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Analysis of Peers and Class Fellows Contribution in English Language Learning At College Level

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Abstract

This study investigates how peer interaction helps to enhance the English language proficiency of students at Girls Degree College (GGDC) Karak. The study uses a Mixed-Method approach to collect data from students and explains how peer learning affects different dimensions of language acquisition. Results of the study identify that peer interaction plays a significant role in enhancing students' vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and fluency. Students have claimed that peer work helped them practice the language more effectively and in a comfortable setting. Peer comments helped students improve their critical thinking ability and increase their level of confidence in using the language. Peer learning has been claimed to force many students to take ownership of learning more as they were able to identify their strengths and weaknesses. Despite this, students continued to ask for teacher assistance in more complex grammar topics, indicating that although interactions with other students are important, teacher assistance remains essential for complex issues. The study presents the possibility of peer-learning as a wonderful complement to conventional methods of teaching, particularly where teacher assistance is not readily available. In general, the current study depicts how peer learning can evolve English proficiency extensive, foster collaboration, and construct a more engaging learning environment for students.

Keywords: Peer Learning, English Language Proficiency, Student Collaboration, Language Development, Peer Feedback, Educational Support, Language Acquisition.

Introduction

Learning a second language is a tiresome process that involves not only exposure to the target language but also opportunities to actively use it in conversations (Hummel, 2021). Learning English in a classroom as a second language or a foreign language exerts a great deal of paralyzing pressure over a learner, who is required to use it in the presence of other fellow-learners (Ali, et al., 2015). In a study more than two- third of the Pakistani students agree to feeling embarrassed, and hence ashamed, when they start speaking English (Ali, et al., 2021).

The role of peers and class fellows becomes important in providing a supportive environment to practice speaking skills and build confidence (Abdullah et. al., 2012). Sometimes English learners do not find a methodology adopted by their teachers interesting, leading to lack of motivation (Ali, et al., 2020). Students come from government schools where the standard of education is low, and they also belong to backward and poor regions. They feel afraid to ask questions or hold discussions. When these students pursue their higher education, they face multiple challenges such as confidence, lack of prior knowledge, and language barrier. Lack of adequate linguistic proficiency in the English language, makes writing one of the hardest tasks to master, by L2 trainee writers, particularly, in different genre-specific disciplines (Ali et al, 2020). As English is the official language of Pakistan and the courses in academia are written in English language. Most of the students in Government schools were taught in national language Urdu. The learning in Urdu language instead of English language till to intermediate level affects the learning in second or third language at BS level. Therefore, these students seek each other's help to overcome the language barriers.

Similarly, peer relationships play an important role in language development, both for first and second language acquisition (Han, 2012). Interactions with peers allow learners to experiment with the language, get feedback, and collaboratively construct meaning. Peers can support each other emotionally and create a sense of belonging that motivates continued learning (Strayhorn, 2018). However, the potential of peer learning is not always fully realised in classrooms. Factors such as limited class time, large class sizes, exam-oriented instruction, and learners' own anxieties can restrict the quantity and quality of peer interaction (Ghaleb, 2024). Teachers play a key role in shaping student learning through their own beliefs and the feedback they provide to their students. Their perceptions of students shape expectations that often predict student achievement apart from prior ability. (Ladson & Billings, 2022). The purpose of peer-learning as a form of an alternative learning has been to promote students' autonomous learning during a collaborative process of obtaining new knowledge. In student-centred approach, this form of learning may greatly be facilitated as these students spend a great deal of time with their friends playing during and outside school time. The opportunities for obtaining new knowledge through social interactions as well as motivating and influencing each other make learning possible (Mlawski, 2021). In the context of Government Girls Degree College (GGDC) Karak, students at the college level likely have a foundation in English from their previous schooling but lack confidence and fluency, especially in speaking. Understanding how peer relationships are currently supporting or hindering their English development can

provide insights for enhancing language teaching and learning at the college. By exploring the issues from students' perspectives, this research aims to identify practices and areas for improvement in leveraging peer relationships to enhance English proficiency at the college level. Previously, interactions between students based on the various functions of the declaratives, assertives, directives, expressives, and commissives have also been studied inside the formal context of classroom (Ahmed et al, 2025). The findings can help with teaching approaches, curriculum design, and support services so that they better meet the needs of students in this context. Ultimately, the aim is to empower learners with the English language communication skills and confidence necessary for their academic and professional success.

The Social Learning theory (Bandura, 1999) serves as the foundation for analysing how GGDC Karak students learn English through interactions with class fellows and peers. This theory helps in understanding the importance of modelling, observing behaviour or attitudes and the emotional reaction of others. According to Bandura's theory, which combines behavioural and cognitive learning theories, learning takes place because of the combination of psychological and encouraging influences. Social Learning theory constitutes four main points. They are Observational learning, Imitation, Reciprocal determinism, and Self-efficacy.

