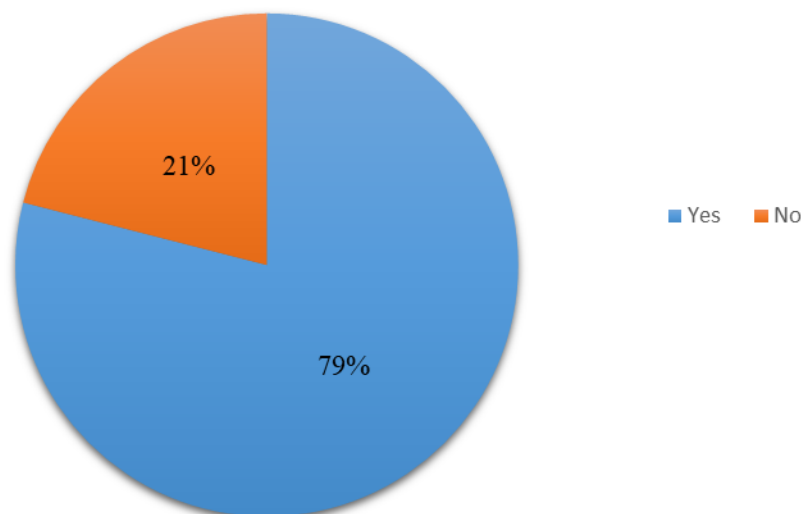


Figure 15 shows that 76% of the population answered with a yes to being corrected by their peers during conversations before. As peers, they may help each other to correct the way they pronounce a certain word, the wrong verb conjugation, or find vocabulary in the target language to better convey their ideas. The remaining 24% of the students answered with a no, as their peers have not corrected them before. In a research conducted by Sheelan and Qani (2020), it was confirmed in their findings that students receive help from each other, especially with vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.

Though peer feedback is not as structured and informative as teachers' feedback, it still provides the learners with help to overcome some mistakes or difficulties at the level of their language knowledge. Holandyah et al. (2024) found that students received a lot of feedback from their peers at the club. This feedback provided the students with knowledge and new information and influenced them to be more fearless and fluent in speaking English in front of others.

Figure 16*The effect of peer feedback on the speaking skill*

Do you think peers' feedback help you improve your speaking skill.
29 responses



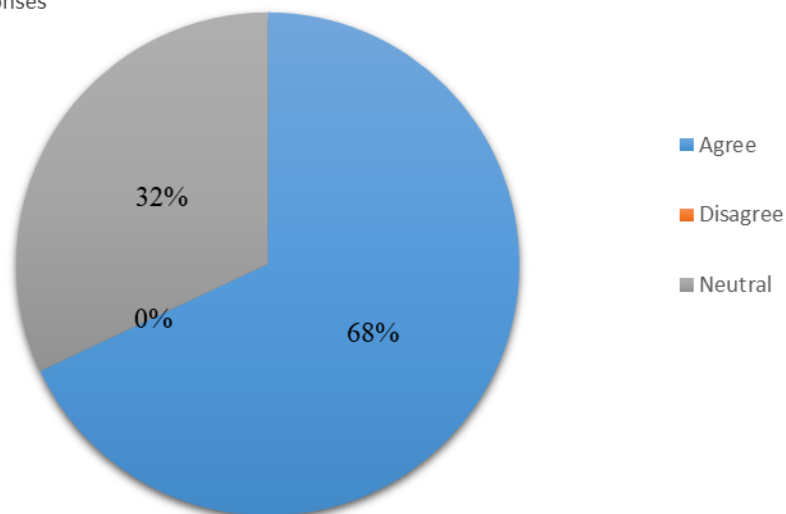
The above pie chart reveals that an overwhelming majority (79%) of students reported that peers' feedback help them improve their speaking skill. The latter finding suggests that peer feedback plays a significant role in enhancing speaking proficiency according to students' perceptions and experiences. On the contrary, 21% of the respondents believe that their peers' feedback does not help them improve their speaking skill. The different opinions reflect varying perceptions regarding the effectiveness of peer feedback in speaking skill enhancement; however, by considering the majority of answers, one concludes that peer feedback is perceived as important and has a positive influence on 3rd-year English students' speaking skill. Sacerdote (2010) reported that the peer effect is as significant in determining learners' outcomes as other frequently mentioned inputs such as teachers' efficiency, enrollment, and parental involvement.

Figure 17

PLCC atmosphere is suitable for students to practice their speaking skill

The Peer-led Conversation Club atmosphere is suitable for practicing my speaking skill.

29 responses



The above chart shows that the majority of students (68%) agree that the PLCC atmosphere is suitable for practicing their speaking skill. This suggests that the PLCC setting is perceived as conducive to speaking skill development, probably due to other factors such as fun activities, freedom of self-expression, and peer support. The remaining 32% of the respondents remain neutral about the statement. Interestingly, no respondents disagree with this statement, which indicates an agreement on the suitability of the PLCC atmosphere for speaking practice.

