



### *Dedications*

*First and foremost, praises and thanks to Allah SWT for giving us the strength and patience to carry out this work.*

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## Abstract

This dissertation aims to investigate the role of English-Speaking Clubs in developing EFL learners' communicative competence. The objectives of the study are threefold. First, it seeks to investigate the activities teachers implement in English-Speaking Clubs to develop EFL learners' communicative competence. Second, it attempts to examine the scaffolding strategies teachers use in English-Speaking Clubs to enhance their learners' communicative competence. Third, it strives to explore EFL learners' perceptions about the extent to which participation in English-Speaking Clubs improves their communicative competence. This research is guided by the theoretical framework of 'Social Constructivism Theory' proposed by Lev Vygotsky (1978), putting emphasis on two core concepts: 'Scaffolding and Active Learning'. A mixed-methods approach is adopted in this study as the main methodology for both data collection and data analysis. To collect the data, a questionnaire was administered to twenty-five (25) students and eight (8) classroom observations were carried out in two English-Speaking Clubs in two private schools in Tizi-ouzou. The findings indicate that teachers in English-Speaking Clubs implement active learning activities including 'debates, role plays, discussions and presentations' to develop their learners' communicative competence. In addition, the results show that teachers use scaffolding strategies including modeling, offering explanations, inviting students' participation, providing feedback and inviting students to contribute clues during the club sessions to enhance their learners' communicative competence. Despite, some scaffolding strategies are used partially. Furthermore, the study displays that EFL learners perceive greater improvements in their communicative competence since joining the English-Speaking Clubs. Finally, it can be concluded that joining English-Speaking Clubs contribute to the development of EFL learners' communicative competence.

**Key words:** active learning, communicative competence, English-Speaking Clubs, private school, scaffolding, social constructivism theory.

**List of Abbreviations:**

**EFL:** English as a Foreign Language

**H:** Hypothesis

**Q:** Question

**QCA:** Qualitative Content Analysis

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***General Introduction***

## Statement of the Problem

The goal from learning any language is to communicate successfully with others and to be able to achieve different communicative goals in an effective way. This is referred to as communicative competence. The latter can be defined as the learner's ability to use the language in different social contexts that require not only acknowledging structures and rules of a language, but also the ability to use this knowledge in various situations for different communicative purposes (Hymes, 1972).

Developing communicative competence in the English language has become a vital focus in today's world and has gained much attention since it offers the learners the right skills that allow them to express themselves appropriately and interact with different people in real-life settings. However, as observed during the regular classroom sessions, many learners struggle to develop their communicative competence as most of the time is mainly devoted to the usage of the language and not on the use. That is, regular classes mainly put emphasis more on other language skills such as reading and writing. Yet, no attention is given to oral communication. Due to these limitations, learners start to look for other means that focus more on using the target language for communication purposes in order to improve their communicative competence. Therefore, English-Speaking Clubs serve as a means for EFL learners to involve themselves along with others outside the classroom walls for the purpose of socializing and most importantly to develop their communicative competence.

In the light of this, English-Speaking Clubs have been created to provide EFL learners with opportunities to practice their English language skills in authentic settings. English speaking Clubs are defined as students extra learning program beside regular English class which focus more on practicing and mastering English language skills (Yuliandasari &

Kusriandi, 2018). Indeed, English-Speaking Clubs serve as a practical and as a social context for the learners as they give them the chance to apply their English language skills and go beyond to develop the learners' communicative competence outside regular classes.

The formation of English-Speaking Clubs in Algeria can be a great way of broadening EFL learners' knowledge, as it builds awareness in individuals about their language abilities, boosting their self-confidence and motivation (Salma, 2018 as cited in Holandyah, M., et al. 2023). Besides, it is believed that joining these language clubs enhances learners' overall performance and the important role that socializing plays as it contributes to the development of different language and social skills (Sorgen, 2015 as cited in Demydovych, O. & Holik, O. 2020). Several studies have been carried out concerning the importance of English-Speaking Clubs as a learning strategy both at the national and international levels. The first study has been conducted at the department of English at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia in Jijel, which is submitted by Moussaoui and Hacini (2021) for the Master's degree in Didactics of foreign languages entitled 'EFL Teachers and Learners' Attitudes towards the Role of English-Speaking Clubs in proving EFL Learners' Oral Proficiency'. It explores the views of EFL teachers and learners regarding the role of English-Speaking Clubs in developing EFL learners' oral proficiency. The results show that EFL teachers and learners hold positive attitudes towards the use of English-Speaking Clubs as a useful means in developing EFL learners' oral proficiency. The second study has been conducted at the University of Islam Nigeri Sultan Sayarif Kasim Riau, Indonesia which is entitled 'The Analysis of English-Speaking Clubs Activity in Helping Students' Speaking Ability' submitted by Fitri Yanti (2021). It has been found that English-Speaking Clubs activities are effective in fostering students' speaking ability. Additionally, it further recommends implementing the club activities as an essential part of a course.

While the previous works have focused mainly on the importance of English-Speaking Clubs in enhancing EFL learners' speaking ability, little attention has been given to the importance of English-Speaking Clubs in developing EFL learner's communicative competence. In an attempt to widen the scope of this study, the present work further delves into investigating the role of English-Speaking Clubs as a learning strategy in developing the EFL learner's communicative competence in two English-Speaking Clubs in two private schools in Tizi-ouzou.

### **Aims and Significance of the Study**

The overall aim of this study is to investigate how participating in English-Speaking Clubs contribute to the development of EFL learners' communicative competence in two selected private schools in Tizi-ouzou. The objectives of this study are threefold. First, the research seeks to investigate the various activities teachers implement in English-Speaking Clubs to develop EFL learners' communicative competence. Second, it attempts to examine the scaffolding strategies teachers use in English-Speaking Clubs to enhance their learners' communicative competence. Finally, the study strives to explore EFL learners' perceptions about the extent to which participation in the English-Speaking Clubs improves their communicative competence.

This research is significant because of the contribution that it may add to previous studies in the field of English language teaching. To begin with, there are only few works that have been conducted on the importance of English-Speaking Clubs as a learning community. Second, understanding the importance of English-Speaking clubs in enhancing EFL learners' communicative competence can inform the teachers and educators about the effective strategies that can be integrated in regular classes to develop EFL learners' communicative

competence, as it can also improve language learning curricula by incorporating interactive and communicative activities.

## Research Questions and Hypotheses

The present study attempts to answer the following set of questions in order to attain the aforementioned research objectives.

**Q1:** What are the tasks teachers implement in English-Speaking Clubs to enhance their learners' communicative competence?

**Q2:** what are the scaffolding strategies teachers use in English-Speaking Clubs to help their learners improve their communicative competence?

**Q3:** What are EFL learners' perceptions about the extent to which participation in English-Speaking Clubs improves their communicative competence?

## Research Hypotheses

- **H1:** Teachers implement communicative tasks including role-plays, debates, discussions and presentations to develop learners' communicative competence.
- **H2:** Teachers use modeling, offering explanations, providing feedback, inviting students' participation and inviting students to contribute clues as scaffolding strategies English-Speaking Clubs to develop EFL learners' communicative competence.
- **H3:** EFL learners who participate in English-Speaking Clubs perceive greater improvements in their communicative competence.

## **Research Techniques and Methodology**

Our research is a survey case study. It aims at investigating the role of English-Speaking Clubs in developing EFL learners' communicative competence. In order to fulfill this aim, and provide answers to the research questions, the mixed-methods approach, which involves the combination of both Quantitative and Qualitative methods, is adopted for data collection and data analysis. The research data are gathered using a questionnaire and a classroom observation. A questionnaire is distributed to twenty five (25) participants from two English-Speaking Clubs in two different private schools in Tizi-ouzou and eight (8) classroom observations are carried out during the speaking sessions. The quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire and the classroom observation checklist are analyzed using the Descriptive Statistical method. Conversely, the qualitative data collected from the questionnaire are interpreted adopting the Qualitative Content Analysis method (QCA). This study is guided by the theoretical framework of 'Social Constructivism Theory' proposed by Lev Vygotsky (1978) putting emphasis on two core concepts namely 'Scaffolding and Active Learning' in English-Speaking Clubs.

## **The Structure of the Dissertation**

The present research follows the traditional simple model that consists of a General Introduction, four chapters and a General Conclusion. The General Introduction gives the reader insights into the content and the topic being under investigation. It presents the statement of the problem, the aims and significance of the study, the research questions and hypotheses, the research techniques and methodology and the structure of the dissertation. The first chapter entitled Review of the Literature reviews the previous works and the main

concepts related to the research topic as it presents the main theoretical frameworks. The second chapter is named Research Design. It is concerned with the procedures of data collection and data analysis and their tools. The following chapter is labeled the Result chapter which aims at presenting the findings. The fourth and last chapter is the Discussion of the findings. It aims at analyzing the results in the light of the theoretical framework and the review of the literature. Finally, the General Conclusion provides a summary of the main points tackled throughout the dissertation and provides answers to the research questions on the basis of the obtained results and to finally check the validity of the hypotheses and provide recommendations for further search.

*Chapter One*  
*Review of the Literature*

## **Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to present a comprehensive review of the existing literature relevant to the research area, as well as to shed light on the key concepts underlying our study. This chapter is divided into four main sections. The first section focuses on the definition of the concept of perception. The second section is devoted to the concept of the English-Speaking Clubs, detailing its advantages in language learning. The third section introduces the notion of communicative competence, along with its models in language teaching and learning, and highlights its importance in English-Speaking Clubs as it puts emphasis on the role of communicative competence in constructivism. Finally, the last section presents the theoretical framework upon which this study is based on.

## **Section one: Perception**

### **1. Definition of Perception**

Perceptions refer to the way individuals perceive, interpret and make opinions about given events. It can be categorized into two kinds, positive and negative perception (Burns et al., 2017). There are two factors that influence someone's perception which are divided into internal factors and external factors. Internal factors include factors that come from the individual such as thoughts, feelings, and motivation. External factors include factors that come from the environment such as behaviors, situations, and the social environment in general (Slameto, 2010 as cited in Fathia, N., et al. 2022).

Students' perceptions are the impressions that the students have toward a certain thing or event. It is a way to observe and explain the classroom condition which is essential to the

purpose of evaluation and teaching development (Freiberg and Stein 2005 as cited in Hafrizal, U. et al.2021). Students with positive perception would have good learning motivation, whereas negative perception can cause a reduced motivation (Rudiyanto, 2006 as cited in Hafrizal, U. et al. 2021).

## **Section Two: English-Speaking Clubs**

### **2. The Concept of English-Speaking Clubs**

The primary goal of EFL teaching and learning is to equip students with the necessary skills in order to become effective communicators. Yet, it is essential to encourage and motivate learners to communicate in English not only within the corners of the regular classroom settings but also in various real-life situations. Kim (2015 as cited in Demydovych, O.2020) have stressed upon the necessity of teaching the English language not only in the corner of the regular classroom but also outside of it.

English-Speaking Clubs can be defined as a group of people who get together regularly to talk, listen, read and write in English. It gives the students a place to practice, fix and improve their English language and speech skills in a comfortable and fun setting (Malu, 2018 as cited in Maros, M. A.2023). English-Speaking Clubs can also be referred to as discussion clubs, communication clubs and talk clubs (Alvermann et al. 1999). These English-Speaking Clubs offer a less formal environment compared to the regular classes which numerous students perceive as more enjoyable, casual and mimicking real-life situations which in turn increase learners' desire to practice English on their own (Dierking, 2017 as cited Yanti. F.2021). Above and beyond, Azoua (2020) claim that English-Speaking Clubs generally provide a chance for students who want to learn and engage more in English with their schoolmates as an extra strategy outside the classroom.

Furthermore, the goal of English-Speaking Clubs is to create a welcoming environment in which members can practice their spoken English (Nur and Eltayeb 2014 as cited in Holandyah, M., et al., 2023). This approach enables EFL learners to develop and practice different communication skills including speaking, listening, reading and writing in English (Kathleen, 2018). Having such a space to make such connections allows members to socially construct language and thought that are essential in learning (Vygotsky, 1987 as cited in Kathleen, F. M. 2016). In addition, Armita (2019 as cited in Maros, M.2023) have found that these clubs help students practice their speaking, share knowledge and become more motivated to practice speaking. In this case, different learners who share common interests and goals and from different backgrounds meet in such an informal place to socialize, interact and share their thoughts and knowledge for the sake of acquiring and developing different English skills and to be competent communicators.

### **2.1 The Benefits of English-Speaking Clubs**

Once students have acquired a comprehensive understanding of the language system, participating in English-Speaking Clubs provide a great opportunity for EFL learners to develop more their speaking ability including pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar accuracy and fluency that enables them to effectively communicate in the target language (Mandasari, 2018 as cited in Holandyah, M., et al., 2023). These clubs provide a supportive environment where students communicate solely in English, allowing for a comprehensive practice and improvement. This idea is supported by Maulidiyah and Qolbia (2020) who noticed that individuals who participate in English-Speaking Clubs tend to have higher speaking abilities compared to those who do not. Learners are better equipped to express themselves at ease,

engaging in conversation which eventually contributes to speaking the foreign language fluently (Maksymenko, 2017 as cited in Demydovych, O. 2020).

In addition, English-Speaking Clubs are not only created for the purpose of developing oral proficiency but also for increasing students' motivation and confidence to speak as much as possible (Rao 2019 as cited in as cited in Mashudi, A., et al., 2023) . As a result, they will have a greater chance of achieving higher levels of success in the future (Cheng, et al., 2019 as cited in Octaberlina, L. R., 2022). That is, as students become more motivated and confident in speaking the language, there will be more chances to be successful in their academic and career achievements. Moreover, students are encouraged to participate in club activities as they help them practice and improve their speaking and communicative skills (Abott, 2001 as cited in Abdala, A., 2021).