Research Objectives

- To identify the strategies used by students for learning the English language at college level in district Karak.
- To explore the contribution of peers and class fellows in the learning of English language at college level in district Karak.

Research Questions

- What strategies do students employ in learning the English language at college level in district Karak?
- How do the peers and class fellows contribute to the learning of English language at college level in district Karak?

Literature Review

Ahmed's study provides feedback exchange in a telecollaborative learning project in English and Arabic as a foreign language. This study explored the peer feedback in telecollaborative Spanish and Arabic-speaking contexts. It brought attention to how language proficiency may be positively impacted by digital learning when it allows students and peers to give and receive feedback in an online learning scenario. The paper emphasized the importance of peer feedback for language learning where face-to-face teacher feedback might be restricted, thereby providing evidence for the role of peers in mediating language learning constraints (Ahmed & Al Khateeb, 2022). This research is in coherence with the focus of the current study in pointing out the importance of peer relationships to help managing the language challenges faced by the students at GGDC Karak.

Alharbi suggests that education strategy on achievement in English language among intermediate school students (Qassim area in Saudi Arabia) as perceived by teachers. It investigates the role of peer teaching in promoting English language achievement across

middle school. Through the distribution of questionnaires to teachers, the research also shows that peer education has a considerable impact on student performance, revealing that cooperative learning among peers group can be an effective means to addressing the linguistic issue (Alharbi, 2023). This also echoes the present study that demonstrates the significance of peer and classmates interaction in promoting English learning at college level in Karak.

Perla study “Academic Impacts of Peer-Mediated Interventions for English-Learning Students” explores the academic effects of peer mediated interventions on English Language Learners and it found that peer mediated interventions resulted in significant improvements in language acquisition and in academic outcome measures (Perla, 2017). The study supports that peer interactions may provide important assistance in language learning and subsequently academic achievement. This finding is consistent with the aim of the study that was investigating the peer influence in language learning at the GGDC Karak, where peer involvement is crucial in breaking the language barriers.

Cole’s work emphasizes on peer-mediated learning as an advantageous method to enhance language outcomes for English Language Learners (ELLs). It stresses the importance that peer communication offers learners real language use opportunities and learning-to-learn advantages (Cole, 2013). This perspective is also in line with paper’s premise that the student at GGDC Karak, can use the peer relationships to improve the specific domain of English i.e. oral and written expression.

Erdemir, study “Vocabulary Development from Peer Conversation in Preschool” investigates the role of peer interactions in vocabulary development of emergent bilingual children in preschool. It shows peers' talk and co-activities create chances for language learners to learn and even to revise vocabulary (Erdemir, 2020). This study is relevant because it investigates how peer interactions at the postsecondary level may also support vocabulary and language development towards foreign language.

Garcia’s study examined the influence of peer effects on receptive vocabulary development in English and Spanish for dual language learners. The research reveals that peer interactions are important for improving vocabulary acquisition, since interaction with peers exposes learners to a richer language environment and peer learners can provide implicit linguistic guidance. The study also looks at how bilingual peers can scaffold each other’s learning, for that matter, such interactions enhance the children’s vocabulary in both languages (Garcia, 2021). This is in line with the aims of the current research to explore how peer interactions can enhance English vocabulary and language proficiency, especially in a multilingual setting like GGDC Karak. The study recommends supporting language exposure through peer support that could improve the challenges encountered among Karak students, who may be with limited opportunities outside the classroom for language practice.

Methodology

This current study adopts mixed-method approach to explore the contribution of peers and class fellows' interaction in English language learning at college level. The approach includes administering questionnaires to the selected sample of students to collect data based on their experiences and attitudes. The questionnaire is based on conclusive questions along with open-ended questions aligning with the research objectives. Participants are observed to gain qualitative insights into the dynamics of peer interaction in the classroom that fosters language learning. Since it combines the extensiveness of quantitative data with the depth of qualitative narratives, the mixed method approach is suitable for providing thorough insights and enables a detailed examination of peers and class fellows feedback as a resource for learning English at the BS level in the GGDC, Karak.