Figure 18

PLCC's most enjoyable activity

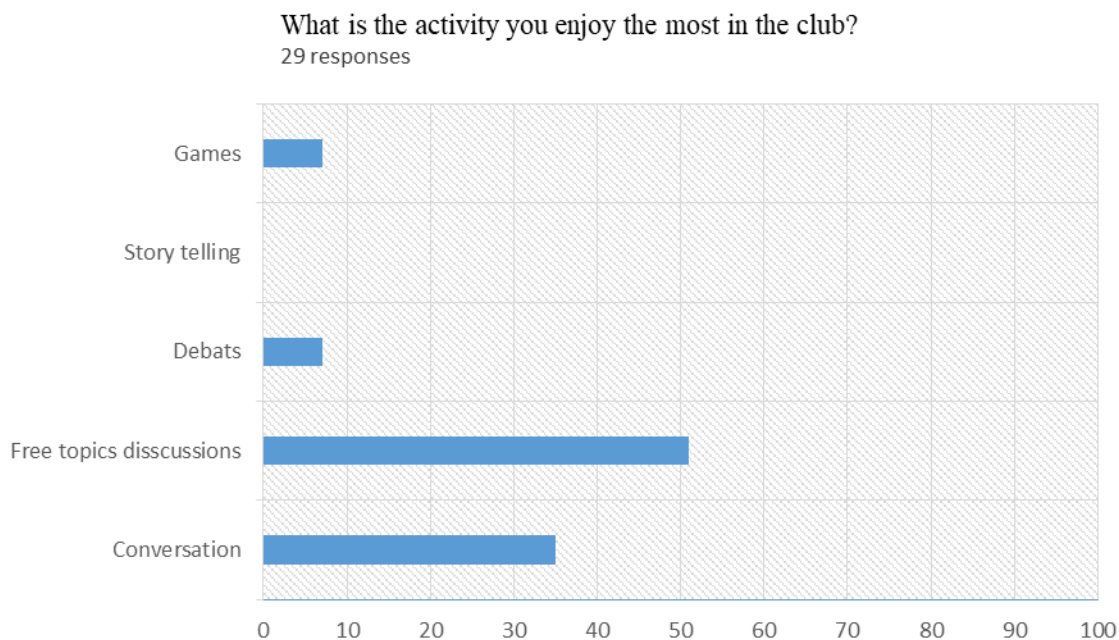


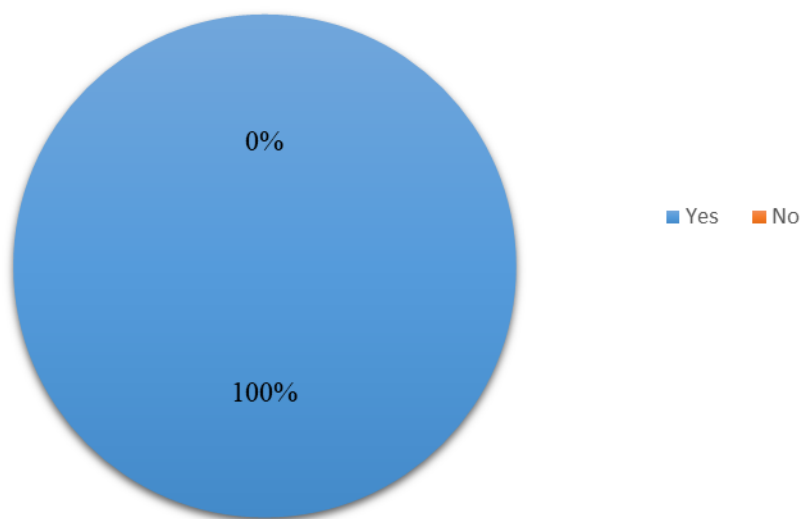
Figure 18 reveals that the majority (51%) of the students at Mila University Centre are mostly interested in free-topic discussions where there are no restrictions or limits on their freedom of self-expression. In another research conducted by Raskova Octaberlina and Ikhwanul Muslimin (2022), it was affirmed that 78% of the students agreed that discussion is an activity that improves students' speaking ability. Additionally, 35% of the population enjoys conversation as they get to choose the topic and orient the session's course according to their interests and preferences. The chart also reveals that only 7% of the students choose games and debates as the activities they enjoy the most. Interestingly, no one among them (0%) chose storytelling. The latter result is the total opposite of the findings of Raskova Octaberlina and Ikhwanul Muslimin (2022), who reported that students mostly enjoyed storytelling, and that it helped them improve their speaking abilities and that the experience was enjoyable.

A possible interpretation is that storytelling is an activity that requires good narrative skills and a certain knowledge of literature that is mostly acquired through reading, which makes it a bit challenging for the students to easily engage in it.

Figure 19

Does PLCC boost students' speaking skill?

Do you believe that your speaking skill is better after attending this club's sessions?
29 responses



As the pie chart above reveals, 100% of the students answered with a yes, and no one of them (0%) answered with a no to this question. They all believe that their speaking skill is better after attending the club's sessions. Therefore, the peer-led conversation club at the University Center of Mila may have its own shortcomings, such as a lack of the members' teaching experience and management difficulties; however, 3rd year English students, who attended these sessions, declared the club's significance in improving their speaking skill.

2.2. The Settings' Observations

Section One: General Observation of the Setting Management

Table 1

The physical setting is clean and comfortable.

Rating Scale	PLCC Sessions	Percentage	OSS Sessions	Percentage
Always	2	40%	-	0%
Often	-	0%	1	20%
Sometimes	3	60%	-	0%
Rarely	-	0%	4	80%
Never	-	0%	-	0%

The preceding data illustrates observations from three sessions (60%) of PLCC, where it was sometimes noted that the physical setting lacked sufficient chairs for the attendees because of the small space available. Additionally, the occasional smell of cigarettes proved to be a distraction for participants. However, in the remaining two sessions (40%), the setting was more organized, clean, and colorful for the learners. OSS also presented challenges, primarily due to space constraints; they were rarely clean and comfortable in four sessions (80%), and “often” one time (20%). The small classroom size led to a cluttered and uncomfortably warm environment, particularly when accommodating chairs and tables hindered the learning processes, as confirmed by Schneider (2002, as cited in Matoy, T. J., 2021). The spatial configuration influences the students and teachers’ ability to perform. Morning OSS, often (20%) noted for cleanliness, tidiness, and adequate lighting, facilitated a conducive environment for student participation in oral expression courses. However, the absence of functional visual displays, often covered in dust and inactive, diminishes motivation for engagement, as confirmed by Culp (2006, as cited in Suleman, Q., Aslam, H. D., & Hussain, Dr. I.2014). Success in the classroom can be guaranteed through the utilization of visual displays. Conversely, in the afternoon, four sessions were rarely clean and organized (80%), and the classroom environment significantly deteriorated, becoming messy.

The significant influence of the physical environment on the learning experience must be addressed in both settings. These observations highlight the importance of creating conducive learning environments. Addressing these environmental factors is crucial for enhancing student engagement and performance.

Table 2

The setting is organized in a way that enables the learners to face each other and remain eye contact during interactions.

Rating Scale	PLCC Sessions	Percentage	OSS Sessions	Percentage
Always	5	100%	-	0%
Often	-	0%	-	0%
Sometimes	-	0%	-	0%
Rarely	-	0%	-	0%
Never	-	0%	5	100%

Unlike the structured arrangement found in traditional classrooms, the PLCC typically always adopted a circular seating layout in the five observed sessions (100%). One of Brown's key principles (2007, as cited in Kimura, K.2013) suggested that round tables require students to consistently integrate their listening and speaking skills. This encourages face-to-face interaction among participants and fosters a sense of connection and engagement. Learners were positioned to easily observe each other's facial expressions, facilitating effective communication and the exchange of ideas. However, throughout the duration of all five OSS, it was clear that the traditional classroom setup failed to support effective communication and interaction among students (100%). Specifically, the seating arrangement hindered the exchange of ideas. In each session, students were organized in a single-file layout facing each other's backs, lacking the arrangement conducive to maintaining eye contact during interactions.

