

Assessing Students' Perception of the Effectiveness of Group Discussion in Improving Speaking Skills

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Abstract

Group discussion is highly recommended as a crucial instructional method in schools to enhance students' speaking skills. The main objective of this study is to examine the effects of group discussion on students' speaking skills. This study employed both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 133 tertiary-level students at Rift Valley University, Burayu Campus, Ethiopia. A Likert-scale questionnaire was employed to collect primary data, which was subsequently analyzed using SPSS and Excel. The study found that group discussion is a highly effective strategy for improving student's oral communication skills. Furthermore, the majority of students believe that group discussions contributed to their enhanced language proficiency.

Keywords: group discussion, English language, speaking skill, teaching-learning

1. Introduction

Speaking, listening, writing, and reading are known to be major language skills whereas, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation are considered minor language skills. So speaking is the expression of ideas using speech sounds combined into words. Speaking is the ability to use spoken words (Nordquist, 2019). According to Bygate (1987), speaking is an expression of one's idea using sounds. Generally, speaking is the greatest language skill and the reason for human development through time. There are various methods which can be employed to teach speaking skills, including role-play, group discussions, and pair work. Group discussion is widely recognized as a highly effective method for improving students' oral communication skills.

Group discussion is important as it encourages teamwork and allows students to improve their speaking. It helps students develop students' critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, and communication skills. Small group discussion in speaking class has a positive impact on students' learning. It promotes interaction and learning, encourages motivation, and develops respect for others' ideas. Students become more confident in expressing their thoughts and critiquing others' ideas. Using small group discussions significantly improves students' speaking skills. It helps students to actively engage in conversations, share opinions, and support each other's learning. This approach allows teachers to focus on individual students and provide personalized feedback. Small group discussions also create a more dynamic and engaging learning environment, preventing students from getting bored. Overall, small group discussion is an effective strategy for improving students' speaking skills and enhancing their learning experience in the classroom. However, in most speaking classrooms this strategy is not implemented which results in students' speaking difficulty.

The majority of the students do not have enough practice to master their English-speaking skills. The reason for this may be that the students have no time to practice English inside the classroom. Most students don't care much about their speaking English since they don't use the target language for communication. This may emerge not only from the negligence of students but also from teachers' carelessness about

developing their students' English-speaking skills.

In addition, teachers' speaking skills and teaching methods can affect students' English-speaking skills are greatly affected by teachers. Based on the teachers' ability, students can be perfect speakers or can't speak at all. The problem that causes low English-speaking skills mostly arises from teachers' teaching commitment and the teaching methods they use. Most teachers focus on teaching grammar and they use a teacher-centered teaching-learning process. The traditional and teacher-centered teaching methods are seen in most Ethiopian education institutions.

Ethiopia's education curriculum and syllabus design also play a lion's share in students' poor speaking performance. The syllabus does not provide enough time for practicing and developing their English-speaking skills. Having not learned English very well, students face speaking difficulties. Thus, why the researcher is eager to investigate students' perception of using Group Discussion in enhancing their speaking performance. The main beneficial groups from the findings of this study are teachers, students, schools, curriculum designers, and stakeholders.

2. Literature Review

Speaking difficulty is a major problem for most students in different non-English-speaking countries including, Arabian countries (Aziz, 2019), Bangladesh (Hoque et al. 2023, Hoque et al. 2024, Tanzina et al. 2024,) Egypt (Latif, 2024), India (Rani, S., 2020), Indonesia (Zaim, M., & Arsyad, S. 2020), Nigeria (Tom-Lawyer & Thomas, 2024), Pakistan (Khan & Mohammed, 2024), Somalia (Sowton, 2023), Yemen (Awadh et al., 2024). Therefore, it is often claimed that students in non-English-speaking countries struggle with speaking English, which can hinder their academic and professional aspirations. Most students face challenges in learning a foreign language. These problems may arise from themselves, their teachers, and their curriculum. Consequently, these circumstances made it challenging for students to develop their English-speaking skills in many countries of Asia and Africa. Many students feel nervous when they try to speak English in front of their classmates and friends (Hoque et al., 2018; Lamessa et al., 2023). This, in turn, will affect their English-speaking skills and will diminish their English language performance over time. Students should get sufficient time to practice speaking.

Classroom discussion is important in academic contexts, particularly in English for academic purposes. This discussion involves multiple interlocutors, mainly students, and requires using different linguistic devices. The goal is to teach discourse features that can be used in class discussions while raising awareness of the differences between written and spoken academic English (Lalu Bohari, 2019). Speech context in classroom interactions is influenced by various factors, including gender, class, and cultural constructs. Contextual features can affect how the interaction unfolds, such as the direction of the conversation when a teacher interacts with students (Leong & Ahmadi, 2016). In analyzing students' and teachers' talk in classroom discussions, it was found that the agreement phases of discussion are reciprocally affected by students' topical talk and teachers' topical talk, while peer discourse in disagreement phases is more independent of teachers' talk (Hakim, 2018). Classroom interactions involve various speech acts, with imperatives being the most dominant type. Strategies used in the realization of imperatives include formal completeness, level of directness, point of view, context, and mood. The language-use patterns of teachers in different play contexts in classrooms can affect the rate and nature of students' language, suggesting that teachers should align their practices with desired learning goals (Nordquist, 2019). To improve students' speaking skills, many researchers conducted studies. Let's see some of their works.

Khamkhien (2010) argued that classroom instruction should not solely prioritize the acquisition of spoken statements and everyday expressions, but should also emphasise the development of communication skills in authentic contexts (p.184). According to Hadfield (1999) as cited in Setiyadi (2007) a speaking lesson serves as a connection for learners, linking the classroom with the outside world. Consequently, speaking activities possess three characteristics that connect the classroom with the real world: they provide opportunities for practice; they facilitate purposeful communication, and they create relevant circumstance.

In addition, Setiyadi (2007) stated that there are three distinct stages involved in developing speaking competencies: setting up, practicing speaking, and receiving feedback. As educators, it is essential for us to carefully plan the materials and topics we will present to our students. Subsequently, the teacher provides opportunities for practical application. Subsequently, the students receive feedback in the form of corrections or a summary of the information.

Besides, Rahman and Deviyanti (2012) asserted that speaking proficiency must encompass the following aspects: fluency, accuracy (in terms of grammar and pronunciation), and comprehension. Similarly, Brown (2004) contends that speaking skills should encompass five key aspects: vocabulary, grammar, fluency, comprehension, and pronunciation.

2.1 Empirical Literature

Previous research indicates that using group discussions is recommended as an effective approach for fostering students' speaking proficiency. According to Argawati (2014), engaging in group discussions is one of the most effective approaches for acquiring proficiency in speaking a foreign language. It enhances the students' proficiency in spoken communication. Within the group, students have the chance to engage in English conversation and mutually enhance their language skills with their peers. Engaging in conversations with friends enhances their self-assurance in articulating some terms without concern about potential errors. In addition, learning in a group enhances their language proficiency. Similarly, Osborne et al. (2001) stated that using small group discussion in the instruction of speaking skills is highly efficient. The study contrasts students who were instructed in speaking skills without using group discussion with those who were taught using group discussion. The study found that students who were instructed through small group discussions showed improvement.

In addition, Newton et al. (1999) found that nearly all of the students who had an enhancement in their motivation during speaking classes demonstrated improvement in their speaking skills. Although the change was minimal, it was a positive indication that incorporating discussion activities can enhance students' speaking skills. Besides, Moge (2019) stated that using small group discussion technique enhances students' proficiency in oral communication. The utilisation of the small group discussion technique provides students with the opportunity to actively engage in language practice. Small group discussion is an instructional method where the teacher partitions the class into smaller groups. Using small group discussion techniques can have a profound impact on enhancing students' speaking proficiency. Utilising the small discussion strategy in teaching speaking enhances students' level of engagement and promotes active learning. Therefore, group discussion plays a significant role in providing students with the chance to practise and improve their speaking skills.