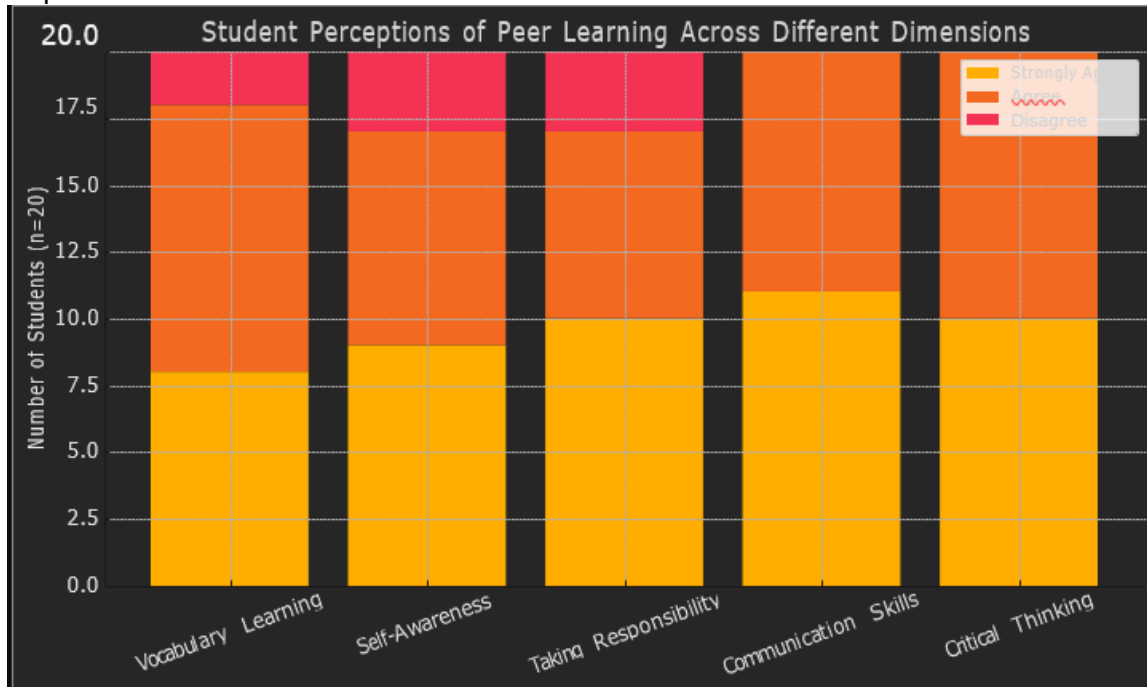
Population

The population of a study intends to investigate is a group of participants from a particular entity who are relevant to the proposed study (Zikmund, 1997). The target population of this study is undergraduate level students at GGDC Karak. Authority letter was submitted to the principal and his consent is obtained before getting data from the students.

Sample

60 BS-level students of GGDC Karak for administering the questionnaire, and 5 students for the conduct of the interviews.

Data Analysis
Department 01

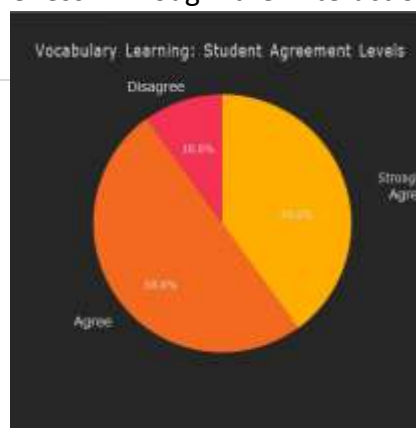


Graph

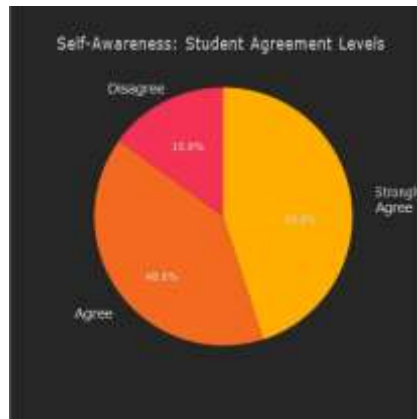
01 Analysis

Graph 01 illustrates the views of 20 students regarding how effective peer learning are in improving their English language. In learning new words, 40% (8 out of 20) of the students strongly agree that communication with their peers is as effective as with their tutors in broadening their vocabulary, and 50% (10 out of 20) agreed. This impressive percentage shows that most students prefer the benefit of discussion with their peers, meaning vocabulary learning does not have to be tutor inclined but also peer led. Peer discussion can be a less formal, interesting, and interactive setting where to rehearse and implement new words. However, though there is wide consensus in favour of peer learning as far as vocabulary learning goes, 10% (2 out of 20) don't agree with this statement. Perhaps this small group of students can see that peer talk may not have the structure, familiarity, and amount of description possible by a tutor. Tutors tend to know the language full and can provide vocabulary more formally, some learners might prefer so. Therefore, the conflict implies that peer learning, as useful as it is, may not entirely replace formal training in some cases.