In the present day, the main goal of teaching and learning a language is to enable students to communicate effectively and fluently. This entails using the language appropriately to transfer their message across and in an accurate way and to achieve their communication goals. In fact, it has been said that learners attempt to develop their communicative competence in an efficient and a productive way when they are exposed in informal and socialized learning environments. These settings can make learners feel more at ease, confident and motivated to practice their communication abilities with diverse individuals regardless of their different backgrounds.

In essence, effective communication requires communicative competence. This process is not only about being a language proficient but it goes beyond in the sense that it requires the ability to use language effectively in real-life situations. As concluded by Carter and Nunan (2001 cited in Abdala, A., 2021), English-Speaking Clubs create a friendly social

atmosphere among where students broaden their communicative competence as a result of that socialization process.

### **Section three: Communicative Competence**

#### **3. The Concept of Communicative Competence**

The notion of ‘communicative competence’ was introduced by the sociolinguist Dell Hymes in 1972 as a reaction to ‘Linguistic Competence’ proposed by the American linguist Noam Chomsky in 1965 who made a distinction between performance and competence. According to Chomsky (1956), competence is “the speaker-hearer’s knowledge of his language”, accounting for inherit grammatical rules and structures to produce new sentences and utterances which is unaffected by cognitive and situational factors during the actual linguistic performance which is defined as “the actual use of language in concrete situations” Chomsky (1965, p. 4 as cited in Ahmed, S. T. S. 2023). However, unlike Chomsky (1965), Dell Hymes (1972) introduces the concept ‘communicative competence’ to emphasize that communicative competence as being “the tacit knowledge of the language and the “ability to use it for communication” (Hymes 2001, p. 16 as cited in Ahmed, S. T. S., 2023). Consequently, according to Hymes (1972), competence is not only about the knowledge of grammatical rules, vocabulary and language structures, but, rather, it represents the ability to use and communicate appropriately with that knowledge in different real-life social contexts. While Hymes (1972) believes that both grammatical and sociolinguistic competences are necessary in language acquisition, Terrel and Krahen (1983) argue otherwise and conclude that communicative competence is the use of language in social communication without focusing on grammatical competence. In fact, Pallotti (2010) adds his further definition of the concept and views communicative competence as the ability to achieve

communicative goals smoothly and effortlessly. That is, individuals communicate their thoughts in a way that seems natural and without struggle.

### **3.1 Communicative Competence in Language Teaching and Learning**

Communicative competence in its simple words means having the ‘competence to communicate’ (Ahmed & Pawar, 2018). It is a broader term that encompasses different skills in order to convey information in an understandable and a comprehensible manner and to be able to interact and communicate verbally and non-verbally effectively in the appropriate social context and fulfill various communicative goals. Savignon (2002, p. 2 as cited in Tarvin, L. D., 2015) states that “Hymes uses communicative competence to represent the ability to use the languages in social contexts, to observe sociolinguistic norms and appropriateness”. Thereupon, Hymes (2001, p. 60 as cited in Ahmed, S. T. S.2018) states “He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when no, and as to what to talk about with who, when, where, in what manner”. In other words, a competent communicator understands when it is appropriate to speak, what to speak and whom to speak using appropriate styles in various situations. For this reason, he further explains four (4) parameters necessary for communicative competence as follow:

1. Whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible. (It is concerned with the use of language in real life situations. For instance, a learner uses formal language to write a letter to his teacher. While, he uses informal language to write a letter to his friend).
2. Whether (and to what degree) something is feasible in virtue of means of implementation available. (It is concerned with the level of the speaker taking into account his linguistic and cognitive capacities. For example, the teacher provides their learners with basic

vocabulary related to hobbies, after that he asks the learners to speak about their hobbies using the vocabulary being taught).

3. Whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate (adequate, happy, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated. (It is concerned with the social and cultural norms governing the interaction. For instance, a learner in the classroom says ‘good morning, I hope you are all doing great’ this shows awareness of politeness. Conversely to when the learner says ‘hey what’s up’, which is inappropriate considering the context.
4. Whether (and to what degree) something is in fact done, actually performed, and what it doing entails. (It is concerned with the clarity of the message. The delivered message should be comprehensible and understandable). (Hymes, 1972, p. 281 as cited in Ahmed, S. T. S. 2023).

By introducing such framework, Hymes (1972) considers communicative competence as a broader ability that encompasses several competences and skills in which linguistic or grammatical competence represents only one element of communicative competence. As stated by Brno (2017, p. 13 as cited in Maroof, S. O. S., 2021) “Hymes defines communicative competence as a necessary grammatical competence in various communicative situations”. Over time, several models have been introduced as a continuous development of the term ‘communicative competence’ introduced by Hymes (1972). These models provide a comprehensive definition of communicative competence including all the competences and skills needed for effective communication. Canale and Swain (1980) have further developed the concept and coupled it with Hymes’ (1972) view as they believe that the social factors are part and crucial in the communicative competence. They state “the study of sociolinguistic competence is essential to the study of communicative competence as is the

study of grammatical competence” (Canale and Swain, 1980, p. 6 as cited in Ahmed, S. T. S.2018). In the light of this, their model is composed of four (4) components that are part of communicative competence including, linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence and discourse competence. Linguistic competence refers to the students’ knowledge of lexical items, grammatical rules, syntax, morphology, semantics, and phonology. Sociolinguistic competence is about the knowledge of what, when, why, to whom and how to say something in a given situation. Strategic competence includes the knowledge of different skills (verbal or non-verbal) which aim at improving communication breakdowns and overcome obstacles during communication due to the insufficient competence in one or more components of communicative competence (Canale and Swain, 1980). Discourse competence represents the knowledge of how to connect different grammatical forms and meanings to form coherent discourse or conversation (Canale, 1983).

Murcia, Dorney and Thrrell (1995) have developed their own framework by adding one competence that is referred to as the actional competence. This latter, is defined as the ability of the learner to perform speech acts and language functions such as apologizing and requesting. Later, the model has been developed to become ‘interactional competence’ by Celce-Murcia (2007 as cited in Ahmed, S. T. S. 2023) by adding three components that are conversational competence, paralinguistic competence and formulaic competence. Conversational competence is the knowledge of how to engage in meaningful conversations such as how to begin and close conversations, maintaining turn taking and clear expression of ideas. Paralinguistic competence is the knowledge of how to appropriately use nonverbal cues. Formulaic competence is the knowledge of how to use formulaic expressions such as collocations and greetings that are used in everyday interactions.

Later on, Littlewood's (2011) model is considered the most recent framework of communicative competence. It takes place upon Canale and Swaine's (1980) and Canale's (1983) model as the initial model whereby Littlewood (2011) further adds two competences namely pragmatic competence and sociocultural competence. Pragmatic competence enables second language speakers to use their linguistic resources to convey and interpret meanings in real-life situations. Sociocultural competence refers to the awareness of cultural knowledge and assumptions affecting meanings and may lead to misunderstandings in intercultural communication (Littlewood, 2011, p.547 as cited in Eghtesadi, A. R. 2017).

### **3.2 The Importance of Communicative Competence in English-Speaking Clubs**

Communicative competence in learning English as a foreign language refers to the ability of EFL learners to use the English language to communicate effectively with others in different social situations. That is, the role of language teachers is to help learners get along in real-life situations to be able to process and interact with the language in different social settings (Savignon, 2007 as cited in Tarvin, L. D., 2015). In this case, it is important to realize that communicative competence is an essential ability to develop in English as a foreign language in the sense that it enables EFL learners to clearly transmit their message as to understand others' messages using English in real-life situations. In fact, communicative competence is about achieving functions using the language that requires a realistic interaction among learners in a real-life context, for instance having a conversation to talk about their life experiences or to express attitudes and ideas (Hymes, 1972 & Bachman, 1990 as cited in Barón, P. N. 2006). In particular, communicative competence means using

the language to fulfill functions in everyday life and achieve specific goals in a proficient way.

However, without enough exposure of learners to authentic situations to use the language and interact among their peers, friends and teachers, it becomes difficult to promote and achieve EFL learners' communicative competence. For this reason, English-Speaking Clubs are special contexts where a group of EFL learners who share common interests meet together to socialize, interact and communicate with each other for the purpose of acquiring new and useful information and to develop their communicative competence in English. As claimed by Hymes (1972) communicative competence is that aspect of our competence which enables us to negotiate meaning interpersonally within specific contexts. He further adds that communicative competence in English is the ability of the learner to socially interact and communicate in English using the language properly and following the surrounded social and cultural rules, such as the ability to realize what to say in any situation and or the purpose of that conversation. Meanwhile, Mulyasa (2007 as cited in Yanti. F., 2021) states that the purpose of these clubs is to help and support students' competence. In effect, EFL learners need such opportunities and real-life environments to engage in meaningful conversations to use the language and improve their communicative competence instead of using strategies of memorization and imitation of the traditional learning style that is mainly concerned about language and its structures.

### **3.3 Fluency**

For EFL learners to be competent in the target language, they should develop their fluency as it is regarded as one of the major characteristics of communicative competence (Shahini and Shahamirian, 2017). Pallotti (2010, p. 173) indicates that communicative

competence “is further divided into efficacy (the ability to reach one’s communicative goals) and fluency (the ability to do so smoothly, quickly and effortlessly)”. In fact, there are multiple meanings that are associated with the term fluency. For instance, fluency can be defined as the ability to use the language quickly and confidently without hesitation or too many unnatural pauses to cause barriers in communication (Bailey. et al., 2003 as cited in Ho, V. P., 2018). For this reason, fluency is an important skill to be improved by EFL learners as it makes their English proficiency much better and more natural due to the absence of speaking disturbances.

### **3.4 Accuracy**

Communicative competence also puts emphasis on linguistic competence as it is one of its components that refers to the knowledge of grammatical structures, vocabulary and pronunciation. This is where accuracy of spoken English stands out. In order to be able to communicate effectively, learners need an adequate mastery of grammar and vocabulary” (Byrne, 1991, p. 11 as cited in Rochman, M. (2017). In other words, effective communication is the speakers’ ability to use appropriately the language in terms of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation and deliver their message clearly and accurately without being ambiguous.

### **3.5 Vocabulary**

Vocabulary is recognized as an important element to be developed in communicative competence (Schmitt, 2000 as cited in Alqahtani. M.2015). The former is defined as a collection of words and terms that an individual knows, understands and uses to communicate meanings and information with others in different situations. That is, without sufficient amount of vocabulary, learners cannot express themselves clearly and effectively despite

having good command in grammar structures. Notwithstanding, unlike the intentional learning where learners pay direct attention to learn the vocabulary and words itself, learners can encounter and use new words naturally when they are exposed to interaction and the use of language in various contexts and incorporate these new words in their everyday life. For this reason, Galanes and Adams (2013 as cited in Yanti. F.2021) assert that learners get new vocabulary when they join English-Speaking Clubs. Thus, these club activities prove to be effective in developing student's vocabulary (Mandasari, 2018 as cited in Holandyah, M.2023).

### **3.6 Communicative Competence and Constructivism**

Tarvin (2015) views communicative competence as the ability to use the language to accomplish social tasks with efficacy and fluency through extended interaction. As Hymes (1972) and Bachman (1990) believe that communicative competence requires a realistic interaction among learners using a meaningful and a contextualized language. That is, communicative competence occurs in an interactive process where language learners interact in social contexts to accomplish meaningful social actions with the others using the language (Hall and Doehler, 2011 as cited in Tarvin, L. D.2015). Owing to these facts, it is important to note that communicative competence is primarily based on interaction as it can be also improved through interaction. This in fact aligns with the constructivist approach which emphasizes the importance of the context, interaction and active involvement of the learner to construct their knowledge and develop different language skills. Hence, the constructivist approach is considered the best environment for learners to improve their communicative competence. In such environments, learners can actively participate and learn through relevant activities under the guidance of a more knowledgeable other. As it has been stressed

by Routman (2005, p. 207 as cited in Hurst, B.2013), “students learn more when they are able to talk to one another and be actively involved”. The teachers’ role is to organize and create such engaging environments through incorporating stimulating activities including free and guided role-plays, debates, discussions, simulations and dialogues. These activities provide the learners with opportunities to use the target language, leading to improvements of their oral communicative competence (Dendrinis, 2015as cited in Maroof, S. O. S.2021).

## **Section four: Presenting the Theoretical Framework**

### **4. Social Constructivism Theory**

The theoretical framework guiding this study is referred to as the ‘social constructivism theory’ proposed by the Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1978). Social constructivism is rooted in the constructivism approach that is most originated from the work of Jean Piaget (1950s) on children’s cognitive development. Simply put, Constructivism is a theory of learning emphasizing that knowledge is constructed and learners build such knowledge upon what is already known as well as the active role of learners in the learning process. In 1978, Lev Vygotsky further developed ‘social constructivism’ with the aim of explaining the importance of social context and interaction with peers and more knowledgeable mentors in constructing and acquiring new knowledge and skills. As far as our research is concerned, the aim from using Vygotsky’s (1978) theory of social constructivism is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of English-Speaking Clubs as a social setting where learners engage and interact in various activities with peers and teachers to improve learners’ communicative competence. In addition, since it signifies the role of a more knowledgeable other in facilitating the learners’ learning process, this theoretical framework

seeks to explore the strategies used by teachers in such clubs to develop learners' communicative competence.