A possible interpretation of the result is that PLCC sessions provide learners with the perfect setup to practice the language. The open arrangement promotes dynamic dialogue and collaborative

learning experiences, enhancing the overall quality of oral communication within the university context. Furthermore, the absence of a circular seating arrangement in OSS prevents students from observing each other facial expressions, which are significant for effective practice of the speaking skill. Consequently, the environment did not foster dynamic verbal interactions among 3rd year EFL students.

Table 3

The session's moderator moves around the setting to offer guidance and check comprehension.

Rating Scale	PLCC Sessions	Percentage	OSS Sessions	Percentage
Always	-	0%	-	0%
Often	-	0%	-	0%
Sometimes	-	0%	-	0%
Rarely	-	0%	1	20%
Never	5	100%	4	80%

The PLCC, the peer guiding the session typically remains stationary at their designated desk or position. Whether sitting or standing, they did not move around the room (100%). This static positioning may offer consistency and stability within the discussion setting but may also limit the moderator's ability to engage actively with participants. Similarly, in the OSS, teachers usually stay seated at their desk or standing next to it throughout four sessions. They never moved (80%), and rarely did (20%). This lack of movement limited their interaction with students, making it harder for students to ask questions or get clarification. The small classroom size added to the problem, making it difficult for instructors to move around and help students individually. This might affect how well students understand the material and how engaged they are in the class. It also means instructors cannot adapt their teaching style easily to meet students' needs, which could affect how well students learn.

In PLCC and OSS, moderators typically remain seated throughout sessions, which can hinder their ability to interact effectively with participants or students. In PLCC, this may limit the

facilitation of discussions, while in OSS; it may make it difficult for instructors to address student questions. Although this static positioning provides stability, it restricts adaptability and individual support, potentially affecting learning outcomes and participation.

Table 4

The moderator controls some irrelevant behaviours. (E.g. Coming in, getting out, and side talks during the session)

Rating Scale	PLCC Sessions	Percentage	OSS Sessions	Percentage
Always	-	0%	5	100%
Often	-	0%	-	0%
Sometimes	-	0%	-	0%
Rarely	-	0%	-	0%
Never	5	100%	-	0%

In peer-led conversation clubs, there is typically no control over certain behaviors, such as coming in and out of the session or engaging in side talks. Members have the freedom to enter or exit the room as they please, without any regulation. This lack of control can sometimes disrupt the flow of conversation and interaction among participants, as interruptions may occur without warning or restriction. As a result, the spontaneity and informality of the club setting may lead to occasional challenges in maintaining focused and continuous VI.

Conversely, in the university's ordinary oral speaking sessions, there is usually more control over these behaviors. Teachers typically enforce rules regarding entering and exiting the classroom during the session, aiming to minimize disruptions and maintain focus. Irrelevant behaviors are often discouraged or regulated to ensure that students remain engaged in the main discussion or lecture. This controlled environment aims to foster a more structured learning experience, emphasizing attention.

Table 5

The moderator restricts the use of L1 during interactions.

Rating Scale	PLCC Sessions	Percentage	OSS Sessions	Percentage
Always	-	0%	4	60%
Often	-	0%	2	40%
Sometimes	-	0%	-	0%
Rarely	-	0%	-	0%
Never	5	100%	-	0%

As Table 5 presents, in PLCC, learners are never restricted from using their native language (L1) (100%). They are encouraged to communicate freely in their mother tongue. This approach aligns with the primary objective of the English club, emphasized by Ningsih and Fata (2015, as cited in Holandyah et al.2023), which aims to enhance individuals' interpersonal and conversational skills within a relaxed and informal setting. The absence of language restrictions fosters a more inclusive and relaxed atmosphere, facilitating spontaneous and authentic communication among participants. It is common for learners to revert to using their native language (L1) when they encounter difficulties expressing themselves in the target language while their peers help them reform those utterances in English. This practice not only aids communication but also ensures that all participants can effectively convey their thoughts and ideas. Conversely, in OSS, teachers always restricted the use of L1 during the sessions (20%), and they often restricted this practice (60%). Learners are allowed to use only English during VI. Creating an environment that promotes immersion in the target language and enhances students' language learning experience is the teachers' main aim

The interpretation suggests that the approach to language use in these settings reflects different philosophies of language learning. PLCC prioritizes communication and meaningful interactions, while OSS prioritizes immersion and proficiency in the target language. Each approach has its advantages and may cater to different learning preferences and objectives.

Table 6

The session's objective are clearly set for each session.

Rating Scale	PLCC Sessions	Percentage	OSS Sessions	Percentage
Always	-	0%	5	100%
Often	5	100%	-	0%
Sometimes	-	0%	-	0%
Rarely	-	0%	-	0%
Never	-	0%	-	0%

In PLCC, session objectives were often established for each session (100%). The club operates in a more relaxed and informal manner but still focuses on facilitating open discussions and interactions among members with specific goals in mind. While topics were suggested in some sessions, discussions often evolve naturally based on the interests and contributions of the learners. This flexible approach allows for greater creativity and exploration but may lack the clear direction provided by established session objectives.

Conversely, in OSS, session objectives were always set for each session as part of the structured curriculum (100%). These objectives define specific learning outcomes that students are expected to achieve, guiding the content and activities of the session. The curriculum provides a framework for organizing the session. This structured approach fosters a more focused and goal-oriented learning environment, allowing students to track their progress and measure their proficiency in the target language. However, the recitative activity throughout the whole the semester could be questionable to a certain extent.

Section Two: General Observation of the Learners' Engagement during Oral Interactions

Table 7

Everyone has equal chances to participate in the verbal interaction.

Rating Scale	PLCC Sessions	Percentage	OSS	Percentage
Always	1	20%	-	0%
Often	4	80%	-	0%
Sometimes	-	0%	1	20%
Rarely	-	0%	2	40%
Never	-	0%	2	40%

As the table above reveals, it was observed in four different sessions of PLCC (equal to 80%) that learners often had equal chances to speak during verbal interactions (VI). Additionally, during the 3rd session, it was observed that learners always (20%) had equal chances to participate in VI. Holandyah et al. (2024) stated that all the tree interviewers positively answered the question of getting the same opportunities to speak in the club, also elaborating how beneficial it was in improving other areas of their speaking skill. In contrast, in the OSS, it was observed, in the best of cases, that learners sometimes had equal chances to participate during the VI (20%). In two other sessions (40%), they rarely participated equally. In another identical percentage (40%), it was observed that students never participated equally during discussions.