Going to the second dimension of self-awareness 45% (9 out of 20) of the learners strongly agree that interaction with their peers helped them in identifying areas where they needed improvement in English, and 40% (8 out of 20) agree. The implication of this finding is that peer feedback contributes to self-awareness. Through the interaction with peers, a platform is



provided where learners obtain constructive criticism and realize areas they need to work on. As opposed to tutors, peers can provide understanding in a less formal and less intimidating manner, which allows learners to be honest and confident while speaking about their language

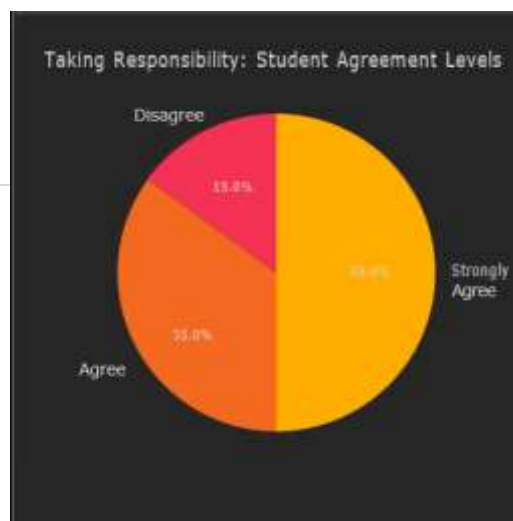


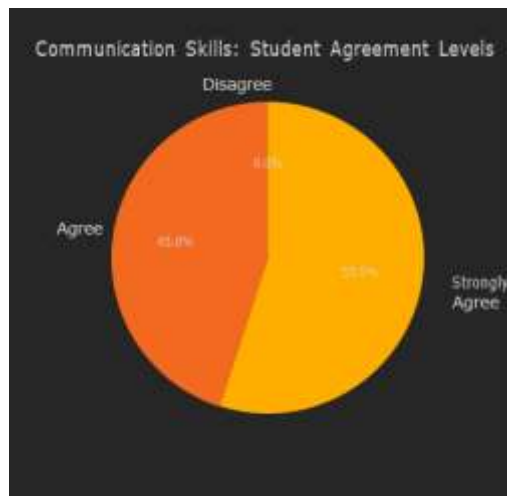
issues.

Conversely, 15% (3 out of 20) believe that peer feedback does not make them more aware of their weaknesses. This points to the fact that not all students find peer interaction to be as beneficial to individual development. Other students might have been given less substantial or less authentic comments from their peers, hence making it more challenging for them to discover areas of improvement. In such cases, students might rather have direct instruction from tutors who can provide more professional, intense, and exact guidance.

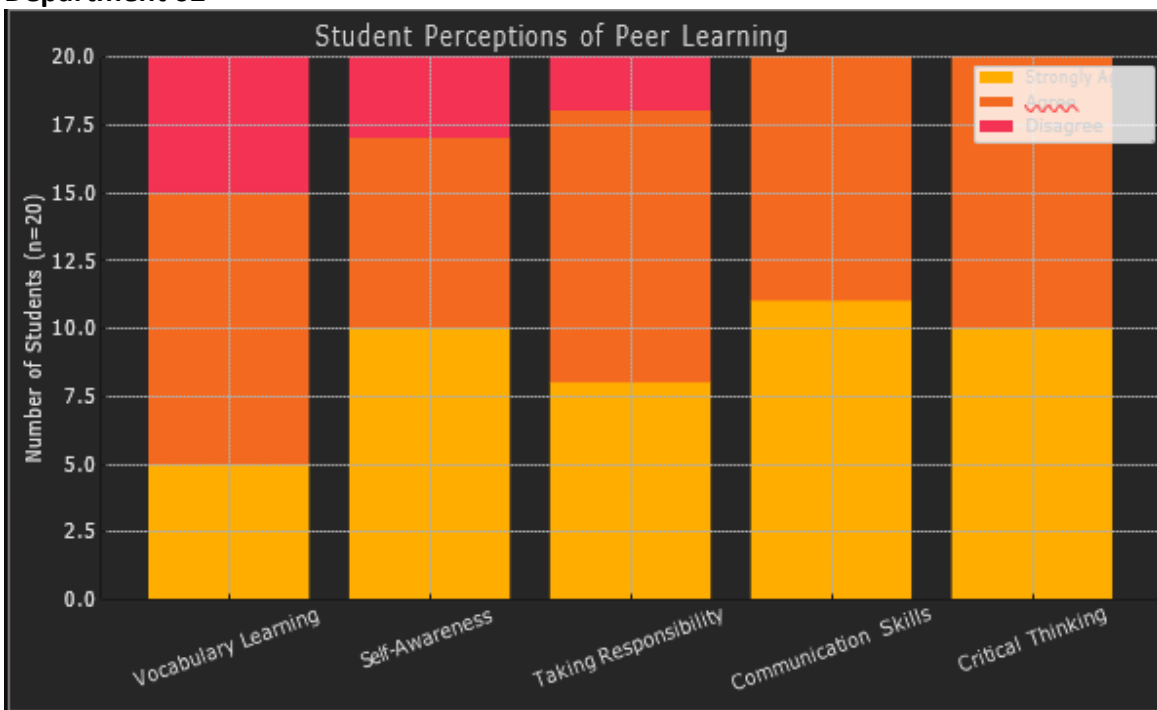
In terms of taking responsibility for learning, 50% (10 out of 20) of the participants strongly agree and 35% (7 out of 20) agree that peer interaction made them take more responsibility for learning English. This shows that peer learning creates a sense of responsibility. Peer discussion and giving and receiving feedback makes everyone responsible for acquiring language skills. It also provides an impression of peer pressure to remain on course, as students would be more inclined to engage and keep pace with their group knowing others are relying on them.