Social constructivism recognizes that learners actively produce knowledge in response to interaction with their prior knowledge and environment. From Vygotsky's (1978) view, the learner does not learn in isolation. Instead, learning is strongly influenced by social interactions which occur in meaningful contexts under the guidance of a more knowledgeable other to support students learning process. Vygotsky (1978 as cited in Aljohani, M.2017) considers every knowledge is social in nature and believes that learning occurs in a context of social interaction leading to understanding. This idea is also strengthened by Gibbons (2001, p. 20) who states that learning "is not an individual process but a social one and can therefore only occur in the interaction between individuals".

In essence, social constructivism emphasizes students' participation, discussion and sharing. That is, instead of only absorbing information as a passive recipient, learners actively participate and engage in the learning process through whole class conversations, small group discussions and involvement on specific topics where they share and brainstorm their ideas and develop their skills to finally add something to their existing knowledge (Al-Qaysi, & Al-Emran, 2021 as cited in Saleem, A., et al.2021). Social constructivism (1978) is considered more of learner-centered approach and student centered learning involves three characteristics including, active involvement of the learners to construct knowledge of themselves, coaching and facilitating teacher and the use of authentic assignments. Authentic in this context means tasks that allow students to explore, discuss and make meaningful constructs and relationships within contexts that involve working with and using real world problems and projects that are

relevant to the learner and that are based on actual practice outside the university environment. (Baeten et al., 2013 as cited in Holmes, A. G. D. 2019).

#### **4.1 Scaffolding**

In social constructivism, since it is a more of learner-centered learning, the teacher or mentor in such environments plays the role of the guide and facilitator only to help the learner accomplish tasks and develop different skills, contrastingly to the regular classes where teachers mostly take control of the whole learning process. In other words, the teacher's function in constructivism is to instruct the learners to achieve their goals and acquire new skills and provide them with opportunities to construct it. This is what Vygotsky (1978) refers to as 'Scaffolding'. Raymond (2000, p. 176 as cited in Yuvita.2018) claims that "Vygotsky defines scaffolding as the role of teachers and others in supporting the learners development and providing support structures to get to that next stage or level". Likewise, Sukyadi and Husanah (2013, p. 4 as cited in Wassie, S.,et al. 2018) claim that "scaffolding is a strategy used by the teachers to facilitate learners' transition from assisted to independent performance". In addition, it is important to realize that scaffolding is a teaching strategy that is built on mutual cooperation and interaction where teachers act as helpers and provide the necessary support for learners to develop different skills while the learners engage in the learning process attempting to do the task on their own as soon as possible (Collins et al., 1989 as cited in Bikmaz, F. H. et al. 2015). Furthermore, according to Horwitz (2008, p. 32 as cited in Wassie, S.,et al. 2018) during scaffolding "there will be a close attention to conversational partner, asking open-ended questions or comments to encourage learners speak, interpret or expend cements".

Roehler and Cantalon (1997 as cited in Bikmaz, F. H. et al. 2015) have identified five different scaffoldings that can be described as follows:

- 1. Modeling of Desired Behavior:** teachers provide examples so that learners can observe and model to effectively accomplish similar tasks and acquire new information and develop their skills, for instance observing teachers behaviors. This strategy shows how one should think, feel and act within a given situation. Salisu and Ransom (2014, p. 55) argue that “Skill mastery occurs when models provide guidance, feedback, and social reinforcement during practice”. Thus, learners are provided with clear examples to see, hear and imitate to develop their understanding (Walqui 2006).
- 2. Offering Explanations:** it is to provide the learners with explicit demonstrations of what is being learned, why and when it is used and how to use it, for instance the use of schemes. According to Lange (2002 as cited in Mehri, E., et al.2014), it is to break down the task into several stages and explaining the procedures of the task so that learners carry it out in a simple way.
- 3. Inviting Students’ Participation:** students are given opportunities to participate and perform the task confidently after being guided by the instructor and work in collaboration with teachers and students. For instance, teachers encourage the learners to speak in front of the others.
- 4. Verifying and Clarifying Students Understanding:** it is essential to provide feedback to the students’ responses so that it becomes more understandable and clarifying to the students. For instance, if learners find it difficult to pronounce a word, teachers would explain it using the board.

**5. Inviting Students to Contribute Clues:** students are encouraged to ask or provide hints to complete the task. According to Lange (2002), in this stage learners are expected to restate the ideas and procedures for others to establish their knowledge and deepen their understanding of the task. For instance, teachers give freedom to their students to suggest topics they prefer to speak about.

#### **4.2 Active Learning**

Active learning is considered as an approach in the constructivist theory as the general interpretation of active learning stems from constructivism or social constructivism (Freeman et al., 2014). Active learning is often seen as a model of learning in contrast to the traditional teacher-centered styles of pedagogy. It is viewed as the active involvement of the learner in the learning process rather than passively receive information. It is “anything that involves students doing things and thinking about the things they are doing” (Bonwell and Eison, 1991, p. 2 as cited in Doolittle, P., et al. 2023). Besides, since active learning makes the learning environment more enjoyable and engaging, learners are more likely to be interested and this in turn facilitate their understanding.

For this reason, since active learning is rooted in the social constructivism theory which emphasizes the role of interaction and active participation of the learners in the learning process, integrating this approach in English speaking clubs significantly contribute to the development of the learners’ communicative competence. By engaging in different communicative tasks including debates, discussions, presentation and role plays, learners will be encouraged to actively get involved with others and be given opportunities to use the English language. Like Lightbown and Spada (2013 as cited in Gudinge, J.2018) argue that it is through the social interaction with others that we learn how to communicate successfully.

### 4.2.1 Active Learning Activities

It has been noted that active learning is an effective strategy because it increases peer-to-peer interaction, creating a more enjoyable experience for students (Roehl, et al., 2013 as cited in Taylor, L. (2016). In fact, interaction among learners, peers and teachers is a great way to improve language skills and learning a second or a foreign language can be facilitated when language learners are actively involved in interactive communications (Nunan, 1991 as cited in Rogti, M.2020). Hence, active learning is commonly associated with the learning that involves interpersonal interaction with the others and with learning strategies. Accordingly, Braxton et al., (2000) argue that active learning includes different activities that can be described as follow:

#### ❖ Role Plays

Role plays are a form of interactive and communicative activity where learners are addressed roles and perform real life topics, situations and/or conversations. For instance, teachers write two roles in a paper and each student perform the roles in front of others. Role plays provide the learners with opportunities to use the target language and stimulating authentic conversational interactions in different social contexts and social roles (Al-Senaidi, 2010; Richards, 1985 as cited in Waluyo, B. 2019). They are a one way of getting students to speak in different social contexts (Celce & Murcia, 2001 as cited in Wibowo, R. A., et al.2020). Notably, it has been suggested that role plays are very suitable for communicative classroom when performed in pairs or groups because it would encourage the participation of all students (Hedge, 2000 cited in Akshaya, R. 2020). Role-play tasks enhance learning through frequent use of the target language in contextual situations, so that immediate comprehension of how to express meanings in the target language can be grasped by learners,

which may help learners improve their communicative competence after several role performances (Ampatuan et al., 2016 cited in Waluyo, B. 2019).

### ❖ Debates

According to Mayuni et al (1995, p. 42 cited in Asrida, D. 2016) a “debate is considered the most structurally exact form of persuasive speech. It usually focuses on a preposition of controversial sides attempt to convince an audience that their ideas and argument are right”. Debates are also considered as a form of an interactive activity where learners are given a topic to discuss, defend and to express their opinions supported by arguments. Likewise, debates can stimulate students’ thoughts, processes especially when defending a position that consequently can involve all learners in active performance (Maryadi, 2008 cited in Iman, J. N. 2017). Debates are assumed to be effective in improving learners’ arguing skills and communication because learners are encouraged to speak and deliver their ideas in English in a good way. As Kennedy (2007) states that when students are debating they are more likely to be active learners and ultimately they strengthen their communication competence.

### ❖ Discussion

Discussion is an oral exploration of a topic, a concept or experience. It is considered as one of the activities that can bring about interactivity between students and teacher for the sake of exchanging ideas and opinions and provides opportunities for real communication. Additionally, it is believed that discussion is probably the most commonly used activity in the speaking classroom that is useful in making learners actively engaged in the learning process (Celce & Murcia, 2001 cited in Wibowo, R. A., et al.2020). Learners in this state engage in

meaningful conversations with teachers and peers toward particular topics and share their thoughts and opinions towards it in a mutual respect. This method gives room for learners to develop their communication skills (Jegede, 2010 cited in Akpan, V. I.2022). For the most important part, students' engagement in the discussion is essential in developing their communicative competences (Ampatuan and Jose, 2016 cited in Aflah, M.N. 2022 ).

### ❖ Presentations

Presentation-based learning activities are considered as a core method to build students' active learning. It is a method where learners develop, organize and present their ideas and materials on particular issues (Shaw, 2001 cited in Sugeng, B. 2018). When students present and speak in the classroom, they are primarily practicing skills including communication. In addition, Piccinini (2016 cited in Kabesh, M. L. 2024 ) states that fluency, accuracy and confidence can be enhanced by oral presentations, as it also lead to greater interaction and participation, an increased interest in learning, and noticeable improvements in their students' communication and presentation skills (Pinar and Trapp, 2011 cited in Brooks, G. 2014 ).

### ❖ Collaborative Learning

In contrast to the traditional style of learning, active learning engages the learners in the learning process characterized by collaboration. The concept functions as a subset of active learning strategies and it is rooted in the social constructivism theory of Vygotsky (1978) who views learning as a social activity based on interaction among learners rather than individualized learning. Collaborative learning attributes to a situation where learners work together in small groups to accomplish similar tasks that benefit all the involved participants

which lead to better understanding of the task as they are socially and intellectually involved. This idea is supported by Routenberg (2005, 27 cited in Johnson, P. A. (2011) who states “...Good learning ... is collaborative and social, not competitive and isolated...sharing ones’ ideas and responding to other’s actions sharpens thinking and deepens understanding”. Hence, learning to speak in a foreign language will be facilitated when learners are actively engaged in attempting to communicate in groups (Nunan, 1991 as cited in Rogti, M. (2020).

### **Conclusion**

To conclude, this chapter has reviewed the main concepts related to the current study. First, it has provided the definition of perceptions. Second, it has explained the concept of English-Speaking Clubs along with its benefits. Then, the chapter has defined the concept of communicative competence, identifying its models in language teaching and learning along with its importance in English-Speaking Clubs and in constructivism. Lastly, the chapter concludes with the presentation of Vygotsky’s (1978) ‘Social Constructivism Theory’ stressing two approaches namely ‘Active Learning’ and ‘Scaffolding’, which is the theoretical framework that guide the current investigation. Whilst, the next chapter introduces the research design and methodology process of the study.

*Chapter Two*  
*Research Design and Methodology*

## **Introduction**

The present chapter is concerned with the methodological part of the current study. It describes the research design, shedding light on the instruments that have been used in order to collect data, and the procedures that have been followed to analyze and interpret them. Both procedures are adopted to investigate the role of English-Speaking Clubs in developing EFL learners' communicative competence in two private schools in Tizi-ouzou. This chapter is divided into five parts. The first part describes the research method. The second part describes the research design. The third part describes the context of the investigation and the sample of the participants. The fourth part presents the data collection instruments consisting of a questionnaire and a classroom observation. Then, the last part explains the data analysis tools including the Descriptive Statistical method and the Qualitative Content Analysis method (QCA).

### **1. Research Method**

The current research adopts the mixed-methods approach, which is defined by Tashakkori and Creswell (2007, p.4) as the “research in which the investigator collects and analyze data, integrates the findings and draw references using either qualitative and quantitative approach or methods in a single study”. In this study, the quantitative method is used to collect numerical data from the closed-ended questions of the questionnaire and the classroom observation checklist, while the qualitative method is used to gather the qualitative data from the open-ended questions of the questionnaire. In fact, incorporating the mixed-methods approach provides a comprehensive investigation of the research questions from different perspectives.

## **2. Research Design**

The current investigation is a survey and a case study research design. According to Check and Schutt (2012, p. 160 as cited in Ponto, J. 2015) a “survey research is the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions”. That is, a survey focuses on gathering data about individuals’ opinions and behaviors toward a phenomenon through questionnaires. A case study on the other hand, is defined by Yin (2009, p. 18 as cited in Priya, A. (2021) as “ an empirical inquiry which investigates a phenomenon in its real-life context. In a case study research, multiple methods of data collection are used, as it involves an in-depth study of a phenomenon”. That is, this involves exploring contemporary phenomenon in its real context, which can be done through observations. Therefore, we purposely rely on this research design in order to gain in-depth insights into the role of the English-speaking Clubs in developing EFL learners’ communicative competence.

## **3. Context of the Investigation and Sample of the Study**

This study aims to investigate the role of English-Speaking Clubs in developing EFL learners’ communicative competence. To achieve this overall aim, this research has been conducted in two English-Speaking Clubs in two private schools in Tizi-ouzou namely “ELITES for International Studies” and “LOGOS School”, during the academic year 2023-2024. These clubs are created in educational private schools where they provide additional language learning support apart from regular classroom settings. These clubs are often lead by teaches and scheduled three times a week accommodating learners’ preferred time. We have chosen such contexts since they provide a more supportive learning environment for the target language.

The present inquiry consists of twenty five (25) students from the total number of both schools.

#### **4. Data Collection Tools**

In order to answer the previously mentioned research questions and to confirm or refute the suggested hypotheses, this study incorporates two different kinds of data collection instruments: A questionnaire and a classroom observation.