A possible interpretation of the results is that PLCC sessions provide learners with more possibilities to participate equally during discussions in comparison to OSS because of their continuous eye contact and facing each other repeatedly for a certain period. It was observed that some learners gave the impression that they wanted to say something along the course of the VI, but they could not until one of their peers invited and encouraged them. However, in OSS, the learners could not see each other's body language nor maintain eye contact as they were sitting, similar to any grammar lesson session, giving each other their backs.

Table 8

The learners are allowed to select the topic of the verbal interaction.

Rating Scale	PLCC Sessions	Percentage	OSS	Percentage
Always	5	100%	-	0%
Often	-	0%	-	0%
Sometimes	-	0%	3	60%
Rarely	-	0%	-	0%
Never	-	0%	2	40%

As Table 8 presents, during PLCC sessions, the learners always selected their topic of VI (100%). At the beginning of each session, the moderator chooses the topic with their peers, and sometimes the type of activity as well. Contrary to OSS, the teacher limited students' freedom in selecting the topic. They provided their students with topics to choose from; otherwise, they asked them to choose themselves. However, some topics were modified, or they were declined. As it was observed, they were never allowed to select the topic (40%), and sometimes allowed to select a topic (60%).

These percentages of the OSS can be explained that teachers seeking broader varieties of topics. In addition, they avoid repeating, what they see as boring topics, or very basic to the learners' level. Academically speaking, teachers' reasoning can be rational. Still, the learners' interests are highly important, and allowing them to speak about what makes them comfortable can positively influence other affective factors. In addition, 3rd year EFL students are expected to be graduates at this phase of their learning, so providing them with more freedom concerning the selection of topics would allow them to work more on their exchange of ideas techniques and conveying their viewpoints meaningfully to their peers, which is as important as speaking fluently.

Table 9

The learners are allowed to shift the verbal interaction's course according to their own interests.

Rating Scale	PLCC Sessions	Percentage	OSS	Percentage
Always	1	20%	-	0%
Often	4	80%	-	0%
Sometimes	-	0%	-	0%
Rarely	-	0%	2	30%
Never	-	0%	3	60%

During the majority of the PLCC sessions (4 sessions = 80%), the learners often shifted the interactions' course according to what they were interested in discussing. They elaborated on ideas, which they considered amusing and provoking. However, the moderators tried to direct them back to the main topic of the VI at some points. Moreover, in the 5th session, the learners were always allowed to shift the interaction's course (20%) based on their own interests without any interference. Differently, during three different OSS, students were never allowed to switch the course of the interaction (60%). They followed one topic and related ideas all through the sessions. In another two sessions, learners rarely redirected the interaction's course (30%), but the teacher made them go back to the main topic immediately.

The interpretation of these findings can be traced back to the ordinary speaking sessions' objectives that ought to be achieved at the end of each session, so the teacher is obliged to maintain the main interaction's course for the sake of reaching the required goals and successfully directing their sessions. Nevertheless, the absence of this quality in the PLCC sessions provides learners with more freedom to tackle topics that are more interesting.

Table 10

The learners are allowed to use some idioms, slangs, and expressions that are not academic along the session's course.

Rating Scale	PLCC Sessions	Percentage	OSS	Percentage
Always	5	100%	-	0%
Often	-	0%	-	0%
Sometimes	-	0%	-	0%
Rarely	-	0%	-	0%
Never	-	0%	5	100%

In PLCC sessions, EFL students were always allowed to use non-academic English (100%), but learners used no inappropriate or vulgar words and expressions during the five observed sessions. Nonetheless, in OSS, they were never allowed to use this kind of language during the session's course (100%). The restriction of non-academic English inside classrooms can be academically justified. However, speaking appears in different contexts, and most of them are outside of academic settings. Moreover, the main aim of English language teaching is to provide learners with the ability to use English efficiently and correctly in different communication situations (Davies & Pearse, 2000, as cited in Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). Based on this idea, it is important for learners to tackle and practice distinctive kinds of English in order to ameliorate their speaking skill and gain flexible ability to engage in various VI.

Table 11

Learners try different speaking activities and techniques each session.

Rating Scale	PLCC Sessions	Percentage	OSS	Percentage
Always	1	20%	-	0%
Often	3	60%	-	0%
Sometimes	1	20%	-	0%
Rarely	-	0%	2	40%
Never	-	0%	3	60%

Concerning whether learners try different speaking activities and techniques each session, Table 11 reveals that this statement was observed always once (20%), sometimes (20%), and often (60%) in PLCC sessions. However, in OSS, the learners rarely tried different activities and techniques each session (40%). In other sessions, they never did (60%).

PLCC activities vary from discussions and conversations to storytelling, debates, and gaming sessions. Each activity applies different techniques, and the number of moderators differs according to the nature of the activity. Wahyuniati, Maulidiyah, N., & Qolbia, M. (2020) confirmed that speaking club activities increase the learners' confidence. Differently, in the OSS, the activity is the same throughout the whole semester. Learners are supposed to deliver the same task using the same activities and techniques. Sheelan and Qani (2020) concluded in their research that English club activities are much better to practice the target language than traditional classrooms.

Table 12

Learners are given more freedom to express themselves.

Rating Scale	PLCC Sessions	Percentage	OSS	Percentage
Always	5	100%	-	0%
Often	-	0%	-	0%
Sometimes	-	0%	3	60%
Rarely	-	0%	1	20%
Never	-	0%	1	20%

Table 12 reveals that students were always given more freedom to share their opinions during the PLCC sessions (100%). In one of the secret jar activity sessions, a male student spoke about his experience with smoking addiction, how it affected his life, and the way he was fighting himself to overcome it. Interestingly, peers did not judge or restrict each other's freedom to express themselves. On the contrary, they were open to communicating their opinions and feelings freely, even when they contrasted with their peers. Sheelan and Qani (2020) stated that learners believe that they are given more freedom to talk in the club's sessions.

In the OSS context, however, it was observed that in three different sessions, the learners were sometimes given more freedom to express themselves in discussions (60%). Though their participation was welcomed, learners showed less enthusiasm for tackling more personal perspectives in comparison to PLCC sessions. In addition, during one of the sessions, learners were rarely given more freedom (20%), and in another, they were never given so (20%).