According to Kindsvatter et al. (1996: 242), a small-group discussion involves dividing a large classroom into smaller groups of students to achieve specific objectives. This approach allows students to take more responsibility for their learning, develop social and leadership skills, and engage in an alternative instructional method. Furthermore, Orlich et.al (1985) argued that small group discussions could improve the student's speaking skills. Group discussion is used to increase teacher-student interaction and student-student verbal interaction in the classroom. Group discussion can also be used to promote meaningful personal interaction and learning. The learning may be of contents, skills, attitudes or processes. It is used to help students adopt a more responsible and independent mode of learning. There are four key elements of organizing small groups in your classroom. These are goals and objectives, ideal group size, room arrangement, and choice of topics and applications (Solomon, 1991).

Moreover, Sadiyah, (2016) explained that small group discussion is part of many learning methods that stimulate student activity. This method apart from being a method of discussion as well as a problem management method (problem-solving). Small group discussions were conducted by dividing students into groups. It also found that the small group discussion was effective for students' ability to speak. Similarly, Antoni (2014) explored that small group discussions highly improved students' speaking skills. The rule of friends found in small group discussion technique became the main factor that influences students' speaking skills. It means, applying small group discussions gave students more chances to be involved in the class speaking. Based on the extensive literature survey, the researchers were motivated to assess the effect of group discussion on students' speaking skills. To the knowledge of the researchers, no one conducted a study to investigate the effect of group discussion to improve students' speaking skills at Rift Valley University, Burayu Campus.

3. Methods

In this research, a mixed approach was used. The mixed approach contains both qualitative and quantitative approaches at the same time. The random sampling technique was used to select each sample from the groups. For this study, 133 students were selected from Rift Valley University, Burayu Campus. Primary data was collected through a Likert-Scale questionnaire. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS and Excel. The results of the analyzed data were displayed in the form of Tables and Figures.

4. Results and Discussions

Q1. The group discussions have helped me feel more confident in expressing my ideas verbally.

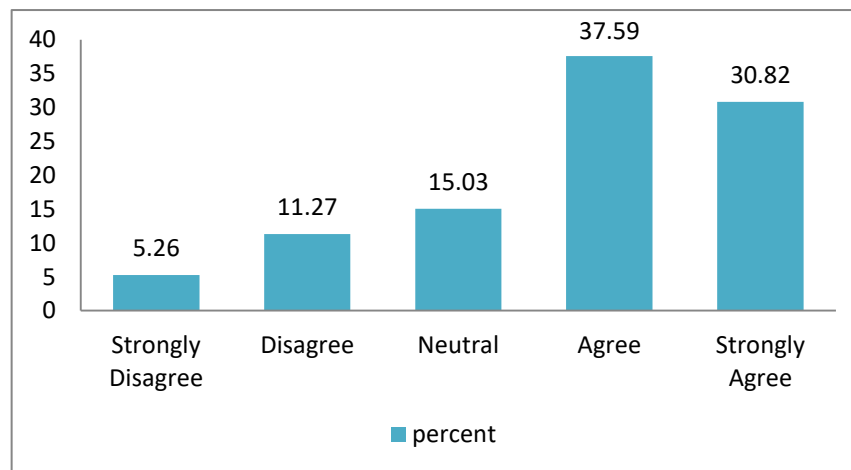


Figure 1. Participants' level of agreement on the importance of group discussions letting them feel more confident in expressing their ideas verbally

Figure 1 indicates the participants' responses to a statement on the impact of group discussion on their confidence in verbal communication. 5.26% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the notion that group discussions have enhanced their verbal communication skills. This indicates that just a small number of individuals believed that group discussion did not enhance their self-assurance. 11.27% of participants expressed their disagreement. This demonstrates that some participants did not perceive group discussions as beneficial for enhancing their confidence in verbal expression. 15.03% of individuals held a neutral attitude toward the statement. This suggests that group interactions do

not have an impact on their level of confidence. 37.59% of respondents reported that engaging in group discussions had enhanced their verbal communication skills. The majority of respondents agreed that engaging in group discussions positively impacted their confidence. 30.82% of respondents expressed a strong agreement. This demonstrates that a significant number of students considered group discussions to be beneficial and observed an improvement in spoken communication. The majority of participants perceived group interactions enhanced their confidence to express themselves verbally. A group discussion is key to boosting confidence and enhancing communication skills, as stated by Bender (2005). Working together as a group not only fosters a sense of self-assurance but also encourages effective collaboration. As students enhance their speaking skills, they simultaneously boost their confidence levels. Moreover, improving students' speaking skills through group discussion also fosters a sense of collaborative learning among students (Sinaga & Pustika, 2021).

Q2. I believe my speaking skills have improved as a result of participating in group discussions.

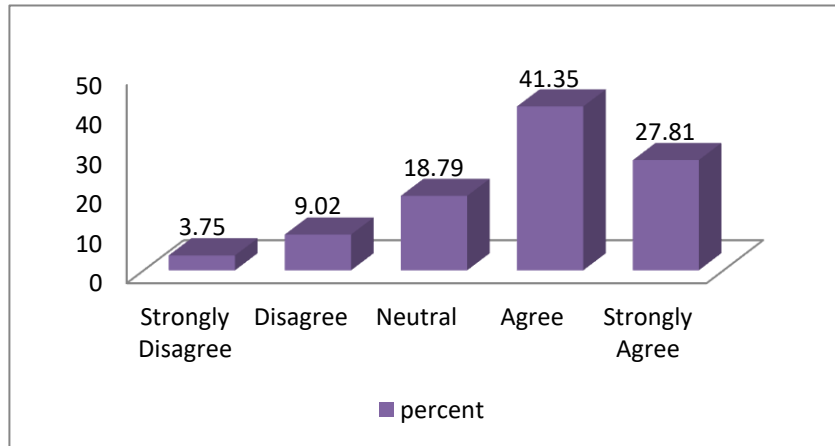


Figure 2. Participants' level of agreement on whether their speaking skills improved as a result of participating in group discussions

Figure 2 represents the participants' responses to a statement regarding the improving their speaking skills through group discussions. 3.75% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the notion that group discussion has enhanced their speaking skills. This indicates a small number of the students held the belief that group discussions did not enhance their speaking skills. 9.02% disagreed with the statement that group discussion has enhanced their speaking skills. This demonstrates that some individuals held the belief that group discussion did not enhance their speaking skills. 18.79% of individuals had a neutral attitude toward the statement. They exhibit neither agreement nor disagreement. According to the data, 41.35% of the participants agreed that engaging in group discussions had a positive impact on their ability to speak effectively. This shows that the majority of respondents indicated that group discussions were good for improving speaking skills. 27.06% of the respondents strongly agreed. This indicates that a substantial number of students found group discussions is beneficial, and they experienced a significant improvement in their oral communication skills. This reveals that the majority of participants held the belief that engaging in group discussion enhances their speaking skills. According to Celce (2001), there are various methods that can be utilized to enhance students' speaking skills. These include engaging in discussions, delivering speeches, participating in role-plays, engaging in conversations, using audiotape oral dialogues, maintaining journals, and incorporating accuracy-based activities. By incorporating these techniques, students can significantly improve their ability to speak confidently and effectively.

Q3. Group discussions have enhanced my ability to articulate my thoughts clearly.