Finally, 55% (11 out of 20) of the students agreed that peer discussion helped them in acquiring their English communication skills, and 50% (09 out of 20) agree that peer learning helped them in acquiring critical thinking skills, i.e., analysis and evaluation. This establishes the fact that peer learning has a dual function. Not only does it assist learners in acquiring language skills but also engages them in critical thinking. Through discussion, the students are required to evaluate and examine information, leading to the attainment of higher order thinking skills that they require in order to succeed academically.





Department 02



Graph 02 Analysis

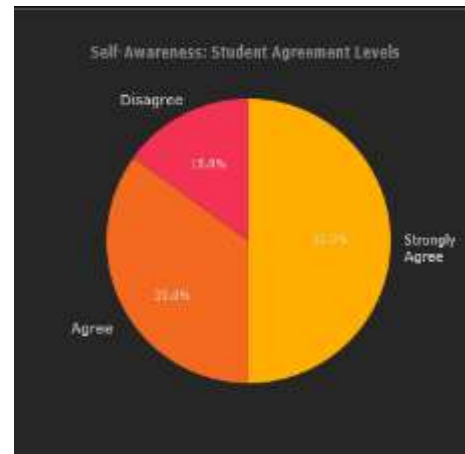
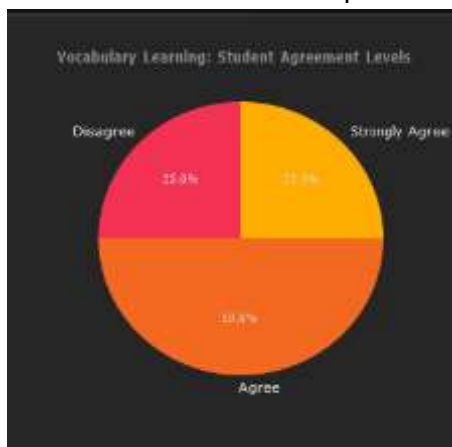
Graph 02 illustrates findings of a second sample of 20 students on how peer learning helped them in learning English language. In matters concerning learning vocabulary, 25% (5 out of 20) strongly agree that interaction with peers helped them in learning new words to the same extent as their tutors, while 50% (10 out of 20) agree. Despite this, this is still a very high rate of

peer learning support, the strong agreement percentage is lower than in Graph 01, where 40% of the students strongly agreed. The difference may be that some students see peer learning as an addition to, not a replacement for, tutor teaching.

Interestingly, 25% (5 out of 20) disagree with the comment on vocabulary acquisition. Such students may find that peer discussion does not provide the same level of clarity or scope as can be provided by a tutor. Tutors have a methodical approach to teaching, which may perhaps enable some students to learn more about vocabulary in broader terms. This suggests that in some students' cases, the peer exchange lacks the depth or focus required for optimum vocabulary acquisition.

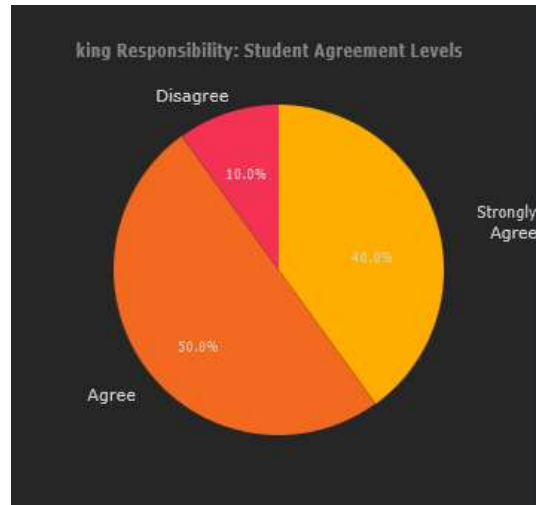
To self-awareness, 50% (10 out of 20) of the students strongly agree that peer interaction helped them in determining the areas of weakness in English, and 35% (7 out of 20) agree. This validates the use of peer feedback to enhance peer reflection and development. Peers can usually identify areas of weakness in a manner that is more natural and less threatening compared to a tutor. This gives students a judgment-free space where they are more receptive to positive criticism.