As an interpretation for these findings, it is suggested that the students' awareness of being evaluated makes them more careful and pay attention to what they say next. Furthermore, the presence of an older person moderating the session creates a more formal atmosphere, yet interlocutors who belong to the same demographical background create a less formal and friendly environment for verbal interactions.

Section Three: General Observation of the Learners Speaking Performance

Table 13

Students talking time is more than the moderator talking time.

Rating Scale	PLCC Sessions	Percentage	OSS Sessions	Percentage
Always	5	100%	-	0%
Often	-	0%	-	0%
Sometimes	-	0%	-	0%
Rarely	-	0%	1	20%
Never	-	0%	4	80%

In PLCC, the MTT is less than the STT. Learners were always engaged in dialogue and the exchange of ideas, with an emphasis on fostering discussions among themselves in all five sessions (100%). The moderators facilitate the conversation, ensuring everyone has a chance to participate, but they did not dominate the speaking time. This decentralized approach promotes a collaborative learning experience where all members are encouraged to contribute and engage actively in dialogues.

Nevertheless, in OSS, regardless of the presentation that the learners presented, where they did most of the talking, learners rarely spoke (20%). MTT was always higher than STT (80%). The teacher, as the main facilitator, guides discussions, delivers instructional content, and provides feedback to students. Gallagher and Ciampa (2020) asserted that within a discussion, the teacher should take on the responsibility of guiding students and fostering maximum participation from them because it is the constant verbal engagement that leads the students to participate more with their speaking skill and gain confidence to do so.

Table 14

The learners are nervous and make no eye contact with their peers while speaking.

Rating Scale	PLCC Sessions	Percentage	OSS Sessions	Percentage
Always	-	0%	3	60%
Often	-	0%	1	20%
Sometimes	1	20%	1	20%
Rarely	1	20%	-	0%
Never	3	60%	-	0%

Concerning whether learners are nervous and make no eye contact with their peers while speaking, Table 14 indicates that this behavior was noted in the PLCC sometimes once (20%), similarly, rarely (20%), and never three times (60%). However, in OSS, this statement was observed by following the presenters' body language and facial expressions, since such qualities were totally absent in the OSS setting. The results showed that learners were always nervous to make eye contact while speaking (60%). In one of the sessions, they were often nervous (20%), and in another, they were sometimes nervous to make eye contact (20%).

In PLCC, learners are rarely, if ever, nervous and tend to maintain eye contact with their peers while speaking. The supportive and inclusive environment encourages participants to feel at ease and confident in expressing themselves. As a result, they engage in various VI with their peers, making eye contact to facilitate communication and connection. This relaxed atmosphere fosters a

sense of mutual respect among participants, enhancing the overall learning experience. Nevertheless, in OSS, learners are often nervous and may avoid making eye contact with their peers while speaking. The structured nature of these sessions, coupled with the pressure to perform and the fear of judgments, can contribute to feelings of anxiety and self-consciousness among participants. The Fear of criticism from classmates can hinder learners' confidence and willingness to speak and affect their speaking proficiency (Wahid, 2009, as cited in Younes, Z., & Albalawi, F., 2016). As a result, learners may struggle to maintain eye contact, focusing instead on their own discomfort or on avoiding potential scrutiny from others. This lack of eye contact can hinder effective communication and interpersonal connections, affecting the quality of interaction within the learning environment.

Table 15

The learners focus on appropriately expressing an idea more than language correctness.

Rating Scale	PLCC Sessions	Percentage	OSS Sessions	Percentage
Always	5	100%	-	0%
Often	-	0%	-	0%
Sometimes	-	0%	-	0%
Rarely	-	0%	5	100%
Never	-	0%	-	0%

During the PLCC sessions (5 sessions = 100%), the learners focus more on appropriately expressing an idea than language correctness. They consistently prioritize appropriately expressing ideas over language correctness. The main goals are effective communication and sharing thoughts, even if it means making occasional errors in language usage. Learners focus on conveying their ideas clearly and engaging in meaningful dialogue with others. This approach fosters creativity, confidence, and active participation. It also creates a supportive learning environment where learners feel encouraged to express themselves freely.

Differently, during three different OSS, learners rarely prioritize appropriately expressing ideas over language correctness (100%). The primary emphasis is on linguistic accuracy, adhering strictly to grammatical rules because it aids speakers in accurately, promptly utilizing, and comprehending the structure of the English language, thereby enhancing their fluency (Richards & Renandya, 2002, as cited in Wahyuniati, Maulidiyah, N., & Qolbia, M., 2020). Consequently, learners may hesitate to speak or refrain from contributing fully to avoid errors or corrections. However, primarily focusing on language correctness can stifle authentic expression and diminish learners' active involvement in the learning process. One possible interpretation is that evaluation is present in OSS. Both teachers and learners place their focus on the correction of the produced language, which is the only way to guarantee higher scoring.

Table 16

Learners are worried of committing mistakes.

Rating Scale	PLCC Sessions	Percentage	OSS Sessions	Percentage
Always	-	0%	5	100%
Often	-	0%	-	0%
Sometimes	-	0%	-	0%
Rarely	-	0%	-	0%
Never	5	100%	-	0%

The preceding description of the data shows that during PLCC sessions, learners demonstrate a consistent lack of worry about making mistakes (100%). The supportive and encouraging environment within these clubs fosters a sense of freedom to express ideas without fear of judgment or criticism. According to Wahyuniati et al. (2020), students are not afraid of making mistakes in the club. Conversely, learners in OSS are always worried about making mistakes (100%). Students face several challenges in speaking, including fear of making grammatical errors, discomfort in pronouncing words or sentences, and a lack of vocabulary (Hadriana, 2008, as cited in Wahyuniati, Maulidiyah, N., & Qolbia, M., 2020). The focus on linguistic correctness and adherence to

grammatical rules in these sessions contributes to a sense of anxiety and pressure to speak flawlessly.

According to the presented statistics, learners in peer-led clubs rarely, if ever, worry about making mistakes while speaking. The results suggest that the relaxed atmosphere in these clubs fosters confidence and active participation in the learning process, allowing participants to use the language without any pressure of perfection. Conversely, learners in regular sessions are consistently concerned about making mistakes, which inhibits their participation and willingness to take language-related risks. This comparison highlights the substantial influence of the learning environment on learners' attitudes towards making mistakes and their overall involvement in language learning activities and VI.

Table 17

Learners receive feedback when they are speaking.