##### **4.1. Definition of the Questionnaire**

Brown (2001, p. 6 as cited in Holmes, A. G. 2023) defines a questionnaire as “any written instrument that presents respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers”. That is to say, a questionnaire is a data collection tool that consists of a set of open and or closed-ended items designed to obtain data from respondents.

##### **4.1.1. Description of the Questionnaire**

The questionnaire included in this study aims to collect data about the topic under investigation. This questionnaire comprises of fifteen (18) items divided into four sections. It is based on Vygotsky’s theory of social constructivism (1978) emphasizing two variables to reformulate the questions: Scaffolding and Active learning. The first section includes two (2) closed-ended questions that are related to the participants’ background information. The second section is entitled ‘English-Speaking Clubs’. It consists of six (6) items which are divided into one (1) open-ended item and five (5) closed-ended items to uncover students’ background information about the English-Speaking Clubs. The third section is

named ‘Communicative Competence’. It consists of three (3) items which are divided into one (1) open-ended item and two (2) closed-ended items to find out the learners’ perceptions about communicative competence. The fourth section is labeled ‘The Role of English-Speaking Clubs in enhancing Communicative Competence’. It encompasses seven (7) items which are divided into two (2) open-ended items and five (5) closed-ended items. This section aims at gathering the needed data to reach the purpose of our research which is about revealing ‘the role of English-Speaking Clubs in developing learners’ communicative Competence’.

#### **4.1.2 Piloting the Questionnaire**

Before the questionnaire is distributed to the target participants, it is first delivered to five (5) students from the English-Speaking Clubs in order to check the clarity and the relevance of its presented items. After receiving the feedback, we have omitted some unnecessary information such as the definition of the concept of competent communicator.

#### **4.2. Classroom observation**

Classroom observation is the second supportive research instrument used to collect quantitative data for this study. Mackey and Gass (2005, p. 186-187) assert that “observations are a useful means of gathering in depth information about phenomena as the type of language activities, interactions and events that occur in a second and foreign language classroom.” That is to say, classroom observation is the most effective research instrument for collecting data as it provides the researcher with the opportunity to observe all the aspects of the lesson and what teachers and learners actually do in the classroom. Observations are very useful in

that they provide the researcher with opportunity to collect large amounts of reach data on the participants' behavior and action within a particular context (Mackey & Grass ,2005).

#### **4.2.1. Description of the Classroom Observation**

The classroom observation has been conducted in two English-Speaking Clubs in two private schools in Tizi-ouzou namely 'ELITES for International Studies' and 'LOGOS School'. The classroom observation checklist consists of fifteen (15) items. The fifteen (15) items are combined in one section entitled 'Scaffolding and Active Learning'. This section aims to observe the different strategies used by teachers in English-Speaking Clubs to develop EFL learners' communicative competence, as it aims to observe how the learners engage in the activities implemented by their teachers in the clubs. The classroom observation has started from May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024 until May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024 for a total of 8 sessions. The duration of each session was about two (2) hours.

### **5. Data Analysis Procedures**

To analyze the data obtained from the questionnaire and the checklist, two data analysis procedures have been employed in this study. The Descriptive Statistical Method is used to analyze the quantitative data that have been gathered from the questionnaire and the checklist. The Qualitative Content Analysis Method (QCA) is used to analyze and interpret the qualitative data that have been gathered from the open-ended items of the questionnaire. The collected data are classified and interpreted according to Active Learning and Scaffolding approaches which are part of the Social Constructivism Theory proposed by Lev Vygotsky in 1978.

## 5.1 Descriptive Statistical Method

Descriptive statistical analysis method is defined by Fisher and Marshall (2009) as the numerical and graphical techniques used to organize, present and analyze data. That is to say, this method is used to analyze and summarize the gathered data in form of numbers without drawing any inferences or conclusions. We have adopted the Descriptive Statistical Method in order to analyze and carry out the calculations of the quantitative data obtained from the closed-ended items of the students' questionnaire and the classroom observation checklist concerning the active learning activities and the scaffolding strategies teachers use in English-Speaking Clubs to develop their learners' communicative competence. The results obtained are highlighted in the form of tables, graphs and numerical data.

## 5.2 Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA)

Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) is a method which organizes data, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns and discovering what is important to report it to others (Bogdan and Biklem, 1982 as cited in Shava, G. N., et al. 2021). That is, Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) goes beyond just counting words to examine and classify themes and categories of similar meanings and these categories represent either explicit or inferred communication (Berelson, 1952 as cited in Shava, G. N., et al. 2021).

The present study adopts the Qualitative Content Analysis method to analyze the qualitative data obtained from the open-ended items of the questionnaire that has been distributed to the EFL learners in the two previously mentioned schools. This method has been employed to examine and interpret the responses from the participants to gain deeper insight about 'The role of English-Speaking Clubs in enhancing EFL learners'

Communicative Competence' through exploring students' perceptions about the extent to which participation in English speaking clubs improve their communicative competence. This method seeks to examine the various improvements in learners' communication abilities, to determine how the tasks teachers implement in English-Speaking Clubs contribute to the development of their communicative competence, as it attempts to explore students' views toward the recommendation of these clubs to other students who are interested in developing their communicative competence. The results are transformed into written material and transcribed in the form of texts.

### **Conclusion**

The present chapter has presented the research design and the methodology used to carry out the current study. First, it has presented the research method, the context of the investigation and the sample of the population that has taken part in our research. Second, it has presented and described the two data collection instruments implemented in this study namely the questionnaire and the classroom observation. Lastly, it has explained the data analysis procedures namely the Descriptive Statistical method and the Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) adopted to analyze and interpret the quantitative and the qualitative data gathered from the questionnaire and the classroom observation. The next chapter presents the findings of this research.

## *Chapter Three*

### *Presentation of the Findings*

## Introduction

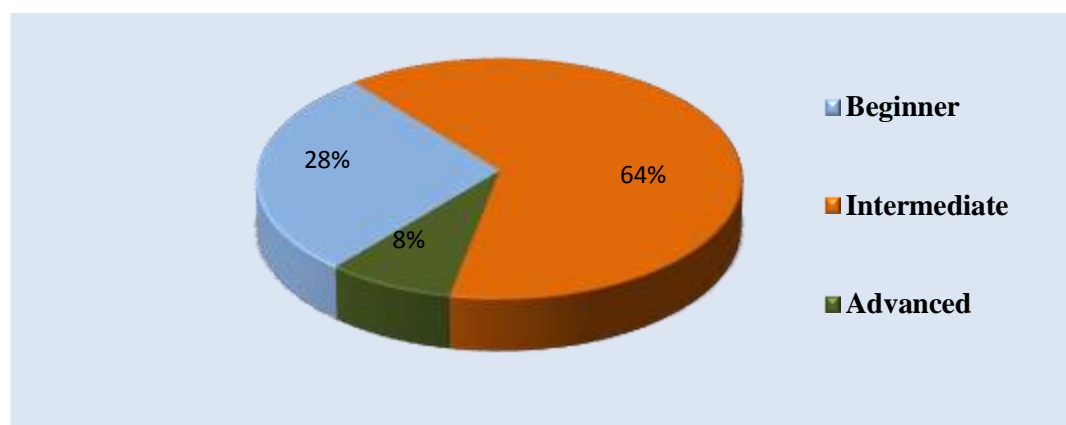
The present chapter is dedicated to the presentation of the findings of the current research. It presents the results obtained from the students' questionnaire and the classroom observation that have been distributed and conducted in two private schools in Tizi-ouzou namely 'ELITES for International Studies' and 'LOGOS School'. It is divided into two parts. The first part is devoted to the findings obtained from the students' questionnaire. The second part presents the findings obtained from the classroom observation checklist. The findings of the study are displayed in percentages and illustrated in the form of diagrams, texts and tables.

## 1. Presentation of the Findings from the Students' Questionnaire

### 1.1. Section One: Participant Information

The aim of this section is to gather information about the participants' information in the English-Speaking Clubs.

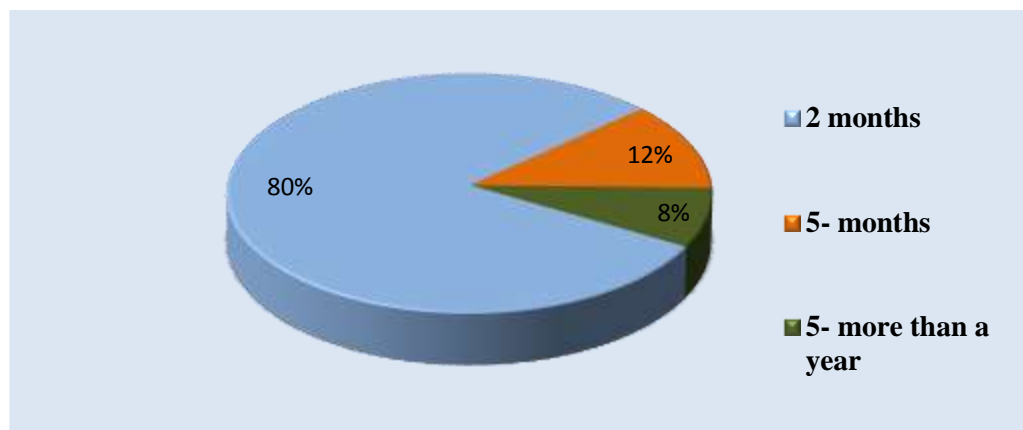
#### Q.01.What is your level in English?



**Diagram 01: Students' Level in English in English-Speaking Clubs**

Diagram (01) demonstrates that 64% of the students are intermediate in English, 28% are beginners while the remaining 8% of the students are advanced in English in the English-Speaking Clubs.

**Q.02. How long have you been a member of the English-Speaking Clubs?**



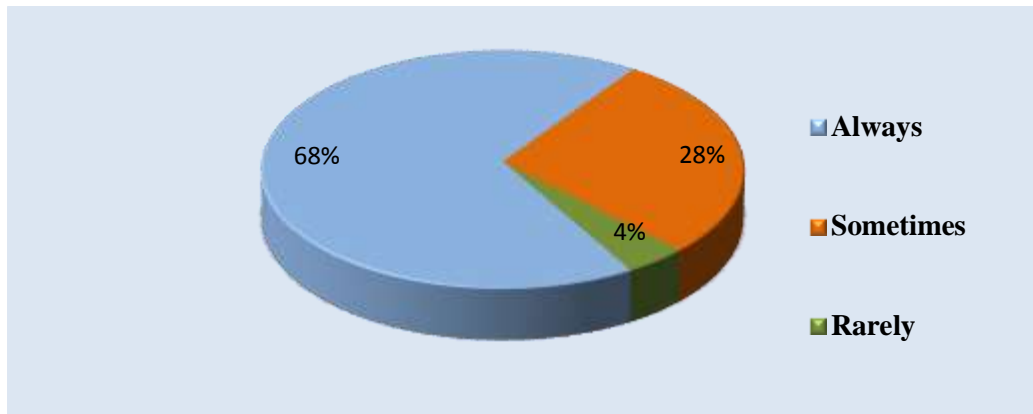
**Diagram 02: Students' Membership at the English-Speaking Clubs**

Diagram (02) shows that 80% of the students of the two English-Speaking Clubs are in the clubs since 2 months, 12% of them are in the clubs since 5 months while 8% of them are in the clubs since over a year.

**1.2. Section Two: English-Speaking Clubs**

The purpose of this section is to gather data concerning the students' background information about the English-Speaking Clubs.

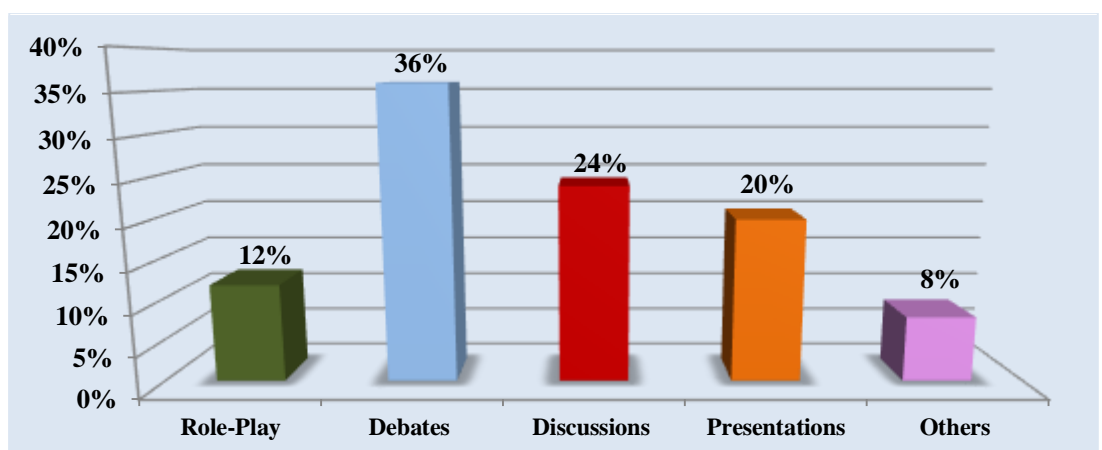
**Q.03. How often do you participate in the English-Speaking Clubs?**



**Diagram 03: Students' Participation in the English-Speaking Clubs**

Diagram (03) demonstrates that 68% of the students are always present in the English-Speaking Clubs, 28% of the students are sometimes present in the club while the rest 4% of them rarely participate in the clubs.