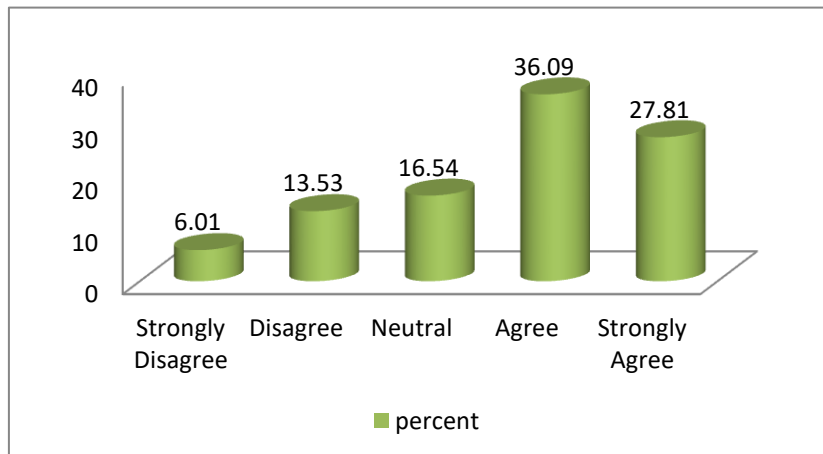


Figure 3. Participants' level of agreement on using group discussions in enhancing their ability to articulate my thoughts clearly

Figure 3 depicts the participants' reactions to a statement regarding the impact of group discussions on their capacity to articulate their opinions. 6.01% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the notion that group discussions enhance to articulate their thoughts clearly. This indicates that a small number of individuals do not believe that group discussions have enhanced their ability to express themselves clearly. 13.53% of participants expressed their disagreement. This demonstrates that some participants did not perceive group discussions as beneficial for enhancing their communication skills. 16.54 % of individuals had a neutral attitude about the statement. This indicates a state of neither agreement nor disagreement and a lack of awareness regarding the enhancement of their ability to express themselves clearly. 36.09% of respondents reported that group discussions have enhanced their communication skills. This represents the largest number of responses, suggesting that group discussions enhanced their spoken communication skills. 27.81% of respondents expressed a strong agreement. This shows that a significant number of students found group discussions to be beneficial and claimed that they enhanced their ability to articulate their viewpoints. This indicates that the majority of participants believe that group discussion enhances their ability to articulate their thoughts. Hammer (1998) also emphasizes that small group discussions provide ample opportunities for students to share their thoughts and ideas, fostering organic interactions that lead to collaborative learning without explicit instruction. In addition, engaging in intimate group discussions helps students develop critical thinking skills and boosts their confidence when sharing ideas with their peers or presenting in front of the class.

Q4. I feel more comfortable speaking in front of others after engaging in group discussions.

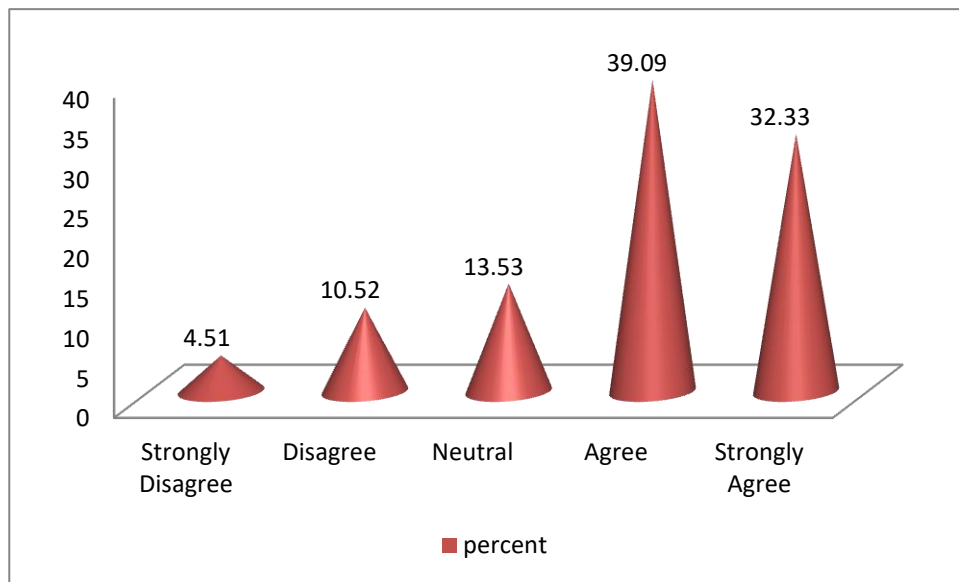


Figure 4. Participants' level of agreement on whether they feel comfortable while speaking in front of others after engaging in group discussions

Figure 4 shows the participant's responses to a statement regarding the impact of group discussions on their level of comfort when speaking in public. 4.51% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that group discussions have improved their confidence in public speaking. This indicates that a small number of individuals did not experience an increased level of comfort during group discussions. 10.52% of participants express their disagreement. This demonstrates that some participants did not observe an increase in their level of comfort in public speaking following the group discussion. 13.53 % of individuals have a neutral attitude about the statement. According to the survey, 39.09% of respondents reported that participating in group discussions has increased their comfort level when speaking in public. This shows that the majority of respondents indicated that group discussions enhanced their comfort in public speaking. 32.33% of respondents expressed a strong agreement. This indicates that a significant number of students considered group discussions beneficial and experienced an increase in their confidence when speaking in public as a consequence. This reveals that the majority of participants indicate that they experience more comfort when speaking in public following group discussions. This result is supported by Ur (1996) who argues sharing ideas without feeling embarrassed can enhance students' skills as it allows them to learn how to complete tasks by exchanging and refining ideas with their peers.

Q5. The feedback received during group discussions has been helpful in identifying areas for improvement in my speaking skills.

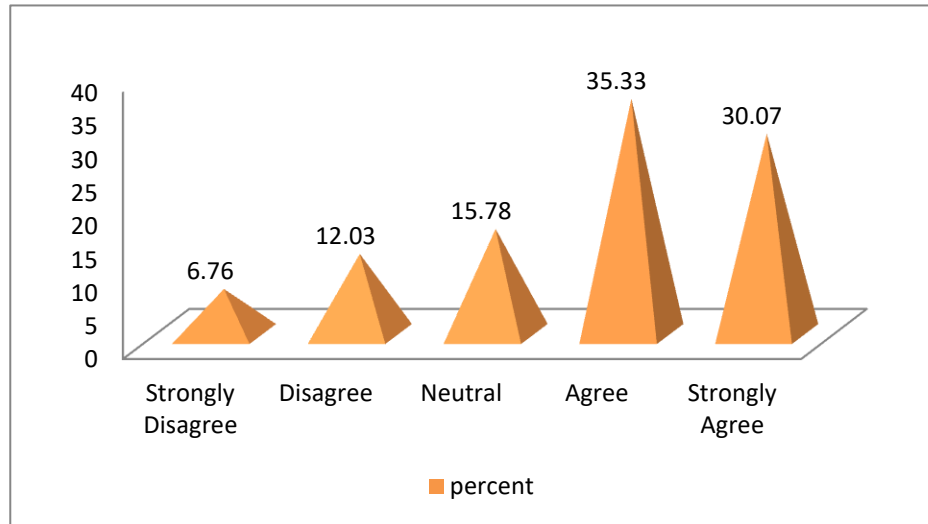


Figure 5. Participants' level of agreement on the importance of feedback during group discussions in identifying areas for improvement in their speaking skills

Figure 5 represents the responses of participants regarding the impact of group discussion feedback on their speaking skills development. 6.76% of participants strongly disagreed that group discussion feedback has facilitated the enhancement of their speaking skills. This indicates that a small number of individuals did not derive any advantages from the feedback provided for personal growth. 12.03% of participants expressed their disagreement. This demonstrates that some individuals did not perceive the feedback as beneficial for enhancing their performance. 15.78% of individuals held a neutral attitude towards the statement. They exhibit uncertainty regarding the efficacy of feedback in identifying areas for improvement. According to the analysis, 35.33% of the participants reported that receiving feedback during group discussions was beneficial in enhancing their speaking skills. This indicates that a significant number of individuals found the input useful for self-assessment and improvement. 30.07% of students strongly agreed. This suggests that a significant number of students found the feedback helpful and viewed it as essential in pinpointing areas that needed improvement, indicating that the feedback process was successful. This reveals that the majority of participants found group discussion feedback to be advantageous in enhancing their speaking skills. Similarly, Crisianita and Mandasari (2022) stated that engaging in small group discussions provides a great opportunity for both teachers and students to enhance their speaking skills. It allows teachers to give individualized feedback and focus on each student's progress effectively.

Q6. Group discussions have encouraged me to actively listen to others' viewpoints and respond thoughtfully.