Rating Scale	PLCC Sessions	Percentage	OSS Sessions	Percentage
Always	-	0%	-	0%
Often	-	0%	5	100%
Sometimes	4	80%	-	0%
Rarely	1	20%	-	0%
Never	-	0%	-	0%

Based on the data presented in Table 17, during the majority of the observed sessions, learners in PLCC sometimes received feedback when they were speaking (80%), but they rarely did during one of the sessions (20%). This finding reflects the collaborative nature of peer-led clubs, where they help one another by offering some feedback concerning their oral performance, whether at the level of language grammar or words' selection. In the other context, learners often received feedback when they were speaking (100%). The teachers offer feedback during or after the learners end their presentations. This aligns with the structured format of ordinary sessions,

where the teacher typically provides guidance, corrections, and feedback to students during speaking activities.

While learners receive peer feedback that is welcomed and encouraging, it may have some potential drawbacks. Without structured feedback from a teacher or moderator, learners in PLCC may miss opportunities for targeted language correction and improvement. OSS, conversely, provides more structured feedback from teachers, which offers opportunities for language correction and development. Nonetheless, the structured nature of OSS may result in creating pressure to perform and limiting opportunities of free expression. Finding a balance between autonomy and guidance is highly significant for designing effective language learning experiences. Feedback should be supportive and encouraging rather than critical.

Table 18

Learners are more willing to speak when the moderator is one of their peers.

Rating Scale	PLCC Sessions	Percentage	OSS	Percentage
Always	3	60%	-	0%
Often	2	20%	-	0%
Sometimes	-	0%	2	40%
Rarely	-	0%	2	40%
Never	-	0%	1	20%

As the table above reveals, in PLCC sessions, where the moderator is always one of the learners' peers, during the majority of the sessions, students were always more willing to speak and engage in VI (60%). During the others, they were often more willing to speak with their peers (40%). Interestingly, in the OSS, despite the fact that the presentations are delivered by peers, the students were never more willing to speak or engage in VI with them during one of the sessions (20%). During two other sessions, they were rarely more willing to speak (40%). In the best of cases, the learners were sometimes more willing to speak twice (40%).

A possible interpretation of the results in Table 18 is the absence of evaluation and the presence of the supportive and friendly environment created by peers within the PLCC setting. As it was observed, learners showed more willingness to speak during PLCC sessions but not during OSS, though peers delivered VI in both contexts. Possibly, the explicit process of evaluation makes students more careful when practicing their speaking skill, and limits their enthusiasm and willingness to speak with their peers as they care more about their scores and teachers remarks. Additionally, peer support during OSS was clearly absent. Learners are more interested in delivering their parts than engaging their peers, which drives them to speak and express what they have in mind concerning the topic under discussion. Jayanti et al. (2022) declared that the clubs' environment is highly important for the students to speaking.

Table 19

The length of the learners' speaking duration increases relatively along the session's course.

Rating Scale	PLCC Sessions	Percentage	OSS	Percentage
Always	-	0%	-	0%
Often	2	40%	-	0%
Sometimes	2	40%	-	0%
Rarely	1	20%	3	60%
Never	-	0%	2	40%

The general observation of the learners' speaking performance in both settings showed that in the context of PLCC, the length of the learners' speaking duration often increased, especially during the 2nd and 3rd sessions (40%). Equally, sometimes it did during the 1st and 5th sessions (40%). However, it rarely increased during the 4th session (20%). The increase in speaking durations for learners can be due to the nature of the topic as well as peer support, which made some of the students more motivated to express themselves. This may be traced back to the supportive and friendly environment. The constant smiling and laughter reduces nervousness and anxiety during the session's course, and the freedom to shift the VI course according to the learners'

interests makes the students more motivated, which led to gradually increase the length of their speaking duration throughout the sessions' course.

In OSS, the length of the learners' speaking duration rarely increased along the 1st, 2nd, and 4th sessions' course (60%). During the other sessions, it was never increased (40%). The observation of this statement within the OSS context did not provide equal transparency like in PLCC sessions because the learners were not speaking equally as the main focus was delivering presentations. Some of the students were observed speaking only during their presentations.

Table 20

Learners use new vocabulary and expressions with each session.

Rating Scale	PLCC Sessions	Percentage	OSS	Percentage
Always	2	40%	5	100%
Often	3	60%	-	0%
Sometimes	-	0%	-	0%
Rarely	-	0%	-	0%
Never	-	0%	-	0%

Concerning whether learners use new vocabulary and expressions with each session, it was observed, in the PLCC context, that in two different sessions, they always did (40%). In the other three sessions, they often used new vocabulary and expressions (60%). The learners used new vocabulary and expressions while verbally interacting with others, mostly whenever they picked distinctive topics of discussion. However, during simple conversations during the secret jar activity, the vocabulary and expressions used were not new, repeated, or basic. Nevertheless, they were provided with more opportunities to tackle topics, which made them use a distinctive kind of vocabulary. Yusvita, Atmowardoyo, H., & Samtidar. (2024) observed that speaking clubs are beneficial as they help learners enhance their vocabulary. Additionally, Jayanti et al. (2022) stated that learners' vocabulary knowledge grows due to my participation in the English-Speaking Club".

Differently, in the OSS context, it was observed that EFL students always used new vocabulary and expressions during the five sessions (100%). It is true that different sets of vocabulary were used each session because of the various topics that required them. However, it is difficult to assume that the vocabulary was learned by heart as part of the presentation or was an already acquired input by the learners. Though in each session new vocabulary and expressions were used, not all learners utilized them equally.

Table 21

The learners' speaking skill is practiced naturally without any previous preparations and reflect their current level.

Rating Scale	PLCC Sessions	Percentage	OSS	Percentage
Always	5	100%	-	0%
Often	-	0%	-	0%
Sometimes	-	0%	2	40%
Rarely	-	0%	3	60%
Never	-	0%	-	0%

It was observed during all five sessions (100%) of PLCC that students attended without having a previous idea of neither the nature of the task nor the topic. In the 1st, 4th, and 5th sessions, the club's members suggested some topics at the beginning of each session, and the learners were free to choose among them or recommend others. In the 2nd and 3rd sessions, the students opted for the secret jar activity. During the latter, each of them wrote a secret of their own and dropped it in a jar. Later, they mixed the papers and picked them randomly for discussion. Therefore, the language they were using was natural, since they did not prepare or read about the kind of language that would be used in the VI. Similarly, Sheelan and Qani (2020) declared that students use English in a more natural way during English club activities than in the classroom.