**Q.04. Which of the following activities does your teacher implement in the English-Speaking Clubs?**



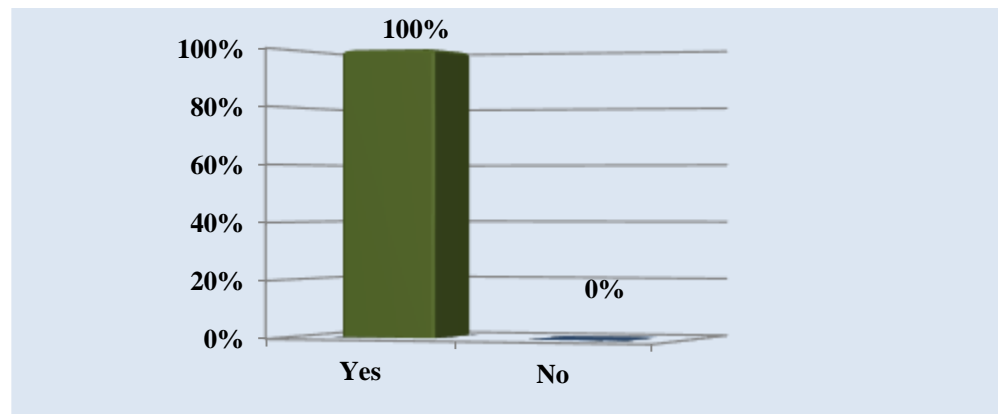
**Diagram 04: The Activities Implemented by Teachers in English-Speaking Clubs**

Diagram (04) demonstrates that debates are the most used activity in the English-Speaking Clubs with 36%, followed by discussions with 24%, 20% for presentation activities ,12% for role-play activities while the rest of 8% are devoted to the other activities that teachers implement in the two clubs.

**If the teacher uses other activities please mention them.**

As the students' responses reveal, the teachers in the English-Speaking Clubs use other activities to enhance their students' communicative competence including games, songs, quotes, questioning, cues cards and speaking with microphones.

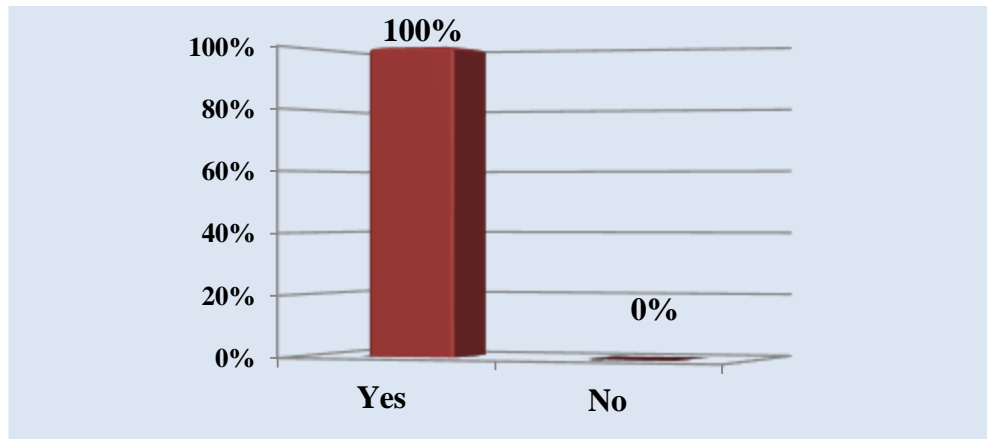
**Q.05. Do you think the activities that your teacher uses make you actively engaged in the learning process?**



**Diagram 05: Students' Engagement in the Learning Process during the English-Speaking Clubs Activities**

Diagram (05) displays that all the students, with a percentage of 100%, think that the activities their teachers implement in the English-Speaking Clubs make them actively engaged in the learning process, while no one has confirmed the opposite.

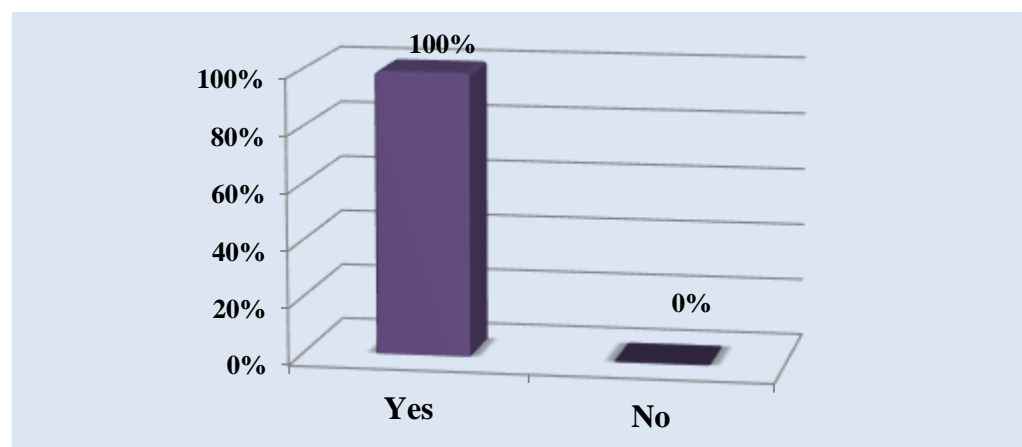
**Q.06. Do the activities make you feel motivated to communicate with your peers and teachers?**



**Diagram 06: Students' Motivation to Communicate during the Clubs Activities**

Diagram (06) shows that 100% of the students agree that the activities that their teachers use during the English-Speaking Clubs meetings make them feel motivated to communicate with their peers and teachers. None of the participants has answered with 'No'.

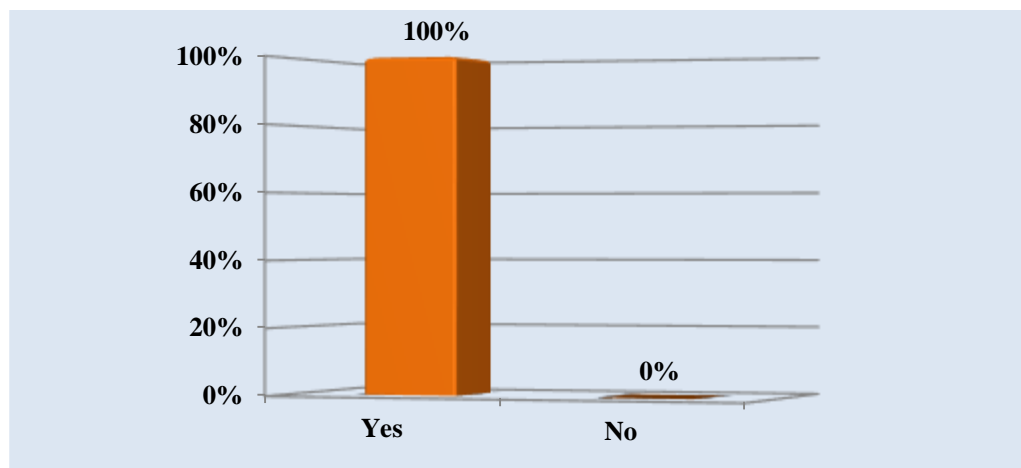
**Q.07. Does your teacher provide you with guidance and feedback during the clubs meetings?**



**Diagram07: Teachers' Guidance and Feedback during the Clubs Meetings**

Diagram (07) indicates that 100% of the participants from the English-Speaking Clubs believe that their teachers provide them with feedback and support during the clubs meetings.

**Q.08. Does your teacher encourage you to communicate in English during the clubs meetings?**



**Diagram 08: Teachers' Encouragement to Communicate in English during the Club Meetings**

Diagram (08) reveals that 100% of the participants agree that their teacher encourages them to communicate in English during the club sessions.

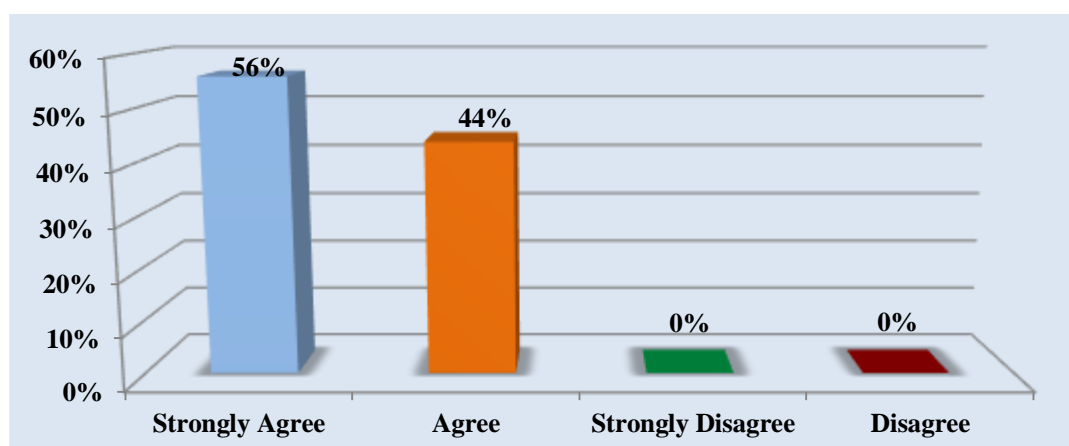
### **1.3 Section three: Communicative Competence**

The aim of this section is to collect data about students' background information about communicative competence.

**Q.09. Communicative competence simply means the ability to use the English language structures including grammar rules and vocabulary appropriately in different social contexts. According to you, how would you define communicative competence?**

The answers provided to this question differ from one student to another. The majority of the learners define communicative competence as the ability to read, write and speak fluently the English language. Meanwhile, others think that communicative competence is the ability to get the message across, to understand and be understood by others across variety of topics. Yet, other students claim that communicative competence is the ability to keep the conversation going on in different situations without much struggle. For the rest of the students, they believe that communicative competence is the ability to transmit ideas, express oneself easily and without hesitation.

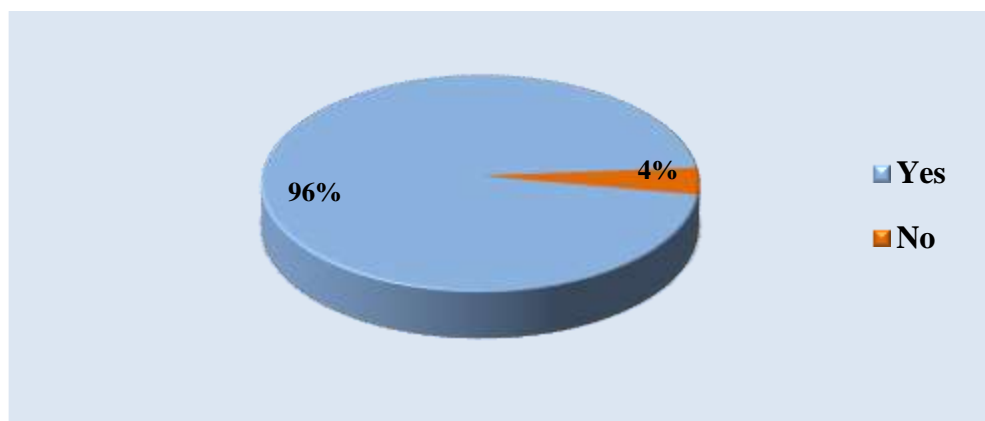
**Q.10. To what extent do you agree with this statement “interaction with peers and teacher within the English-Speaking Clubs Activities help me develop my ability to communicate effectively in English?”**



**Diagram 09: Development of Students' Communication Competence through Interaction in the English-Speaking Clubs**

Diagram (09) indicates that 56% of the students ‘Strongly Agree’ with the statement while the remaining 44% of the students just ‘Agree’ with the statement and no one has answered with ‘Strongly Disagree’ or ‘Disagree’.

**Q.11. Do you believe that having rich vocabulary helps you achieve a communicative competence?**



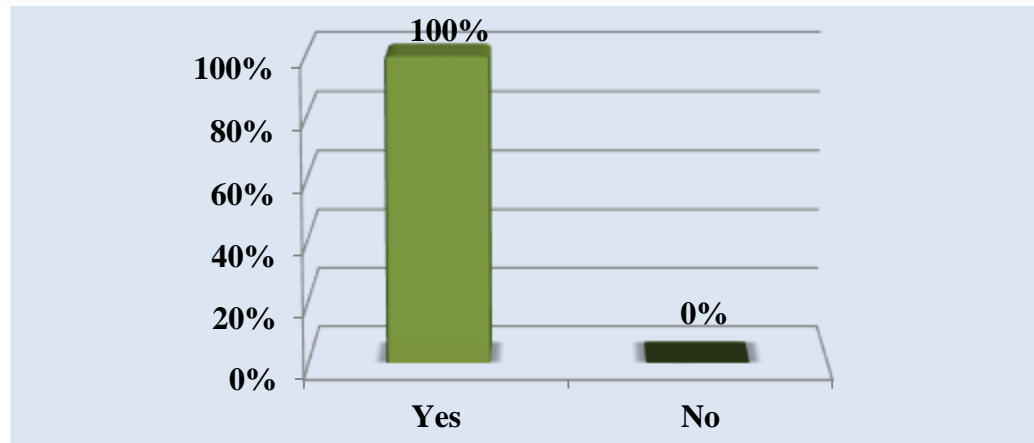
**Diagram 10: Importance of Vocabulary in Communicative Competence**

Diagram (10) demonstrates that 96% of the students believe that having a rich vocabulary helps achieving communicative competence while the 4% of the students believe that having a rich vocabulary is not important to achieve communicative competence.

#### **1.4 Section Four: the Role of English-Speaking Clubs in Enhancing EFL Learners’ Communicative Competence.**

This section gathers data about the role of English-Speaking Clubs in improving students’ communicative competence.