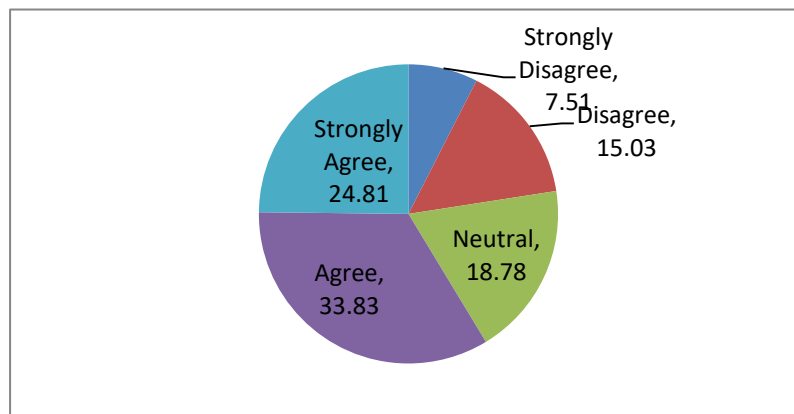


Figure 6. Participants' level of agreement on the uses of group discussions to encourage them to actively listen to others' viewpoints and respond thoughtfully

Figure 6 indicates the participants' responses to a statement regarding the impact of group conversations on their ability to listen and be open to others' ideas. 7.51% of participants strongly disagreed that group interactions have prompted them to listen and respond thoughtfully. This indicates that a small number of individuals did not believe that group conversations encouraged attentive listening and thoughtful replies. 15.03% disagreed with the assertion. This shows that some participants lacked the motivation to actively engage in attentive listening and to provide intelligent responses during group conversations. 18.79% of individuals held a neutral attitude about the statement. Their attitude might be described as uncertain. 33.83% of the participants reported that engaging in group discussions is beneficial in enhancing their

ability to listen attentively and respond wisely. This reveals that a significant number of participants considered that group discussions were advantageous in fostering these behaviors. 24.81 % of respondents expressed a strong agreement. This indicates that a significant number of the participants found group conversations to be advantageous and were highly motivated to engage in active listening and respond thoughtfully. This indicates that the majority of participants held the belief that group discussion fosters active listening and thoughtful responses to others' perspectives. Similarly, Crisanita and Mandasari (2022) argued that engaging in group discussions helps students improve their ability to listen respectfully and boosts their attentiveness when speaking.

Q7. Participating in group discussions has expanded my vocabulary and language proficiency.

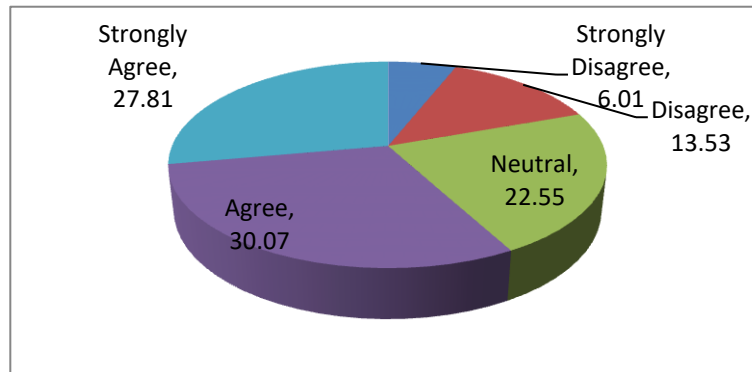


Figure 7. Participants' level of agreement on the role of participating in group discussions to expand their vocabulary and language proficiency

Figure 7 represents the responses of participants to a statement regarding the impact of group discussions on enhancing vocabulary and language proficiency. 6.01% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that group discussions have enhanced their vocabulary and linguistic proficiency. This indicates a small number of individuals who did not believe that group discussions enhanced their language proficiency. 13.53% of the respondents expressed disagreement. This demonstrates that some individuals did not improve their vocabulary or language proficiency through group discussions. 22.55% of individuals held a neutral attitude toward the statement. This demonstrates their neutrality or indecisiveness, maybe indicating a lack of awareness or understanding of how group discussions impact their vocabulary and linguistic skills. 30.07% of participants reported that group discussions enhanced their vocabulary and linguistic proficiency. This exhibits that a significant number of participants considered group discussions to be beneficial for the acquisition of language skills. 27.81% of respondents strongly agreed. These findings indicate that a substantial number of the participants found group discussions beneficial and experienced a notable improvement in their vocabulary and language proficiency. This reveals that the majority of participants believe that group interactions enhance vocabulary and linguistic skills. In the same way, Yudha and Mandasari (2021) argued that group discussion is a fantastic way for students to actively engage with the language and to present their ideas. Not only does it enhance their language proficiency, but it also boosts their speaking skills by expanding their vocabulary.

Q8. Group discussions have improved my ability to engage in constructive dialogue with my peers.

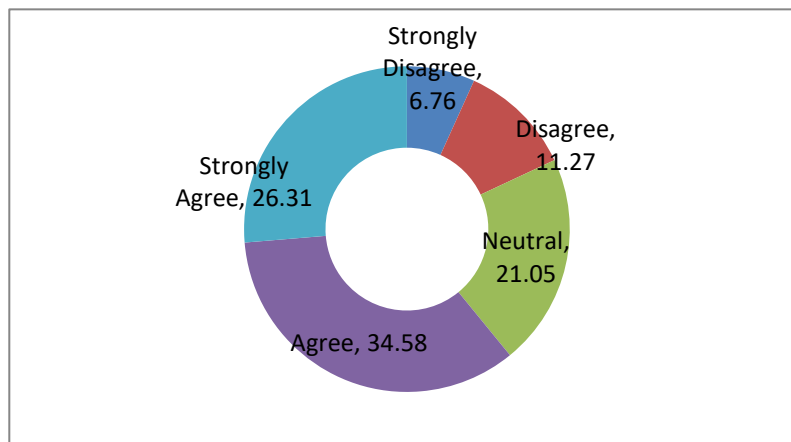


Figure 8. Participants' level of agreement on using group discussions in improving their ability to engage in constructive dialogue with their peers

Figure 8 reveals the participants' replies to a statement regarding the impact of group discussions on their capacity to engage in effective conversations with their peers. 6.76% of participants strongly disagreed with the notion that group discussion has improved their peer

dialogue. This indicates a small number of individuals who did not observe any advancement in significant group discussions. 11.27% of participants expressed their disagreement. This indicates that some participants expressed disagreement over the efficacy of group discussions in enhancing their productive conversation. 21.05% of individuals had a neutral attitude toward the statement. They exhibit uncertainty about the impact of group discussions on their ability to engage in meaningful interactions with their peers. 34.58% of respondents reported that group discussion has improved their group discussion. This indicates that a significant number of participants viewed group discussions to be beneficial for productive exchanges. 26.31% of respondents expressed a strong agreement. This demonstrates that a significant number of students found group discussions to be beneficial and claimed that they enhanced their ability to participate in productive discussions. This reveals that the majority of participants believe that group conversations enhance peer discourse. Similarly, Crisianita and Mandasari (2022) stated that by participating in small group discussions, students are motivated to complete all their assignments and speaking projects. This approach not only fosters a sense of confidence in them but also enables them to effectively communicate and deliver their speech within their group.

Q9. Group discussions have provided valuable opportunities to practice and refine my speaking skills.

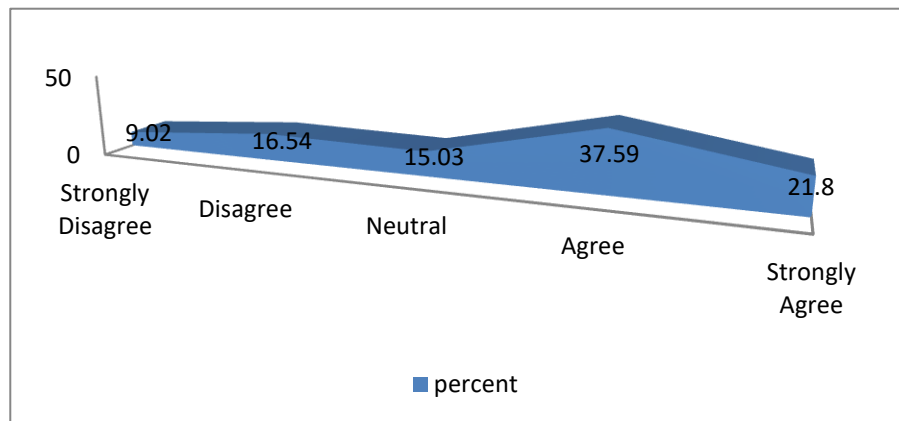


Figure 9. Participants' level of agreement on valuable opportunities for group discussions to practice and refine their speaking skills