In contrary, during the OSS, it was observed that learners rarely practiced their speaking skill naturally without any previous preparations (60%). The presenters, who had previously prepared

for their presentation, did most of the talking. It was only when the teacher asked unexpected questions during or at the end of the presentation that the real current levels of the students could be observed. During the 2nd and 4th sessions, students sometimes used natural English that reflected their levels (20%). Around three students showed interest in the topics and participated with their peers.

3. Limitations of the Study

Although this research was successfully conducted, it still has some limitations that may restraint the generalization of the results. These limitations include the following:

- Time constraints.
- Only around 40% of the target population answered the students' questionnaire.
- The students who did not attend PLCC overnumbered those who did.
- Limited access to the relevant literature.
- The limited number of quality research works on the subject matter.
- Most of the students did not justify their answers while answering the questionnaire.
- The OSS observations did not consider all the groups.

4. Suggestions and Recommendations

a) For Students

- Students should recognize their responsibility for their academic progress and be more autonomous learners.
- Students should recognize the value of seeking additional opportunities for practicing and enhancing their speaking skill.
- Students should not depend only on the university curriculum and seek more practice outside of classrooms.

- Students should consider the importance of extracurricular activities to practice more their speaking skill and further improve it.

b) For Teachers

- Teachers should encourage their students to engage in speaking clubs and practice their speaking skill more.
- Teachers should consider supervising extracurricular activities at the university to help students acknowledge the importance of autonomous study and peer collaborative work for improving their speaking skill.
- Teachers should create a more welcoming and informal classroom environment to encourage students to express themselves orally, as speaking requires more support and encouragement in comparison to other skills.

c) For the Club Members

- The club members should ask for help from more experienced teachers when designing new speaking activities to help students benefit the most from the club's sessions.
- The club members should consider assessing the effectiveness of the club activities.
- The club members should request feedback from the students to regularly identify areas for improvement and make essential adjustments to ensure persistent growth and success.
- The club members should ask their peers to avoid smoking before they attend the sessions.

d) For University Responsible

- The university should highly consider providing students with more suitable rooms for the oral comprehension sessions.
- The university should provide the club members with better rooms and equipment.

- The university should celebrate the achievements and contributions of the club members and recognize their efforts through awards and recognition.
- The university should support more extracurricular activities and encourage students from different faculties to integrate club activities into the academic curriculum where applicable.
- The university should organize awareness campaigns to raise both students' awareness and motivation to engage and participate in distinctive extracurricular activities in the future.

e) For Future Research

- Conducting a study on Peer-led Conversation Clubs' effect on students speaking skill according to the teachers' perspective.
- The influence of Peer-led conversation clubs on the listening skill is worth researching in the future.
- Researchers in the future may conduct an experimental study.
- A comparative study on the academic scores of students who attend the clubs and those who do not.

Conclusion

All the previously presented data provide a clear answer to our research questions and confirm both of our research hypotheses. We can and doubtlessly conclude that the peer-led conversation club, a form of extracurricular activity at the University Centre of Mila, helps 3rd year bachelor English language students improve their speaking skill. Additionally, we found that the club's setting contains certain key elements which contribute to that enhancement but are absent in the ordinary speaking sessions at the university. These key elements are a friendly atmosphere, peer support, freedom of self-expression, and a suitable setting organization.

General Conclusion

This dissertation tackled one of the newest areas of research that is finding its way to the world of academia, which is the impact of Peer-led conversation clubs on English language students' speaking skill. We targeted the population of 3rd-year bachelor students of English at Mila University Center. Moreover, a mixed-method approach was adopted to investigate this research topic from the perspectives of the students and through comparatively observing the two different settings. The research instruments included both the questionnaire and the observation, and the data collected were analyzed using statistical and thematic analysis.

The collected data confirmed both of the research hypotheses and answered both research questions. It was found that the peer-led conversation club at the University Centre of Mila helps 3rd year bachelor English students improve their speaking skill. This improvement was evidenced by significant increases in the students' increased level of motivation. Furthermore, qualitative feedback from students highlighted the positive significant impact of peer in practicing the speaking skill. It also makes them more engaged and enjoy learning. The collected data supports and expands on the previously presented literature on the topic, providing new insights on the effective key elements present in the club's setting, mentioning a friendly atmosphere, peer support, freedom of self-expression, suitable setting organization, and more student-oriented practices.

In spite of the limitations on which this research lies, the presented data is still authentic, valid, and effectively sheds light on the new subject matter at hand. Especially since it provides new insights into the topic investigated in the context of Mila University Centre, Algeria. Additionally, it opens up new avenues for investigation into the richness of the topic under study in the future.

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Appendix A

Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

This questionnaire is designed for better understanding the role Peer-led Conversation Clubs play in boosting your speaking skill as third-year students. Please do kindly spare a few minutes to complete it. Please, note that your responses will be shrouded in secrecy, and they will be used only for research purposes.

- **NB: You can choose more than one answer whenever it is necessary**

Section One: Speaking Skill

1. How would you evaluate your speaking skill?

- Weak
- Average
- Excellent

2. What are the challenges you face when speaking in English?

- I don't face challenges at all
- Lack of confidence
- Lack of vocabulary
- Fear of the teacher's remark
- Fear of my peers' judgments

Others

3. Where do you feel more comfortable practicing your speaking skill?

- In class, with teachers and classmates
- Outside of class, with friends and peers

4. How do you feel when you are corrected while speaking?

- Interrupted, and I lose ideas
- Nervous
- Less confident

Doesn't affect me in any way

Justify.....
.....

5. Does evaluation affect your speaking performance in a bad way?

Yes

No

Justify.....
.....

6. How often do you practice your speaking skill outside of university?

Never

Rarely

Sometimes

Often

Always

7. With whom do you practice your speaking skill?

Alone

With teachers and classmates

With people of the same age and interests

If there any other individuals with whom you practice your speaking skill, please mention them

.....
.....

Section Two: Peer-led Conversation Clubs

1. Practicing the speaking skill in a peer-led conversation club provides a more fun and motivating atmosphere compared to ordinary speaking sessions at the university.

Agree

Disagree

Justify.....
.....
.....

2. Practicing the speaking skill with peers in the absence of evaluation is more comfortable.

- Agree
- Disagree

Justify.....
.....
.....

3. Have you attended one of this club’s sessions before?

- Yes
- No

Why?.....
.....
.....