**Q.12. Since joining the English-Speaking Club, have you noticed any improvements in your communication abilities?**



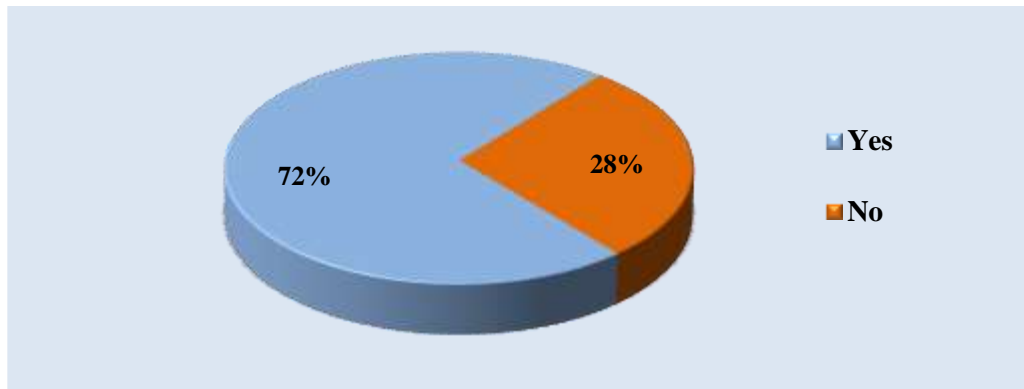
**Diagram 11: Students’ Development of their Communication Abilities since joining the English-Speaking Clubs**

Diagram (11) reveals that 100% of the students who have participated in the English-Speaking Clubs have experienced developments in their communication abilities. While no one has answered with ‘No’.

**Please explain more**

The answers received from the participants to this question varied. Some students state that joining the English-Speaking Clubs has helped them a lot to fight the fear of speaking in public. On the other hand, other students claim that the clubs have contributed to the development of their listening and speaking skills. While the rest of the students claim that joining the clubs has helped them become more confident to speak in front of others and express their thoughts easily than before.

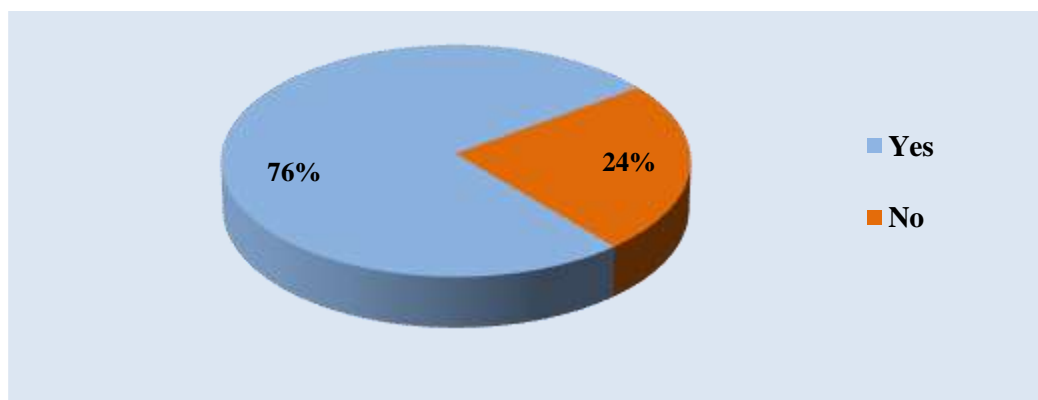
**Q.13. Since joining the English speaking club, are you able to use the English language in different real-life situations?**



**Diagram 12: The Use of English in Real-life Contexts outside the Club Meetings**

Diagram (12) demonstrates that 72% of the students are able to use the English language in real-life situations since they joined the clubs, while 28% of them are still not able to use the language outside the club meetings.

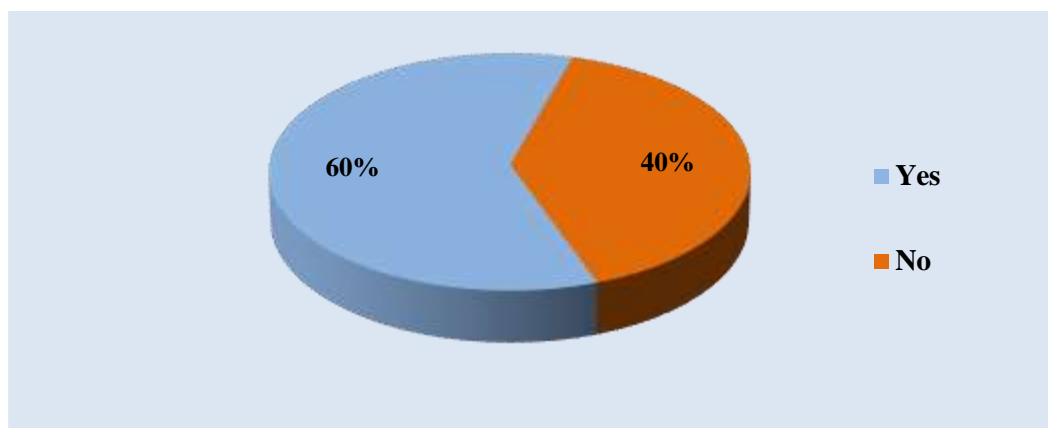
**Q.14 Do you think your English pronunciation has improved after joining the English-Speaking Clubs?**



**Diagram 13: Improvements of Students' Pronunciation after joining the English-Speaking Clubs**

Diagram (13) suggests that a percentage of 76% of the students have noticed improvements in their pronunciation since joining the clubs, meanwhile the 24% of them have not seen any changes in their pronunciation.

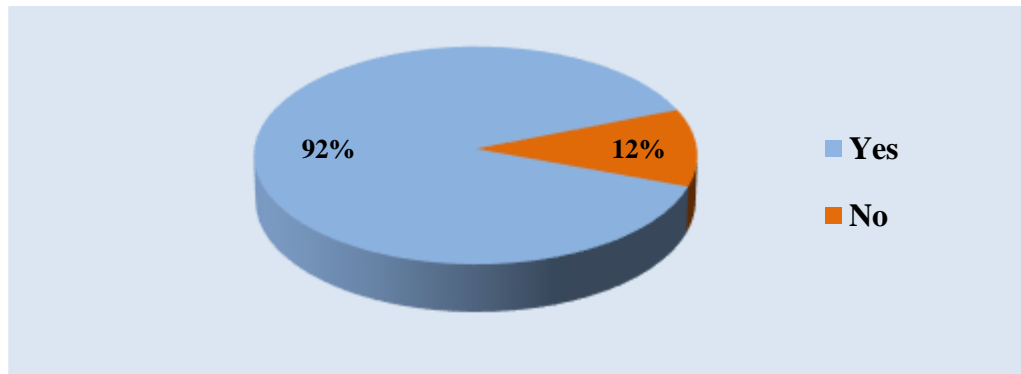
**Q.15. Has your understanding of grammar structures and their rule increased since joining the club?**



**Diagram 14: Improvements of Students' Grammar Structures since joining the English-Speaking Clubs**

Diagram (14) shows that 60% of the students have witnessed an increasing understanding of grammar structures and rules since joining the clubs, while 40% of them have not witnessed such improvement.

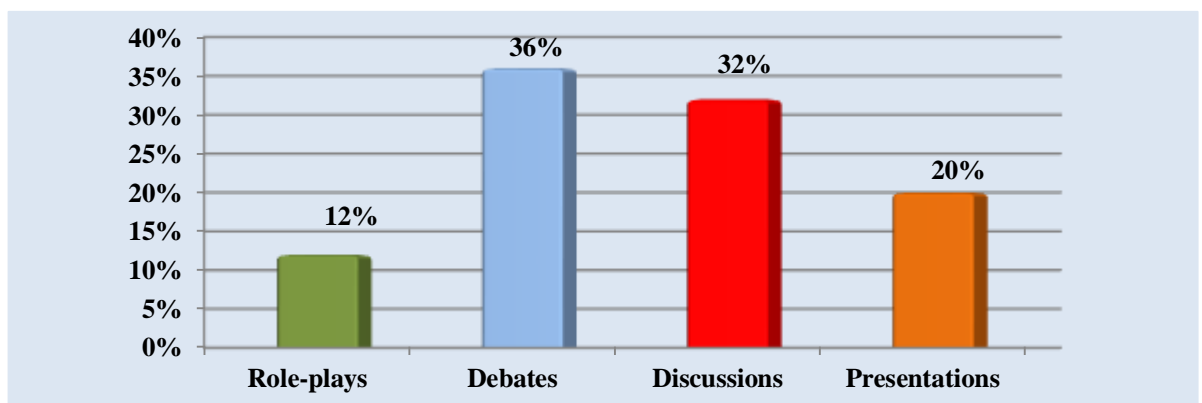
**Q.16. Has your participation in the English-Speaking clubs influenced your confidence in speaking English?**



**Diagram 15: Influence of English-Speaking Clubs on Students' Confidence to Speak English.**

Diagram (15) indicates that 92% of the students think that participating in the club has influenced their confidence to speak English and 12% of them think that the clubs have no influence on their confidence to speak the language.

**Q.17. In your opinion, which of the following activities do you find most effective in improving your communicative competence?**



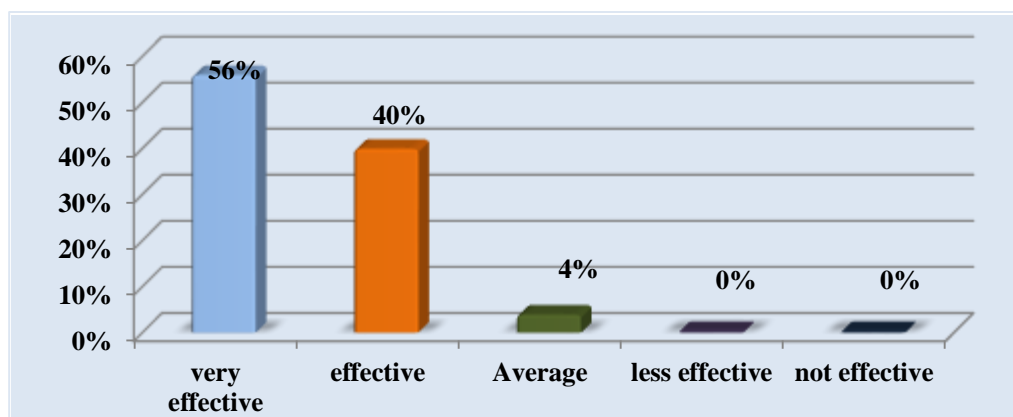
**Diagram 16: Most Effective Activities in Developing Students' Communicative Competence**

Diagram (16) reveals that 36% of the students have chosen debates activities as the most effective activity in developing students' communicative competence. Then, 32% of them believe that discussion activities are the most effective followed by presentation activities (20%) and then role-play activities with 12%.

**Please justify your choice.**

According to the answers, the respondents have different views. Some students agree that debates are really helpful in developing their communicative competence in the sense that debates make them more active and stimulating. Other students believe that discussions allow them to feel at ease and express their opinions freely. Yet other participants think that presentations help learners to gain more confidence to present their ideas in front of others. Meanwhile role-play activities help learners to practice different real-life topics with each other.

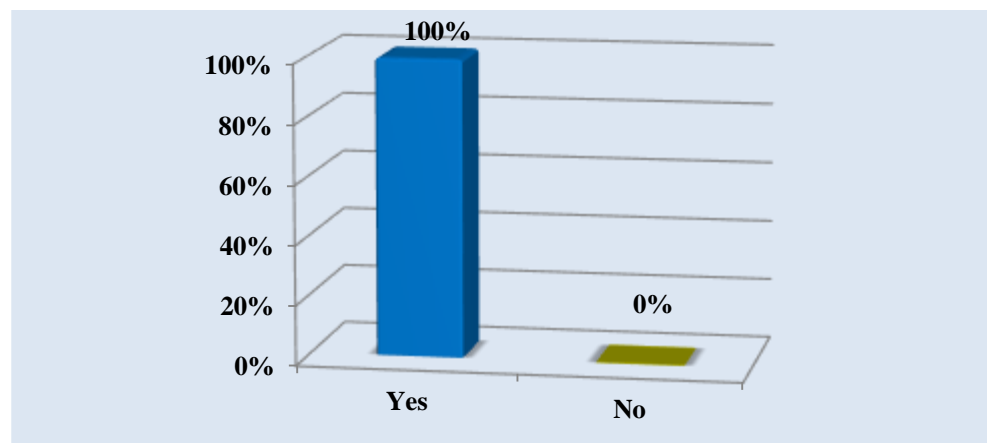
**Q.18 In your opinion, how effective is the English-Speaking Club in helping you become a competent communicator?**



**Diagram 17: Students Views towards the Effectiveness of English-Speaking Clubs in helping them become Competent Communicators**

Diagram (17) denotes that 56% of the students confirm that English-Speaking Club is ‘Very effective’ in helping students to become effective communicators and 40% of the students confirm that the club is ‘effective’ while 4% think it is the average. Meanwhile no one has chosen ‘less effective’ or ‘not effective’.

**Q.19. Would you recommend and suggest the English-Speaking Clubs to other learners who are interested in developing their communicative competence?**



**Diagram 18: Students’ Recommendations of English-Speaking Clubs to other Learners to develop their Communicative Competence**

Diagram (18) shows that 100% of the students would recommend and suggest the English-Speaking Clubs to other learners who are interested in developing their communicative competence.