Figure 9 reflects the responses of participants to a statement regarding the efficacy of group discussion in providing valuable opportunities for them to practice and refine their speaking skills. 9.02% of respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that group discussions have contributed to providing valuable opportunities for them to practice and refine their oral communication skills. It shows that a small number of students did not obtain any advantage from engaging in group conversations as a means of practicing and improving their speaking skills. 16.54% of individuals disagreed with the statement. This demonstrates that some participants did not perceive group discussion as an effective means of providing with valuable opportunities to practice and improve their speaking skills. 15.03% of respondents were neutral. They exhibit uncertainty about the potential benefits of group discussions in providing them with valuable opportunities to practice and hone their speaking skills. 37.59% of respondents agreed that participating in group discussions has provided them with valuable opportunities to practice and refine their speaking skills. This reveals that a significant number of participants reported that engaging in group discussions was beneficial to provide them with valuable opportunities to practice and enhance their oral communication skills. 21.80% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement. This indicates that a considerable number of participants thought group discussions to be beneficial and regarded them as chances to develop their oral communication skills. This reveals that the majority of participants appear to place importance on group discussions as a means of developing and enhancing their speaking skills. Similarly, Anthony (2014) argued that engaging in small group discussions offers students numerous opportunities to express their opinions, share ideas, and interact with one another. Group discussions provide students with a valuable opportunity to enhance their speaking skills and express themselves not only in the classroom but also in their everyday lives.

Q10. Group discussions have been beneficial in enhancing my speaking skills.

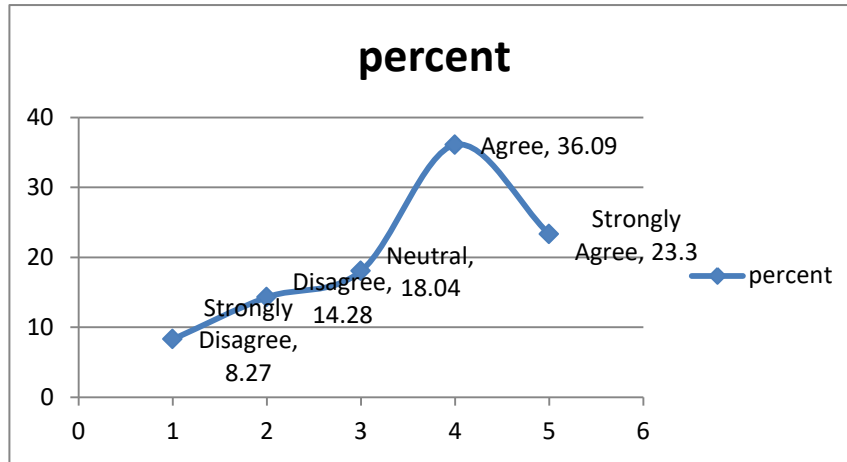


Figure 10. Participants' level of agreement on the benefit of group discussions in enhancing their speaking skills

Figure 10 reflects the participants' responses to a statement regarding the enhancement of speaking skills through group discussions. 8.27% of participants held a strong disagreement regarding the improvement of speaking skills through group discussion. It seems that a small number of individuals did not believe that group discussions enhanced their ability to communicate orally. 14.28% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. This indicates that some individuals held the belief that group discussion did not enhance their speaking skills. 18.04% of individuals had a neutral attitude toward the statement. They exhibit a state of neither agreement nor disagreement on the impact of group discussions on their speaking skills. 36.09% of the participants agreed that engaging in group discussions enhances their speaking skills. This reveals that a significant number of participants reported that engaging in group discussions was beneficial for improving their oral communication skills. 23.30% of respondents expressed a strong agreement. This indicates a significant number of individuals who found group discussions beneficial and perceived an enhancement in their oral communication skills. This depicts that most participants hold the belief that group interactions enhance speaking skills. Group work allows students to enhance their speaking skills by collaborating with individuals who possess diverse skills. This experience is beneficial for improving their communication skills.

Q11. How often do you actively participate in group discussions?

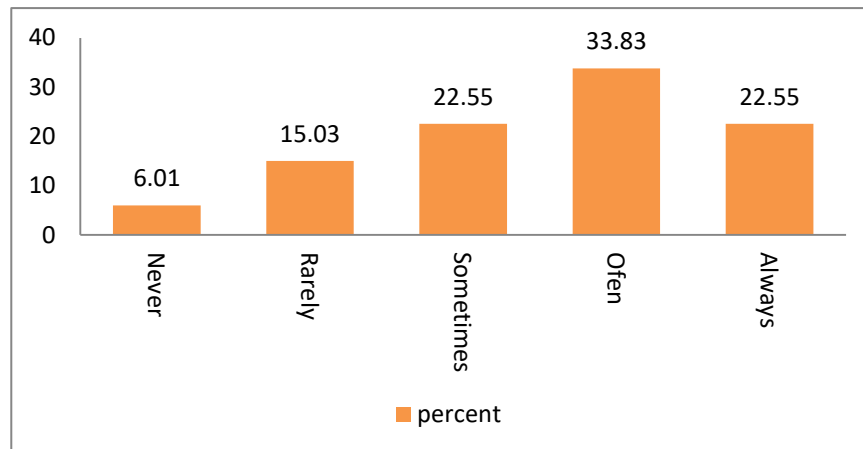


Figure 11. Frequency level of participants' active participation in group discussions

Figure 11 represents the responses of participants regarding the frequency of engaging in active group conversations. 6.01% of participants reported that they never engage in group discussion. This demonstrates that a small number of students did not actively participate in group discussions. 15.03% of the individuals exhibited rare involvement in group conversations. 22.55% of participants sometimes engaged in group discussion. This indicates that a significant number of respondents engaged in group discussion on an occasional basis. 33.83% of participants often engaged in group discussion. This indicates that a significant number of the participants engaged in group discussions. 22.55% of participants were always engaged in group discussions. Similarly, Brown (1994) emphasizes that classroom activity is essential for students to develop their speaking skills. Small groups are designed to encourage student collaboration and communication, serving both educational and social purposes. They provide an ideal setting for students to explore and participate individually, fostering a well-rounded learning experience.

Q12. To what extent do you feel group discussions have helped you overcome your fear of speaking in public?

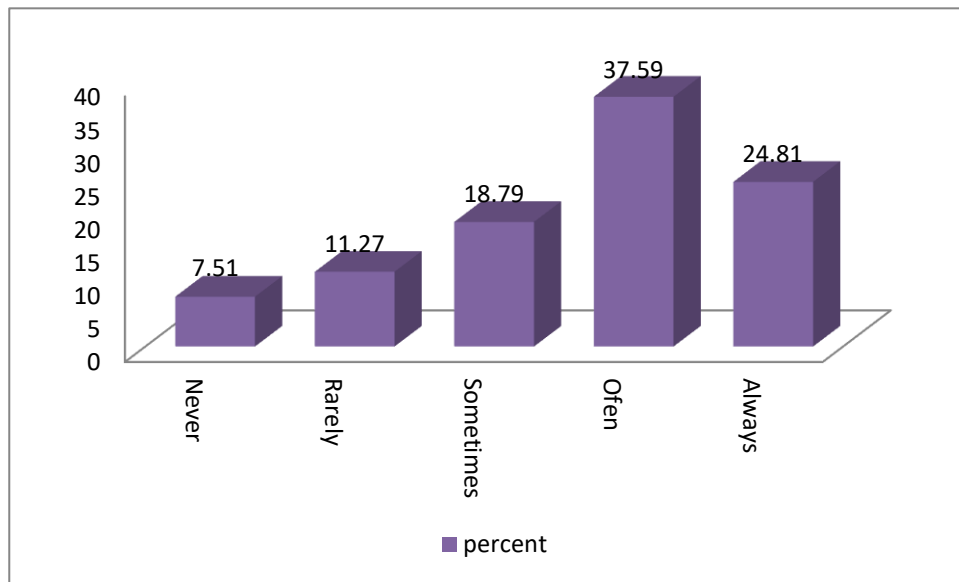


Figure 12. Frequency level of participants' feeling group discussions have helped them overcome their fear of speaking in public