Yet, 15% (3 out of 20) of the students still do not agree that peer feedback makes them sensitive to their weaknesses. This implies that for these students, peer feedback may not be



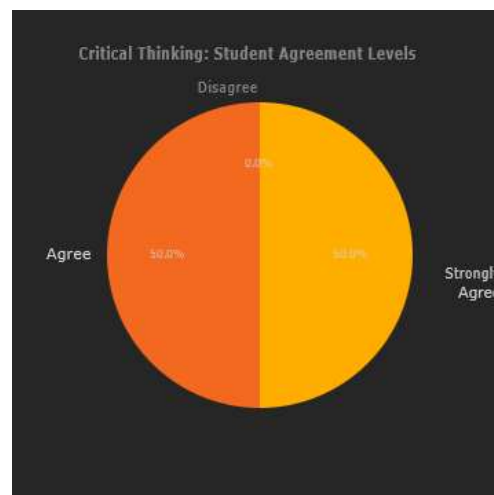
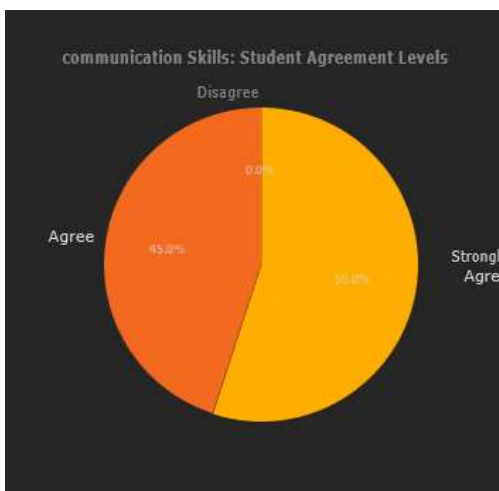
effective enough or may lack substance to see improvement areas. It might also indicate that students would rather have the experience and knowledge that a tutor is able to offer, especially in detecting language problems.

On responsibility for their development, 40% (8 out of 20) of the students firmly agree that peer interaction motivates them towards responsibility for learning, and 50% (10 out of 20) agree. This is indicative of the peer learning, where students not only support each other but also challenge each other towards responsibility for advancement. This feeling of responsibility among peer groups reminds students to be aware of their own

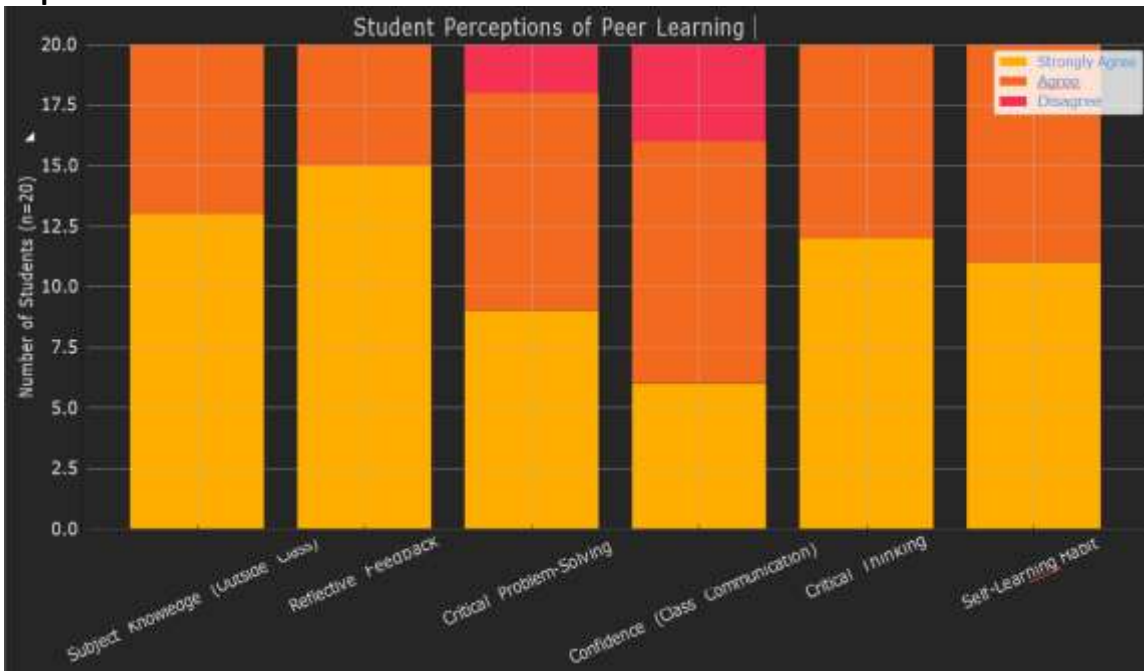


progress in English, as they are accountable for themselves as well as for assisting the group in reaching its goals.