**Please justify your answer.**

The students provide various justifications to this question. The majority of students agree that English-Speaking Clubs are friendly and enjoyable environments where learners

feel less stressed to speak the language. However, others believe that students will be more confident and improve their accent, vocabulary, pronunciation and even grammar. While some students think that when they communicate in groups they share a lot of information using the English language.

## **2. Presentation of the Results from the Classroom Observation**

The following results have been obtained from the classroom observation conducted from May, 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024 until May, 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024 for a total of eight (8) sessions that have been divided into four (4) sessions for each school. The classroom observation has followed a particular checklist that has been prepared earlier. The following checklist contains fifteen (15) items to be observed during the clubs sessions. It is based on the theoretical framework and the research objectives and they have been gathered in one section named ‘Scaffolding and Active Learning’. The checklist has allowed us to observe and have clear insights about the different strategies that the teachers use in the English-Speaking Clubs in the two private schools in Tizi-ouzou to improve their EFL learners’ communicative competence, and the way the learners react to these strategies.

Scaffolding and active learning				
Items to be observed	Always	Sometimes	Often	Never
1. Teachers use modeling strategy, demonstrating natural language use in various situations to improve their learners’ communicative competence.		X		
2. Teachers provide their learners with different explanations and adding extra details about what is being learned.		X		
3. Teachers invite their learners to participate in the club activities.	X			
4. Teachers provide their learners with corrective feedback about their pronunciation and clarify		X		

**Presentation of the Findings**

their understanding during club activities.				
5. Teachers encourage their learners to contribute clues and provide suggestions during the club meetings.	X			
6. Teachers act as facilitators during the club meetings.	X			
7. Teachers make use of active learning activities and scaffolding strategies to develop their learners' communication abilities in the English-Speaking Clubs including debates, role plays, discussions, presentations, modeling..	X			
8. Learners are actively engaged in the activities that are provided by their teachers in the English-Speaking Clubs.	X			
9. Learners are able to initiate and engage in conversations with peers and teachers during the club sessions.	X			
10. Learners listen attentively to the teachers' explanations.	X			
11. During the club activities, learners work collaboratively by seeking explanations and asking questions from their peers and teachers using the English language		X		
12. Teachers give their learners the chance to brainstorm and present their ideas during the club sessions.	X			
13. Learners are able to use the English language appropriately when they are engaged in conversations with their teachers and peers during English-Speaking Club meetings.	X			
14. Learners make use of varied vocabulary and expressions during their communication with the club members.		X		
15. Learners interact and communicate fluently with the club members.	X			

**Table 01: Presentation of the Findings of the Classroom Observation Checklist**

The results from the checklist show that teachers in English-Speaking Clubs sometimes use modeling and offering explanations strategies during the club sessions. They always invite their students to participate in the club activities. Teachers sometimes provide their learners with corrective feedback and always encourage students' contributions during the club meetings. Teachers always act as facilitators during the clubs meeting and always

make use different activities and scaffolding strategies to improve their learners' communication abilities. Learners are always actively engaged during the club activities and always initiate conversations with peers and teachers. Learners always listen attentively to teachers' explanations and sometimes work collaboratively with peers and teachers. Teachers always give their learners the chance to brainstorm their ideas. Learners are always able to use the language appropriately and sometimes make use varied vocabulary and explanations. Lastly, learners always communicate fluently with other club members.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has presented the findings of the current study. It is divided into two parts. The first part has presented the findings of the students' questionnaire that has been distributed to (25) students from the two English-Speaking Clubs. The second part has presented the results of the classroom observation that has been conducted in two English-Speaking Clubs in two private schools in Tizi-ouzou. The results of the students' questionnaire have been presented in the form of diagrams and texts, while the results of classroom observation have been presented in the form of a table and text. The following chapter discusses the results of this investigation.

*Chapter Four*  
*Discussion of the Findings*

## **Introduction**

The present chapter aims to discuss and interpret the findings obtained from the questionnaires that have been distributed to twenty five (25) students and the classroom observations that have been carried out in two English-Speaking Clubs in two private schools in Tizi-ouzou. This chapter intends to provide answers to the research questions advanced in the General Introduction and confirm or refute the suggested hypotheses. It is divided into three sections. The first section deals with the activities teachers implement in the English-Speaking Clubs to develop EFL learners' communicative competence. The second section is concerned with the scaffolding strategies teachers use in English-Speaking Clubs to help their learners enhance their communicative competence. The third and last section discusses the EFL learners' perceptions about the extent to which participation in English-Speaking Clubs improves their communicative competence.

### **1. The Strategies Teachers Use in English-Speaking Clubs**

This section is related to the discussion of the data concerning the strategies teachers use in the English-Speaking Clubs for the aim of developing their EFL learners' communicative competence, which have been collected from both the students' questionnaire and the classroom observation checklist.

#### **1.1 Implementation of Active Learning Activities**

According to the results obtained from the fourth question from the students' questionnaire (see diagram 04) and the classroom observation checklist (see table 01), teachers in English-Speaking Clubs adopt various active learning activities to encourage

learners to communicate in the English language. As it is clearly shown in diagram (4), the majority of students with (36%) have identified debate activities as the most implemented strategy during the club meetings. Discussion activities are the second most chosen with (24%). (20%) is devoted to presentation activities and (12%) for role-play activities. Meanwhile, the remaining 8% account for other activities. Based on these results, it indicates that each activity has been used uniquely and contributes to students' engagement and participation.

### 1.1.1 Debates

From the results displayed in diagram (04), it is clearly noticeable that teachers prioritize the use of debate activities during the English-Speaking Club sessions. According to Mayuni et al. (1995, p. 42) a “debate is considered the most structurally exact form of persuasive speech. It usually focuses on a preposition of controversial sides attempt to convince an audience that their ideas and argument are right”. As observed in the club meetings, teachers always bring pre-prepared topics in the form of questions inside a box about different matters including religion, politics, education, health and culture, such as ‘Is cancel culture cyberbullying?’, ‘Is democracy the best form of government?’ .Each student had to choose a topic to have ideas about it. Then he/she presents his/her own arguments and eventually discuss them with the other members. By doing so, teachers allow their students to brainstorm their ideas, create their own knowledge and give them the chance to argue and communicate with each other. This lines up with Maryadi (2008) who states that debates can stimulate students' thoughts especially when defending a position that consequently can involve all learners in active performance. As learners involve in debates, there are more

chances for interaction with teacher and peers using the target language. This finding correlates with Vygotsky's (1978 as cited in Ait-Hatani, H.2021) claim that debate is a form of social interaction.

### **1.1.2 Discussion**

Discussion is another activity that is used in the English-Speaking Clubs. Celce & Murcia (2001) state that discussion is an oral exploration of a topic, concept or experience. As observed in the club meetings, teachers always allocate time for their learners to discuss various topics related to real-life world issues such as 'What are your objectives for your future professional carrier?', 'What is your phobia?' during these discussions, teachers give each learner the opportunity to freely express his/her opinions and thoughts. This conveys that teachers allow their learners to actively contribute to the discussions with teachers and peers that results in expanding their communication abilities. This finding aligns with Jegede (2010) who asserts that this method gives the learners the room to develop their communication skills.

### **1.1.3 Presentations**

As Shaw (2001) states, presentation is a method where learners develop, organize and present their ideas and materials on particular issues. From what have been observed during the club meetings, teachers always assign every student a work to prepare and present individually tackling different real-life topics, for example 'What are your plans for the coming holidays?' 'Can you share your experience with IELTS?'. This implies that teachers provide their learners with opportunities to improve their ability to structure and present their ideas fluently and confidently. These findings align with Piccinini (2016) who states that

fluency, accuracy and confidence can be enhanced by oral presentations. Moreover, when the learners present their ideas, they are indeed interacting with each other, practicing their English language and ultimately improving their communication abilities. This correlates with Pinar and Trapp (2011) who has found that oral presentations lead to greater interaction and participation, an increased interest in learning, and noticeable improvements in their students' communication and presentation skills.

### **1.1.4 Role plays**

In role plays, students express themselves in different roles in front of small groups (Celce and Murcia 2001). As noticed during the club observations, teachers sometimes write down two roles in small papers, for instance 'Princess' and 'Happy' or 'President' and 'Sad person'. Each student is given a piece of paper and performs the role in front of the club members. Meanwhile the members would guess the role being performed. When the learners perform the role, they show high level of immersion and interaction with each other trying to find the role being performed. This indicates that indeed engaging in role plays allows students to experience the emotions and practice the language in real-life situations which leads to the active participation of all learners. This finding is strengthened by Al-Senaidi (2010) and Richards (1985) who believe that role plays provide learners with opportunities to use the target language and stimulating authentic conversational interactions in different social contexts and roles.

### **1.1.5 Other activities**

The students' answers to the fourth (04) questions from the questionnaire reveal that the remaining 8% fall under 'other activities' category. That is to say, in addition to the active

learning strategies, teachers in English-Speaking Clubs use other activities including, songs, quotes, games, and speaking using a microphone. This suggests that these supplementary activities can also enhance the students' communicative competence. Using songs can make the learning environment more enjoyable and engaging. In fact, singing in English can help the students to improve their pronunciation by exposing them to natural language use. In addition, using quotes can stimulate students' critical thinking skills as it encourages them to think, interpret and discuss their meanings. Furthermore, games can reduce students' anxiety, increase their participation and encourage them to use the target language. Speaking with a microphone can help learners to be more comfortable with public speaking and increase their self-confidence in speaking the target language with others. These additional activities build the learners' confidence, develop their critical thinking and communication skills which are essential in achieving communicative competence.

In addition, based on the findings gathered from the checklist (see table 01) and from the results of diagram (05), 100% of the students confirm that the already mentioned activities make them actively engaged in the learning process. This indicates the advantages of the English-Speaking Clubs activities in fostering a positive and interactive learning environment for the learners to use and practice their English language skills. When the students are engaged, they are more likely to easily speak to each other, interact and foster their communication abilities. This finding is confirmed by Nunan (1991) who states that interaction among learners, peers and teachers is a great way to improve language skills and learning a second or a foreign language can be facilitated when language learners are actively involved in interactive communications.

Likewise, the results obtained from diagram (06) show that 100% of the students have agreed that the activities implemented by the teachers in the English-Speaking Clubs increase their motivation to communicate with their peers and teachers. These findings imply that the strategies adopted by these clubs are effective in stimulating them to communicate. When their motivation is higher, the learners are more likely to engage in the learning process which leads to an increased desire to practice and improve their language skills. Consequently, having the motivation to learn actually boosts the learners' self-confidence to speak English. Actually, as shown in diagram (16), 92% of the students think that the English-Speaking Clubs has an influence on their confidence to speak the language. Meanwhile, 12% of the students have not seen such influence. As the majority of the students have seen an influence of these clubs on their confidence, this means that these clubs are effective in building students' confidence to speak the target language, engage in discussions with teachers and peers and ask questions leading to greater improvements in their communication abilities. These findings are supported by Kasmalinda (2011 as cited in Holandyah, M.2023) who states that English-Speaking Clubs primary goal is to increase students' motivation to speak English with confidence. The 12% who have not felt any influence may be due to psychological factors such as the fear of being the center of attention. Besides, as observed during the club meetings, students sometimes work collaboratively during the club activities (see table 1). For instance if a student does not understand a concept or an activity, the club members try to explain more for him/her. When students work in groups, they communicate with each other using the target language. Consequently, as observed in the meetings, when students work together they always initiate and engage in conversations with peers and teachers (see table 01). When students take the initiative to speak with each other, they are actually sharing ideas and thoughts thereby practicing the target language. That is, it is

important for students to use the language for communication to improve their communicative competence. The result is consistent with Nunan (1991) who states that learning to speak in a foreign language is facilitated when learners are actively engaged in attempting to communicate in groups.

The findings presented in diagram (04) and table (01), answer the first question mentioned and highly support the hypothesis proposed in the General Introduction which says ‘teachers use role-plays, debates, discussions and presentations as active learning activities to develop students communicative competence’. Despite the variations in implementing the activities, each activity contributes to the development of students’ communicative competence by targeting specific areas and language skills.

### **1.2 The Use of Scaffolding Strategies**

According to the findings displayed in table (01), it is clearly confirmed that teachers always play a facilitator role during the clubs meetings. Raymond (2000, p. 176) says “Vygotsky defines scaffolding as the role of teachers and others in supporting the learners development and providing support structures to get to that next stage or level”. As observed during the club sessions, teachers always provide the learners with necessary assistance and design the appropriate activities to help them accomplish the desired skills rather than dominating the whole club sessions. That is, teachers encourage their learners to accomplish the tasks by themselves in order to achieve a higher level of the learned skill. For instance, the teachers give a statement to get the learners’ attention. After that the teachers gradually step back from the discussion to let their learners continue the discussion among them. By doing so, students dominate the discussions and thus extend their communication abilities. As

Sukyadi and Husanah (2013, p.4) state “Scaffolding is a strategy used by the teachers to facilitate learners transition from assisted to independent performance”.