Figure 12 reflects the responses of participants regarding the extent to which group discussions have aided them in overcoming their fear of public speaking. 7.51% of respondents stated that group discussion was never effective in helping them overcome their fear of public speaking. This demonstrates that a small number of individuals have not seen any improvement in their fear of public speaking as a result of participating in group discussions. 11.27% of respondents indicated that group discussion was rarely effective in helping them overcome their fear of public speaking. 18.79% of respondents reported that participating in group discussions was sometimes effective in helping them overcome their fear of public speaking. This suggests that a considerable number of participants overcame their fear of group discussion. 37.59% of respondents reported that engaging in group discussion was often essential in overcoming their fear of public speaking. This indicates that a significant number of participants regularly overcome their fear of speaking in groups. A total of 24.81% of respondents reported that group discussions consistently aided them in conquering their fear of public speaking. This reveals that a significant number of individuals consistently held the belief that engaging in group discussions has been essential in conquering their fears. It is common for students to face challenges when trying to use a foreign language. They may feel shy and fearful when participating in group discussions, and they may encounter difficulties if their teachers do not motivate them to speak English in the classroom.

Q13. How often do you find yourself using new words learned during group discussions in your everyday conversations?

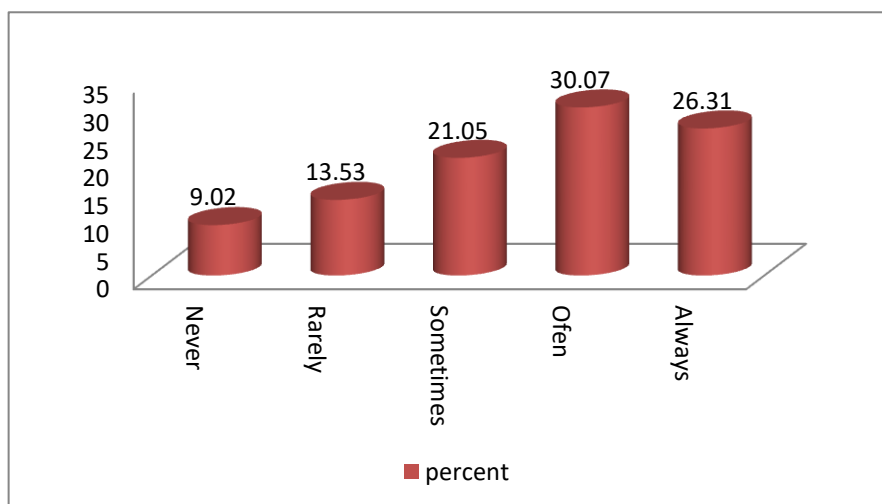


Figure 13. Frequency level of participants' perception of finding themselves using new words learned during group discussions in their everyday conversations

Figure 13 shows the participant's responses to a question regarding the frequency with which they incorporate new vocabulary from group

discussions into their everyday conversations. 9.02% of participants never use new words which they acquired in group discussions during their everyday conversations. It seems that a small number of students did not use new vocabulary on a daily basis. 13.53% of individuals rarely incorporated new vocabulary into their daily conversations. 21.05 % of participants sometimes incorporated newly learned vocabulary from group discussions into their daily conversations. This suggests that a significant number of respondents use new words from time to time. 30.07% of participants often incorporated new vocabulary that they learned from group discussions into their daily conversations. This reveals that a significant number of participants consistently employ novel terms in their verbal communication. 26.31% of the participants always incorporate new vocabulary acquired from group discussions into their everyday conversations. Group work allows students to interact in English and support each other in practicing the language. This helps build their confidence in speaking without the fear of errors. Moreover, studying in a group helps them master a wider range of vocabulary (Ornstein, 2000). Group discussions significantly enhance students' confidence levels. Additionally, students expanded their vocabulary and honed their ability to articulate thoughts effectively. It is evident that group discussion is a key tool in enhancing students' speaking skills.

Q14. How often do you seek out opportunities to engage in discussions with peers outside of the classroom?

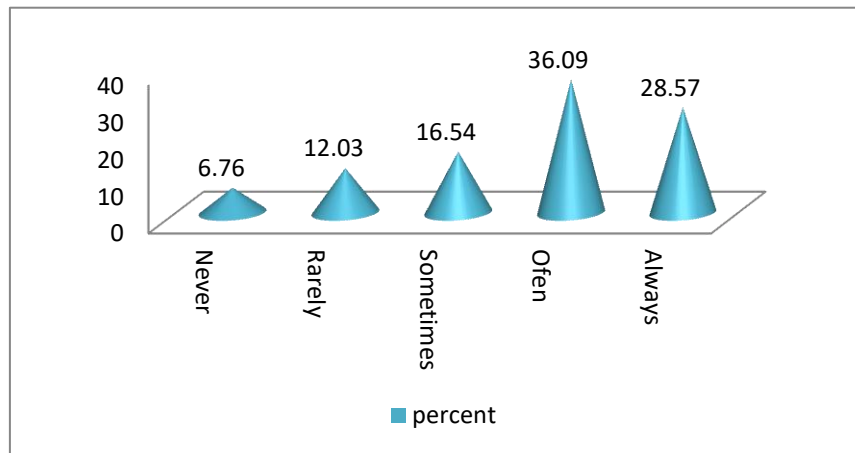


Figure 14. Frequency level of participants seek out opportunities to engage in discussions with peers outside of the classroom

Figure 14 represents the responses of participants to a question about the frequency with which they actively engage in group discussions outside of class. 6.76 % of participants never sought out an opportunity to involve in group discussions outside of the classroom. A small number of students may refrain from initiating peer discussions outside of the classroom. 12.03% of participants reported that they rarely engaged in peer discussions beyond the classroom setting. 16.54% of respondents sometimes engaged in conversations outside of the classroom. This indicates that a considerable number of participants engage in interactions outside of the classroom to improve their speaking skills. 36.09% of the respondents often engaged in group discussions beyond the confines of the classroom. This indicates that a significant number of participants often initiated peer interactions outside of the classroom. 28.57% of participants always engaged in peer interactions outside of the classroom. Similarly, Ornstein (2000) revealed that students can benefit from being part of a small group as it encourages them to participate more actively in their learning while giving teachers the opportunity to closely track their development. Additionally, it fosters better cooperation and social skills among students. Engaging in small group discussions can effectively bridge the gaps in students' knowledge. It provides them with an opportunity to explore and embrace a diverse range of perspectives, fostering an interactive environment where they can exchange ideas and backgrounds. Moreover, these discussions enable students to refine their attitudes and test their ideas against those of their peers, which ultimately enhances their understanding of the subject matter. Additionally, participating in such discussions cultivates a sense of academic openness, encouraging students to freely share their thoughts and ideas.

Q15. How often do you incorporate feedback received during group discussions to improve your speaking skills?