Lastly, 55% (11 out of 20) of the students agree that peer discussion assist them in improving their English communication skills and 50% (10 out of 20) agree that peer learning assist them in the development of critical thinking. Perhaps it was noticed that peer discussions were not limited to language practice but also helped in the improvement of thinking abilities. By discussion, students gain critical skills to express themselves more fluently and to analyse their use of language in different situations



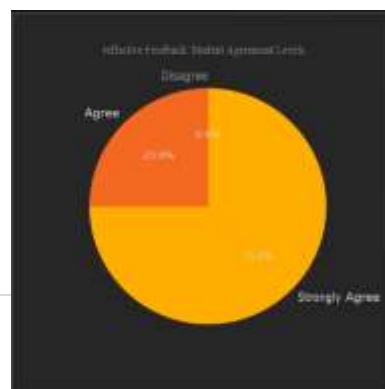
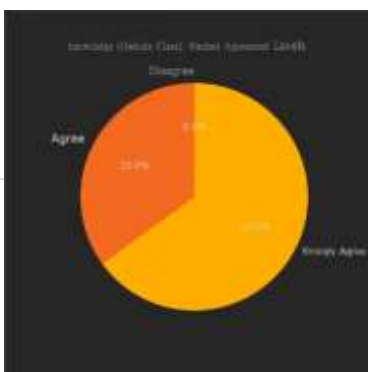
Department 03



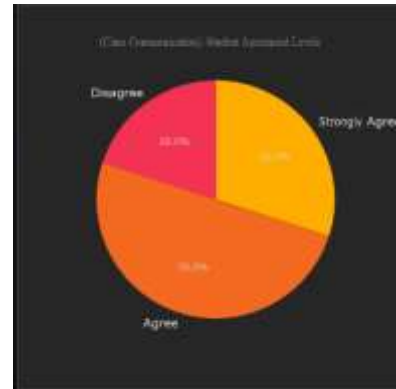
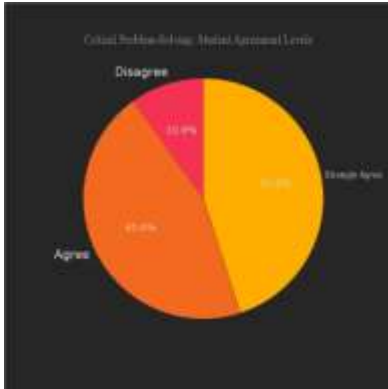
Graph 03 Analysis

Graph 04 illustrates strong support for peer learning on the wide range of language improvement issues. 65% (13 out of 20) of the students concur that peer learning improved their English subject matter knowledge outside the classroom, and 75% (15 out of 20) agree that peer feedback allowed them to reflect on themselves. This would suggest that peer dialogue is important in reinforcing what the class lesson learns and another side of comprehension which formal teaching oftentimes cannot provide. Peer learning also makes students constantly judge themselves about improvement.

In terms of critical problem-solving skills, 45% (9 out of 20) of the students strongly agree and 45% (9 out of 20) agree that peer discussions improved their critical problem-solving skills. This indicates that peer learning not only supports students in language acquisition but also enhances critical problem-solving skills through group work. Group work enables students to solve language problems from different angles, hence making them adaptable and creative in the solutions. In terms of confidence, 50% (10 out of 20) of the students agree that peer discussion increased their confidence in the use of English in class communication. However, 30%

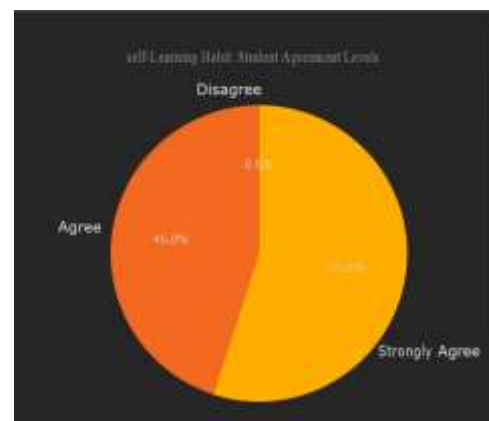
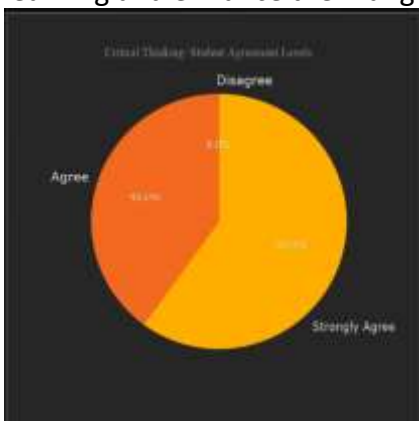


(6 out of 20) strongly agree with this, indicating that despite the positive influence of peer interaction on confidence, there are students who are still not confident when speaking in formal settings. These findings indicate that although peer learning is effective in creating a less stressful atmosphere, it is not necessarily able to eradicate performance anxiety when faced with a tutor or large audience.



Academically, 60% (12 out of 20) of the students strongly agree that peer feedback helped them in enhancing their critical thinking skills, including analysis and evaluation. This implies that engagement with their peers makes students develop higher-order cognitive abilities, which result in critically examining the language more. Peer talks compel students to justify their thinking and analyse the strength of other individuals' arguments, resultantly enhancing analytical skills.

Finally, 55% (11 out of 20) of the students confirm that peer learning helped them in establishing the habit of reading extra resources to learn a language. Peer correction generally involves suggesting more material to read, i.e., books, websites, or exercises. This encourages self-learning habits since the learners continue outside class to look for more resources for learning and enhance their language proficiency.