4. If “Never” What are the reasons that prevent you from attending?

- Shyness
- Afraid of being judged
- I am not interested
- My speaking skill is already good

Others

Section Three: Peer-led Conversation Clubs' Impression on Learners

1. What does motivate you to attend this club's sessions?

- Freedom of self-expression
- Friendly atmosphere
- Fun topics
- Absence of evaluation
- Feeling more confident
- Using English that I cannot inside classrooms

Others

2. I am more talkative in the peer-led club than in the ordinary speaking sessions.

- Agree
- Disagree
- Neutral

Justify.....
.....

3. The Peer-led Conversation Club's sessions help me improve my speaking skill in terms of:

- Appropriateness (to use a suitable language according to the context of speaking)
- Correctness (to form perfect sentences at the level of the language grammar)

Explain.....
.....
.....

4. Have you been corrected by one of your peers during conversations before?

- Yes
- No

5. Do you think peers' feedback help you improve your speaking skill?

- Yes
- No

Justify.....
.....

6. The Peer-led Conversation Club atmosphere is suitable for practicing my speaking skill.

- Agree
- Disagree
- Neutral

Justify.....
.....

7. What is the activity you enjoy the most in the club?

- Conversation
- Free topics discussions
- Debates
- Storytelling
- Games

8. Do you believe that your speaking skill is better after attending this club's sessions?

- Yes
- No

Justify.....
.....
.....

9. Feel free to add any relevant comment to the topic.

.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you

Appendix B

Observation Checklist for the setting

Date	
Observer(s)	
Session	

- **The Rating Scale: A-Always B-Often C-Sometimes D-Rarely E-Never**

Section One: General observation of the setting management	A	B	C	D	E
1. The physical setting is clean and comfortable.					
2. The setting is organized in a way that enables the learners to face each other and keep an eye contact during interactions.					
3. The session's moderator moves around the setting to offer guidance and check comprehension.					
4. The moderator controls some irrelevant behaviours. (E.g. Coming in, getting out, and side talks during the session)					
5. The moderator restricts the use of L1 during interactions.					
6. The session's objective are clearly set for each session.					

Section Two: General observation of the learners engagement during oral interactions	A	B	C	D	E
1. Everyone has equal chances to participate in the verbal interaction.					
2. The learners are allowed to select the topic of the verbal interaction.					
3. The learners are allowed to shift the verbal interaction's course according to their own interests.					
4. The learners are allowed to use some idioms, slangs, and expressions that are not academic along the session course.					
5. Learners try different speaking activities and techniques each session.					
6. Learners are given more freedom to express themselves.					

Section Three: General observation of the learners speaking performance	A	B	C	D	E
1. Students talking time is more than the moderator talking time.					
2. The learners are nervous and make no eye contact with their peers while speaking.					
3. The learners focus on appropriately expressing an idea more than language correctness.					
4. Learners are worried of committing mistakes.					
5. Learners receive feedback when they are speaking.					
6. Learners are more willing to speak when the moderator is one of their peers.					
7. The length of learners' speaking duration increases relatively with each session.					
8. Learners use new vocabulary and expressions with each session.					
9. The learners' speaking skill is practiced naturally without any previous preparations and reflect their current levels.					

Résumé

La compétence en expression orale revêt une importance majeure, car elle reflète la compétence linguistique d'une personne. L'objectif principal de cette mémoire est d'explorer le rôle des clubs de conversation dirigés par les pairs dans le renforcement de la compétence en expression orale chez les étudiants d'anglais et de découvrir les éléments clés efficaces présents dans le cadre de ces clubs qui conduisent à une telle amélioration. Cette étude se concentre sur deux hypothèses. La première est que les clubs de conversation dirigés par les pairs aident les apprenants à améliorer leur compétence en expression orale et la deuxième est que certains éléments clés efficaces nécessaires à cette amélioration sont présents dans le cadre de ces clubs plutôt que dans les séances d'expression orale. Une recherche comparative, adoptant une méthode mixte, est employée. Un questionnaire est administré de manière aléatoire à un échantillon d'étudiants en troisième année d'anglais au Centre universitaire de Mila, en plus de l'observation du cadre des clubs par rapport aux séances d'expression orale. Les résultats ont confirmé que le club de conversation dirigé par les pairs au Centre universitaire de Mila contribue au renforcement de la compétence en expression orale chez les étudiants en troisième année de licence en anglais en raison de certains éléments clés efficaces présents dans le cadre du club, tels qu'une atmosphère conviviale, un soutien entre pairs, la liberté d'expression de soi, une organisation du cadre adaptée et des exercices plus orientés vers les étudiants.

Mots-clés : clubs de conversation dirigés par les pairs, le cadre de club de conversation, séances d'expression orale, apprenants en langue anglaise, compétence en expression orale.

الملخص

مهارة الكلام ذو أهمية كبيرة حيث تعكس الأداء الفعلي لكفاءة الشخص في اللغة. الهدف الرئيسي من هذه الأطروحة هو استكشاف دور الأندية النقاشية التي يديرها الأقران في تعزيز مهارة الكلام بين متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية واكتشاف العناصر الرئيسية الفعالة الموجودة في إطار هذه الأندية التي تؤدي إلى تحسين مهارة الكلام لدى الطلاب. هذه الدراسة تركز على فرضيتين رئيسيتين. الأولى هي أن الأندية النقاشية التي يديرها الأقران تساعد المتعلمين على تحسين مهارة الكلام لديهم والثانية هي أن بعض العناصر الرئيسية الفعالة اللازمة لهذا التحسين موجودة في إطار هذه الأندية بدلاً من الحصص الشفوية العادية. تم استخدام بحث مقارنة عارضة، مع اعتماد أسلوب مختلط. تم تنفيذ استبيان عشوائي لعينة من طلاب السنة الثالثة في اللغة الإنجليزية في مركز جامعة ميله بالإضافة إلى مراقبة إطار الأندية مقارنة الحصص الشفوية العادية. أكدت النتائج أن نادي النقاش الذي يديره الأقران في مركز جامعة ميله يساهم في تعزيز مهارة الكلام بين طلاب السنة الثالثة في اللغة الإنجليزية وذلك بسبب بعض العناصر الرئيسية الفعالة الموجودة في إطار النادي، مثل الجو الودي، الدعم بين الأقران، حرية التعبير عن الذات، تنظيم الإطار المناسب، وممارسات تتجه أكثر نحو الطلاب.

الكلمات الرئيسية: أندية النقاش التي يديرها الأقران، جلسة نادي المحادثة، الحصص الشفوية العادية، متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية، مهارة الكلام.