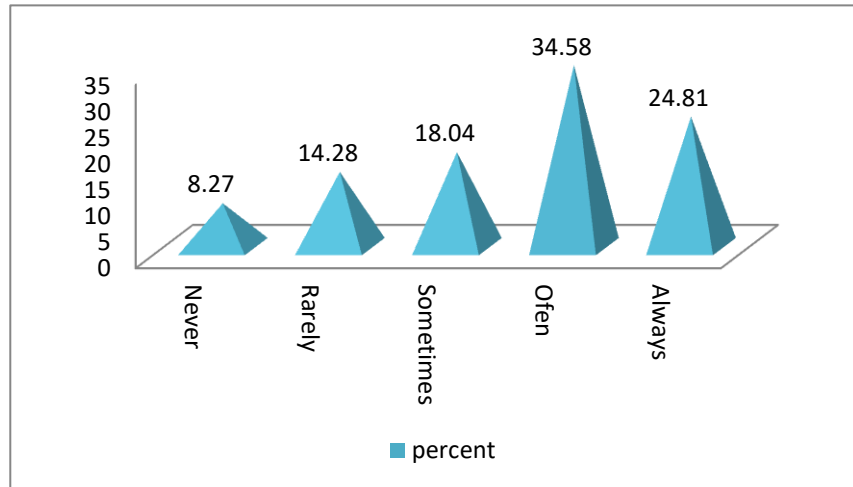


Figure 15. The frequency level of participants incorporates feedback received during group discussions to improve their speaking skills

Figure 15 represents the responses of participants regarding the frequency with which they use the feedback that they get from group discussions to improve their speaking skills. 8.27% of participants agreed that they never used group discussion feedback to improve their speaking skills. 14.28% of participants rarely use group discussion feedback to enhance their speaking skills. 18.04% of respondents agreed that they sometimes used the feedback that they get from group discussions as a means to enhance their oral communication skills. These findings indicate that respondents with a moderate level of engagement sometimes used feedback as a means of enhancing their oral communication performances. 34.58% of the participants agreed that they often used group feedback as a means to enhance their speaking skills. This indicates that a significant number of participants frequently used feedback as a means to enhance their speaking skills. 24.81% of participants agreed that they consistently used group feedback as a means to enhance their verbal communication skills. This reveals that a significant number of students frequently used feedback to improve their speaking skills. Similarly, Jawad and Abosnan (2020) argued that the practice of group discussions allows students to cultivate their intellectual skills by embracing constructivist learning, fostering collaboration, and leveraging shared knowledge to enhance their academic growth. The group becomes incredibly productive, vibrant, and motivated when both peers and the teacher provide immediate and detailed formative feedback.

Q16. How often do you feel challenged to defend your opinions or viewpoints during group discussions?

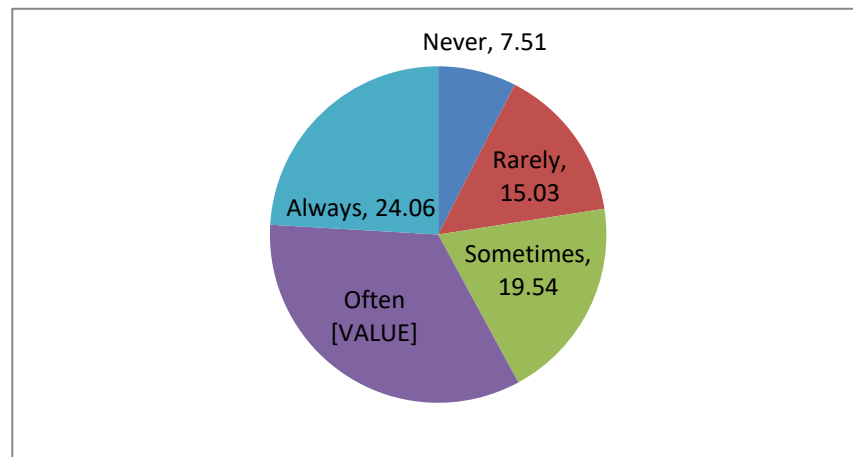


Figure 16. Frequency level of participants feeling challenged to defend their opinions or viewpoints during group discussions

Figure 16 represents the responses of participants to a question about the frequency with which they feel challenged to defend their beliefs during group discussions. 7.51% reported that they never experienced any difficulty in defending their opinions during group conversations. This demonstrates that a small number of individuals find it easy to explain their perspectives. 15.03% reported that they rarely feel challenged to justify their ideas during group discussions. 19.54% of the participants sometimes experienced difficulty in defending their viewpoints during group discussions. This indicates that a significant number of participants encountered difficulties when they justified or supported their opinions. 33.83% of respondents indicated that they often encountered difficulties while attempting to justify their opinions during discussions inside a group. This indicates that the majority of participants encountered difficulty in justifying their perspectives. 24.06% of respondents agreed that they always experienced a sense of challenge when it came to defending their opinions during group conversations. This indicates most of the students of individuals consistently found themselves challenged to justify their opinions during

group discussions. In the same way, Raquel and Pardo (2016) stated that group work can help students overcome language barriers and improve their oral communication skills, making it easier for them to express their thoughts in English

Q 17. How often do you find yourself actively listening to others' contributions during group discussions?

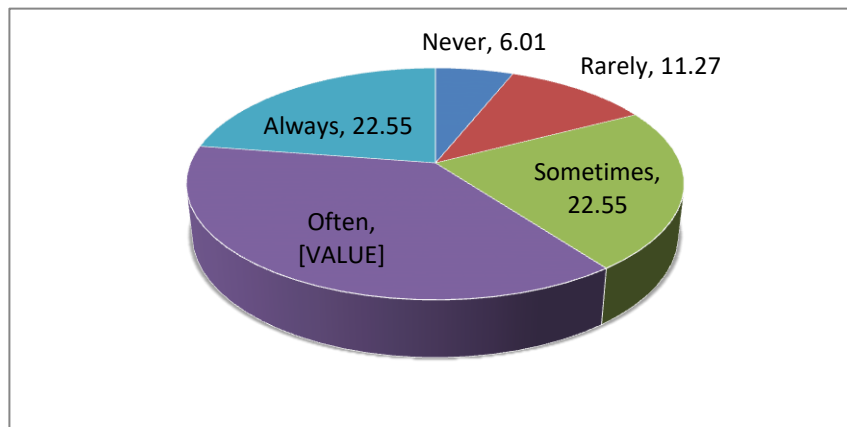


Figure 17. Frequency level of participants find themselves actively listening to others' contributions during group discussions

Figure 17 represents the responses of participants to a question regarding the frequency of their active listening in group discussions. 6.01% of participants never engaged in active listening during group interactions. This indicates that a small number of students may not actively engage in listening during group discussions. 11.27% of the participants admitted that they rarely engaged in active listening during group interactions. 22.55% of the participants agreed that they sometimes engaged in active listening during group interactions. This suggests that a significant number of participants engaged in active listening during group discussions. 37.59% reported that they often engaged frequently in active listening during group interactions. This indicates that a significant number of participants engaged in active listening during discussions inside a group. 22.55% of participants agreed that they always engaged in active listening during group interactions. This indicates that the majority of the students regularly engaged in attentive listening during group interactions. During group discussions, it is evident that some students tend to be passive listeners in the classroom. Unfortunately, their level of active involvement or interaction in the teaching and learning process is quite poor. When engaging in small group discussions, students can share their personal strengths and creative ideas, receiving helpful feedback from the teacher in a positive and open-minded space. This helps them improve their listening skills and attentiveness.

Q 18. How often do you feel motivated to prepare and research topics before participating in group discussions?

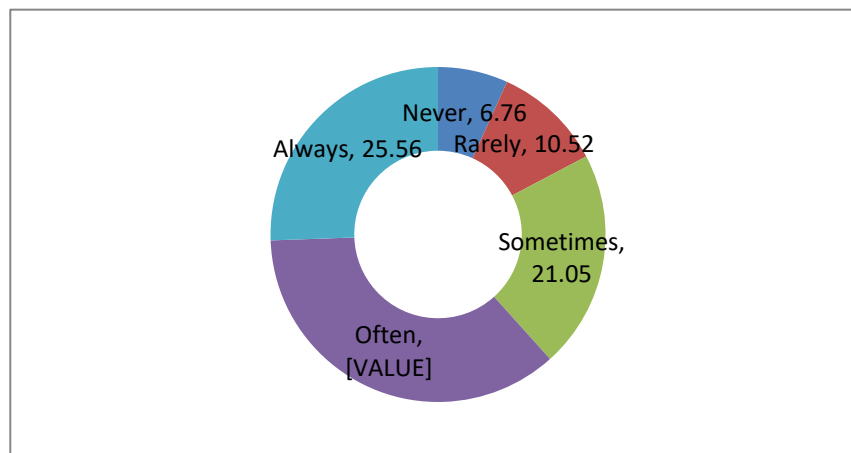


Figure 18. Frequency level of participants' feeling on being motivated to prepare topics before participating in group discussions

Figure 18 illustrates the frequency with which participants feel motivated to prepare topics before involving in the group discussions. 6.76 % of participants reported that they were never inspired when planning and studying subjects for group discussions. It seems that a small number of students did not adequately prepare for group discussions. 10.52 % of participants seldom had the motivation to prepare and find topics before group discussions. 21.05% of participants sometimes felt motivated to have topics before group discussions. This shows that a substantial number of participants occasionally made preparations for group conversations. 36.09% of respondents expressed that they often felt a strong motivation to prepare topics before engaging in group discussions. This demonstrates that a significant number of learners

constantly make preparations for group conversations. 25.56 % of participants agreed that they always experienced a strong motivation to have topics prior to group discussions. This indicates most students always get ready for group discussions. Group discussion encourages learners to share their thoughts and opinions more freely. This can help shy students feel more comfortable speaking up. Active student involvement is essential for a productive group discussion, while the influence of peers plays a significant role in small group interactive learning.