Qualitative Analysis
Peer Practice Builds Confidence and Fluency

The most pervasive and strongest themes from all the interviews give the notion that peer interaction is a central concern in building confidence and fluency in English. The participants explained how they habitually practiced practicing English with peers and classmates, both in the classroom and in informal, everyday settings. Those interactional moments perceive as less formal and less judgmental and therefore gave them the freedom to speak more easily and develop fluency over time.

For instance, the participant in interview stated, *"We practice by having conversations on different topics. We often share our daily activities with one another or talk about current events."* This reflects how English practice is integrated into daily life. Another student mentioned, *"It is a good way to boost one's confidence and find flaws in one's speech,"* highlighting how regular discussions also help students become more attuned to their weaknesses. Meanwhile, one student shared, *"I practice English daily with my peers for at least one hour,"* emphasizing the regularity and dedication involved in peer-based learning. Overall the idea echoed among students, *"Often, we practise English in debates and topic discussion."* All these answers demonstrate how peer informal practice of English has a direct impact on enhanced speaking ability. If students keep practicing English again and again in a casual, non-threatening social setting, it automatically helps them overcome the fear and speak more fluently.

Vocabulary Building Through Peer Interaction

The second theme that is apparent is that peer interaction enables students to build their vocabulary in meaningful ways. Students indicated that conversation with other students introduced them to new vocabulary, helpful expressions, and targeted terminology that otherwise they would not have been introduced to. They were also able to observe vocabulary in use, which helped with understanding and application.

The student clearly stated, *"Conversation with peers helps me improve my vocabulary. There I expose to new words and phrases."* Similarly, another student shared, *"I learn specific terms, vocabulary, and pronunciation from each other."* A unique example came from the student, where the participant noted feedback received from classmates about *"vast and updated vocabulary,"* showing that vocabulary sharing is a two-way process where students are both learners and contributors.

Interestingly, this process is not always structured. As one participant in *Interview 5* explained, *"One of my friends is very good at English and she always brings new vocabulary, and it helps us."* This shows that the vocabulary can also be acquired spontaneously through learning in groups or casual conversation. Students do not only learn from teachers and books but also through listening and talking with more language-skilled classmates.

The focus on constantly sharing vocabulary highlights exactly how central peer learning is to the process of language learning in general. Instead of relying solely on memorization or lists on paper, students are acquiring vocabulary through practice, exchange, and use. That has a direct and obvious affect on English learning methods as well as how peers engage in the process.

Peer Feedback Encourages Improvement

The third general theme relates to peer comment usage in learning English. Some students say they are often corrected or offered suggestions by their peers, mainly about pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary. Notably, the students tended to interpret this comment as supportive, encouraging, not critical and discouraging.

The student during *Interview* shared a detailed example: *“Once in a group discussion one of my class fellows pointed out my mistake by using wrong pronunciation and sentence structure. They correct my pronunciation and explain me the proper structure of the sentence.”* This indicates not just that there was feedback given, but that it is received and implemented to change. Another student in *Interview* mentioned, *“I usually receive feedback about my wrong f and p pronunciation,”* illustrating the accuracy with which peers can indicate language problems.

Feedback from peers does not always mean correction. It includes positive reinforcement, which helps in building self-esteem. In *Interview*, a student says, *“Yes, I have received many compliments from my peers and teachers. It really helps in boosting one’s confidence and also provides support and appreciation.”* This combination of praise and constructive criticism is a balanced and supportive peer environment that helps students to continue growing.

These responses show that peer feedback supports language development in a constructive way. It also confirms that students are not in vacuum. But, in a position where they learn most when they form a group that pays attention to their efforts and allows them to progress.

Findings

Among GGDC Karak students, the peer interaction enhanced English proficiency. Students say that talking with peers helps them more than anything else in terms of increasing their vocabulary and improving their conversational skills. Students can find other skills that they need and work on post-reading, which helped them improve pronunciation, grammar mistakes and vocabulary by peer feedback. This further increases their self-awareness and make students to be more accountable for their learning. In addition, peer activities, such as group discussions and debates also facilitated the enhancement of their critical thinking and problem-solving skills when they were exposed to more meaningful language use and engaged in higher cognitive process. Additionally, peer emotional support made a comfortable environment and freedom from the fear of making mistakes would allow students to speak English freely.

The study suggests that peer learning is useful in most subjects but noted a minority of the students still sought out the traditional teacher-led instruction, as especially complex grammatical topics were more likely to be better understood by means of teaching. On the other hand, peer discussions and group study sessions worked excellently in developing students’ confidence, fluency and motivation to learn. These results suggest that an integration of teacher support and peer learning may improve the language acquisition in GGDC, Karak; thereby, supporting a more holistic educational method, to cultivate academic and emotional confidence among students.

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