Q 19. How often do you find group discussions to be an effective way to learn from your peers' experiences?

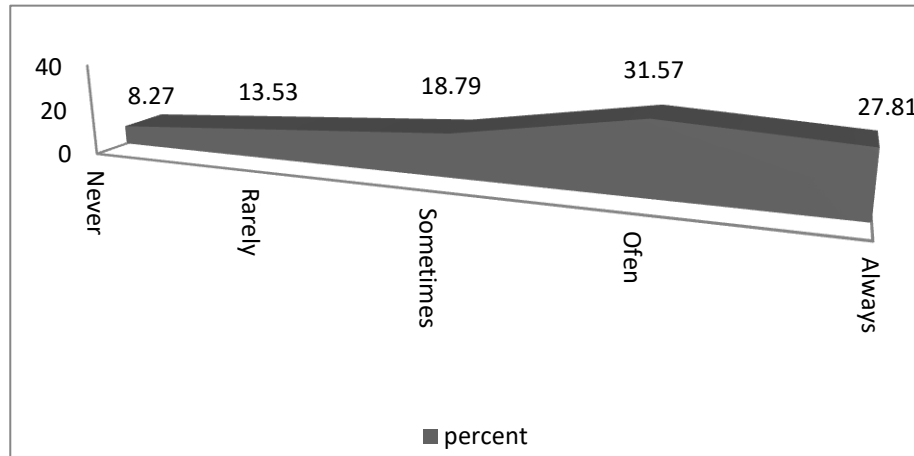


Figure 19. The frequency level of participants finds the effectiveness of group discussions as a way to learn from their peers' experiences

Figure 19 represents the responses of participants to a question about the frequency with which they find group discussion beneficial for learning from their peers. 8.27% of participants indicated that they never acquired knowledge or insights from discussions held in a group setting. This indicates a small number of individuals never anticipate acquiring knowledge from their peers during group discussions. 13.53% of participants rarely acquired knowledge from their peers during group discussions. This indicates that some students perceived group discussions as rather inefficient for peer learning. 18.79% of respondents indicated that they sometimes found group discussion facilitates their acquisition of knowledge from their peers. This suggests that a considerable number of participants sometimes perceived group discussions as valuable for acquiring knowledge from their peers. 31.57% of respondents indicated that they often engaged in group discussion which facilitates their acquisition of knowledge from their peers. This shows that a significant number of participants perceived group discussions as a valuable means of acquiring knowledge from their colleagues. A total of 27.81% of the participants indicated that they always felt that group discussions are effective in acquiring knowledge from their peers and they perceived group discussions as very useful for peer learning. Group discussion helps cultivate a positive and interactive environment, allowing students to connect with their peers and learn from one another.

Q20. How often do you feel that group discussion has contributed to your overall growth and development as a speaker?

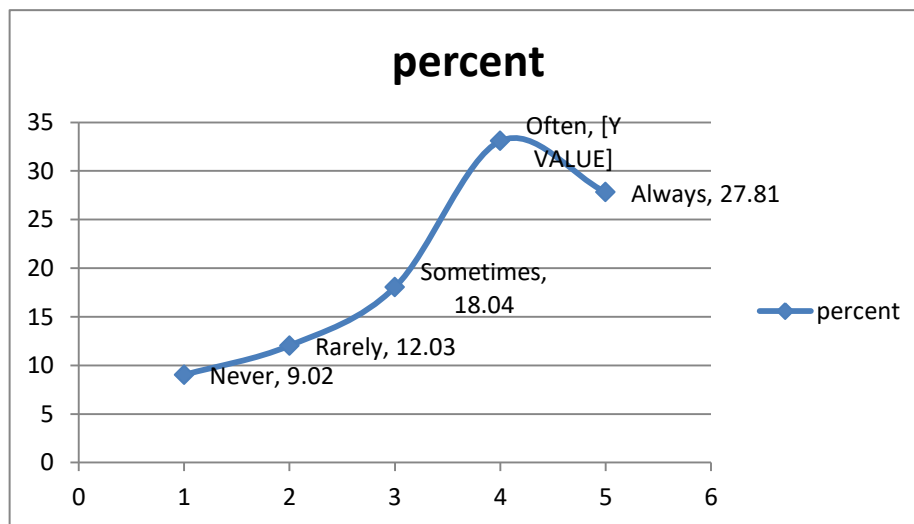


Figure 20. The frequency level of participants' feelings on the contribution of group discussion on overall growth and development as a speaker

Figure 20 represents the responses of participants regarding the frequency with which group discussions have contributed to their improvement as speakers. 9.02% of participants never felt that group discussions are effective ways to enhance their speaking skills. This indicates that very few students believed that group discussions are beneficial to their speaking skills on rare occasions or not at all. 12.03% of participants reported that group discussions are seldom beneficial in enhancing their speaking skills. This implies that some participants perceived group discussion as a rather ineffective way to enhance speaking skills. 18.04% of respondents indicated that engaging in group discussion sometimes enhanced their speaking skills. This indicates that a significant number of participants sometimes perceived group discussions as beneficial for their development of speaking skills. 33.08% of respondents reported that they often felt that group discussion has contributed to enhancing their overall language development and speaking skills. This indicates that most participants perceived group discussions as beneficial for their improvement in speaking skills. 27.81% of participants agreed that they always believed that group interactions have positively contributed to their language development as fluent speakers. This demonstrates that a significant number of students always perceived group interactions as beneficial for their overall language development. Group work encourages active participation from all group members, fostering a sense of responsibility among students to engage and contribute to group discussion. It empowers students to be more responsible for their own learning, improve their social and leadership skills, and immerse themselves in an alternative educational strategy.

5. Conclusion

Speaking in a foreign language can be learned through a variety of methods, one of which is through group discussion. The kids are able to increase their speaking ability as a result of this. In the study of a group discussion, the students will have the opportunity to practise their English with their friends and to utilise the language among themselves with one another. They will increase their vocabulary knowledge, understanding, fluency, and grammar if they practise speaking with their friends or participate in group discussions. Additionally, the students' self-assurance and communication skills will be enhanced as a result of their participation in group discussion activities. The aim of this study is to enhance students' speaking skills through group discussions. The findings indicate that students responded positively to using group discussions by teachers to improve their speaking skills. Many students recognized the advantages of incorporating group discussions in enhancing their speaking skills. They found it to be a straightforward method that allowed them to express their thoughts and opinions. Furthermore, students noted that participating in group discussions boosted their confidence and encouraged critical thinking when evaluating arguments. While most students were enthusiastic, some had mixed feelings due to various reasons. Additionally, teachers play a crucial role in supporting this approach by providing guidance and feedback to students on their speaking performances.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they do not have any known competing financial or non-financial interest and/or personal relationships that could influence this research article.

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Author's Contribution

Dr. Mohammed Shamsul Hoque contributed to developed the literature review, edition and revision of the paper. Lamessa Oli conceptualized and developed the literature review, developed objective, collected data, analysed data, interpreted data, presented the arguments in the article and wrote the manuscript. Dr. Md. Abdul Momen Sarker contributed to edition and revision of the paper. Dr. Tahsina Shabnam contributed to edition and revision of the paper. Dr. Md. Mostafa Ali contributed to edition and revision of the paper. Dr. Toong Hai Sam contributed to edition and revision of the paper. Dr. R Rajadurai contributed to provide critical insights and ensured the overall clarity of the paper.

We, authors, discussed the research findings, contributed to the interpretation of the results, reviews and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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Obtained.

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The Publication Ethics Committee of the Sciedu Press.

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Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

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