The results obtained from the first scaffolding strategy in the checklist ‘**teachers use modeling strategy demonstrating natural language use in various situations to improve their learners’ communicative competence**’, reveal that teachers sometimes use Modeling strategy in the clubs (see table 01). As observed during the club sessions, the teachers bring different models so that learners can observe and learn from them. In this context, the observed teachers invite another teacher to attend the meetings in order to share his/her experience concerning the steps he/she followed to improve his/her English speaking and communication. The learners would ask their questions such as ‘which accent are you using? The invited teacher also provides feedback about the learners’ pronunciation during their interaction. This in fact positively influences the students to learn from the models. As stated by Salisu and Ransom (2014, p. 55) claiming that “skill mastery occurs when models provide guidance, feedback, and social reinforcement during practice.” Additionally, the teachers also bring model songs such as ‘Colours’ by ‘Donovan’ during the club meetings. The teachers bring pre-prepared lyrics and distribute it to the learners. After that, they play the song and ask the learners to repeat after it to improve their flexibility in speaking. Indeed, this result aligns with Walqui (2006) who states that learners are provided with clear examples to see, hear and imitate to develop their understanding.

concerning the second scaffolding strategy in the checklist ‘**teachers provide their learners with different explanations and adding extra details about what is being learned**’, the findings show teachers in English-Speaking Clubs sometimes offer detailed explanations for their learners (see table 01). As observed during the club sessions, the

teachers sometimes explain and demonstrate how to perform an activity. For instance, the teachers assign their learners an activity to present such as ‘If you have an amount of money in a year, what would be your objective?’ The teachers draw a scheme on the board writing ‘a year- an amount of money- objective’. This is to break down the task into smaller units to ensure the comprehension of all students. This finding aligns with what Lange (2002) affirms about offering explanations is to break down the task into several stages and explaining the procedures of the task so that learners carry it out in a simple way. Applying such strategy can be effective in clarifying the activities for the learners, thereby facilitating the learning process.

However, as also noticed during the club sessions, when learners ask their teachers to add information about a specific topic, the teachers ask their learners to search for it for the next session instead of providing them with more details. This is indeed helpful to make the learners independent and more passionate toward the language. Additionally, it has been observed that students always listen to the teachers explanations (see table 01). In fact, this attentive listening enables students to actively engage in the learning process, exposing them to clearly hear and focus on the target language which paves the way to improve their communication abilities. This aligns with what Mendelsohn (1994 as cited in Vani, K. S.2023) states that listening is that capability to grasp the language spoken by the speakers.

Regarding the results obtained from the third scaffolding strategy in the checklist **‘teachers invite their learners to participate in the club activities’** signifies that the observed teachers from both clubs always invite their students to participate in the activities (see table 1). In fact, based also on the results of diagram (08), all students with (100%) have approved that their teachers encourage them to communicate during the clubs activities. Do

(2014 as cited in Chi, H. T.2020) claims that students' participation can be understood as students' involvement in the activities that requires interaction in pairs or groups. As observed during the meetings, the teachers ensure that each student participates during the activities. When teachers notice that there is a student who did not share his opinion, they would use words such as 'Come on, what do you think'? , 'Can you broaden more the topic'? This in fact can be motivating as they feel a sense of worthiness and encourage the learners to speak the language to eventually develop their communication. This in turn goes in line with Dancer & Kamvounias (2005 as cited in Chi, H. T.2020) who state that students' participation improves their ability to communicate orally.

As to the fourth strategy in the checklist '**teachers provide their learners with corrective feedback about their pronunciation and clarify their understanding during club activities**'. The results from table (01) clearly signify that the observed teachers sometimes provide feedback to their learners. As diagram (07) also indicates, all of the students have agreed that their teachers provide them with feedback. As observed in the clubs, teachers sometimes correct their students' mistakes on pronunciations. Teachers' feedback about pronunciation helps students to become aware of their errors and to work on areas of improvements. This in fact plays a crucial role for achieving clear and effective communication. In addition, teachers also provide positive feedback especially when the students add new ideas into the discussions. The learners show a high level of satisfaction and immerse in extended discussions. However, as also noticed, teachers do not provide such feedback especially when the students immerses in the discussions because this interference may block them and make the learners feel uncomfortable. This goes in line with what Krashen (1981 as cited in Menyani, N.2024) states that error correction should be abandoned since it may hinder rather than aid the learning process.

The fifth scaffolding strategy in the checklist ‘**Teachers encourage their learners to contribute clues and provide suggestions during the club meetings**’ demonstrates that teachers always encourage their learners to think and add their own understandings during the clubs, as they also let their learners brainstorm and present their different ideas (see table 01). The strategy definitely helps the learners to share their own knowledge in a comfortable environment without the fear of being judged. For instance, during the beginning of the club meetings, teachers always ask their students to write down a question about anything they prefer. The questions would be kept for the following session and was discussed together. This is in accordance with Pereira et al. (2013 as cited in Ngadimun. 2019) who state that these clubs make an enjoyable and stress-free language learning situations.

To sum up, the findings displayed in table (01) and from the results of diagram (04) provide answers the second question asked in the General Introduction, as it strongly support the hypothesis suggested which says ‘teachers use Modeling, Offering explanation, Inviting students’ participation, Verifying and clarifying students understanding and Inviting students to contribute clues as scaffolding strategies to develop the learners’ communicative competence. In some contexts, ‘Modeling, Offering explanations and feedback’ strategies are partially supported during the clubs sessions. Yet, it cannot deny the fact that implementing scaffolding in the English-Speaking clubs is essential especially that the clubs are settings where students and teachers have more opportunities to interact and speak to each other. This technique helps to build students’ and teachers’ relationship, addressing divers students’ needs. In addition, scaffolding helps to identify strengths and weaknesses of the students to ensure that all the learners reach the highest level of the desired skill. Most importantly, scaffolding improves learners’ communicative competence as it is based on interaction. As Horwitz (2008, p. 32) states “in scaffolding there will be a close attention to the

conversational partner, asking open-ended questions or comments to encourage learners to speak, interpret or expand comments”.

### **1.3 EFL Learners’ Perceptions about the Extent to which Participation in English-Speaking Clubs Improves their Communicative Competence.**

#### **1.3.1 Improvements of Communicative Competence**

According to the responses obtained from the ninth (9) question in the questionnaire, learners in English-speaking Clubs are aware of the meaning of communicative competence. As some of the students state from the open-ended item in the questionnaire, ‘communicative competence is the ability to speak in English and communicate what is in my mind without hesitation’, and ‘communicative competence is the ability to use the language in an easy and clear way to transmit the message effectively’. Consequently, according to the results of diagram (17), 56% of the students perceive English-Speaking Clubs as ‘very effective’ in helping them become competent communicators while 40% of the students perceive it as ‘effective’ and the remaining 4% rate it as ‘average’. A significant number of students perceive English-Speaking Clubs as ‘very effective’ and ‘effective’ indicating a high level of satisfaction and effectiveness of these clubs in improving their communicative competence. Meanwhile, an average rating indicates that these students view these clubs as neither particularly ‘effective’ nor exceptionally ‘not effective’. One interpretation is that the students who have rated the clubs as an average have had higher expectations that are not yet met in the clubs. However, despite the hierarchy in the students’ ratings, the majority of the learners have perceived higher benefits in improving their communicative competence when involved

in these clubs. This finding indeed correlates with Mulyasa (2007) who states that the purpose of these clubs is to support and improve students' competence.

Similarly, according to the findings of diagram (16), there is a varied perceived effectiveness among different activities in developing students' communicative competence. 36% of the students think that debates are most effective in improving their communicative competence. As one of the students states from the results of open-ended items in the questionnaire 'debate gives the chance to speak without the fear of being watched, I can express my opinion more freely' and 'debate allows you to structure your thoughts to make speech'. According to these answers, one can understand that debates allow students to constantly search for more information as it requires them to think critically and present their thoughts in persuasive way. This competitiveness motivates learners to actively listen to grasp as much information as needed and speak their opinions as well. In this context, Kennedy (2007) maintains that when students are debating, they are more likely to be active learners and ultimately they strengthen their oral communicative competence.

In addition, discussions are favored by 32% of the learners. According to the results, discussions are nearly as effective as debates for improving communicative competence. This highlights that when learners engage in meaningful conversations with their peers and teachers, they are indeed practicing their English skills which ultimately lead to the development of their communicative competence. Discussions provide a more informal environment where learners can familiarize with different perspectives and ways of thinking that allow them to build knowledge. As one of the students claims from the results of the questionnaire 'discussions allows me to improve my listening and speaking'. Another one affirms 'discussions make me more culturally open'. Actually, these results are supported by

Ampatuan & Jose (2016) who state that students' engagement in discussions is essential to develop their communicative competence.

Meanwhile 20% of the learners have chosen presentations as the most effective strategy in developing their communicative competence. As one of the students states 'presentations makes me confident to present and speak English'. This finding reflects what Ibrahim et al., (2022 as cited in Suardika, I. K.2023) have found about oral presentation techniques helping students improve their public speaking skills. Indeed, presentations give the learners a sense of leadership and confidence to speak the language.

The remaining 12% have selected role-plays as their favorite strategy to develop their communicative competence despite the low rate. As one of the students has responded in the questionnaire, 'role play makes it easy for me to understand and learn new English words'. Another student says 'role play makes me live the English experience'. This suggests that role-plays are proven to be effective in developing English skills. As Ampatuan et al. (2016) state that role-plays significantly help the learners to improve their communicative competence after several role performances.

Furthermore, it is important to realize that interaction among peers and teachers within the club meetings is beneficial enhancing the learners' ability to communicate effectively. As it is shown in diagram (09), 56% of students 'strongly agree' with the statement and 44% just 'agree'. Meanwhile no one has chosen 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree'. The majority of the students who 'strongly agree' and 'agree' highlights a strong belief in the effectiveness of interaction with peers and teaches in developing learners' ability to communicate effectively which eventually leads to the development of their communicative competence. As a matter of fact, Hymes (1972) and Bachmann (1999) believe that communicative competence requires

a realistic interaction among learners using meaningful contextualized language. This means interaction is a means through which learners can extend their communicative competence. This finding goes with what Carter and Nunan (2001) state about English-Speaking Clubs create a friendly social environment among students in which they broaden their communicative competence as a result of this socialization process. Lightbown and Spada (2013) further state that it is through the social interaction with others that we learn how to communicate successfully.

Besides, as indicated in the results of the classroom observations checklist, students in fact, are able to use the English language appropriately when they are engaged in discussions with their peers and teachers (see table 01). As observed during the club sessions, the students demonstrate the ability to use the language appropriately when they interact with peers and teachers. For instance, when the students feel familiar with the topic being discussed, they show high level of proficiency particularly in terms of vocabulary, grammar, expressions and even the use of gestures to support their opinions. Accordingly, the results from diagram (11) showcase that 100% of the students have perceived remarkable improvements in their communication abilities. Students have given different responses to this question. As some respondents say ‘English-Speaking Club is a place to speak only in English so it helps to extend my vocabulary and improves my pronunciation and communication’, ‘the club helps me listen attentively to each other’s opinions, understand and receive so much input using the English language’, and ‘the club helps me get rid of social anxiety, shyness to communicate in comfortable way.’ Thus, from the participants’ answers, it clearly denotes that participating in English-Speaking Clubs have contributed to the development of their communicative competence. These findings are in accordance with Hijrah & Umar (2021 as cited in

Holandyah, M.2023) who confirm that joining an English-Speaking Club could improve the learners' ability to communicate in English.

In fact, vocabulary is another important element to be developed for a communicative competence. This is what the majority of the students with a percentage of 96% have agreeing on that vocabulary is important to have communicative competence, contrary to the 4% who have believed the opposite (see diagram 10). This aligns with Schmitt (2000) who states that vocabulary is an important element to be developed in communicative competence. As observed in the club sessions, students sometimes use new vocabulary and expressions when involved in communication with each other such as 'patriotism', 'holding grudges'. In addition, each time the other students encounter such new words they would take notes and ask for more clarifications from the teachers and even from their peers using the language. This finding is in accordance with what Galanes and Adams (2013) assert about learners getting new vocabulary when they join English-Speaking Clubs. Besides, as it is clearly indicated in diagram (14), 60% of the students have witnessed an increasing understanding of the grammar structures since joining the clubs, while 40% of them have not. Despite this variation, the majority of the students have seen improvements that could be due to the structured activities such as presentations, the use of modeling song strategy and the consistent practice provided in these clubs. The results point out the benefits of joining the clubs on understanding more grammar structures which is important to achieve communicative competence. Meanwhile, for the 40% of the students who did not see any improvements in their English grammar, it may be due to factors such as irregular attendances. These results bring attention to the importance of joining English-Speaking Clubs on developing English language accuracy including grammar and vocabulary as they are part of communicative competence. These findings go with Byrne (1991, p. 11) who states

“in order to be able to communicate effectively, learners need an adequate mastery of grammar and vocabulary”.

As it is also shown in diagram (13), 76% of the students have perceived progress in their pronunciation after joining the clubs. These findings actually are consistent with what Salma (2018) states that participants in English-Speaking clubs have great pronunciation, vocabulary and grammatical abilities. The findings portrays that the clubs are effective for the majority of them. Meanwhile, 24% of them have not encountered any improvements may be due the individual learning styles. This goes in relation to what Saville-Troike et al. (2006 as cited in Muin, F.2017) states that the outcome of English pronunciation can be affected by learning style.

According to the results gathered from the checklist, students interact and communicate fluently with their club members (see table 1). As observed in the club classrooms, students do deliver their ideas without too much hesitation. For instance, when students speak, they do not make a lot of pauses. This indicates that the students indeed practice and improve their communication in these clubs. This finding is confirmed by Mandasari (2018) who states that participating in English-Speaking Clubs provide a great opportunity for EFL learners to develop more their speaking ability including pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar accuracy and fluency that enable them to effectively communicate in the target language.

With this advantage, it has been estimated that 72% of the students are actually able to use the English language in real-life contexts since joining the English-Speaking Clubs. Meanwhile 28% of the students are not able to use it (diagram 12). The fact that the majority of the learners are able to use and speak the English language outside the clubs suggest that

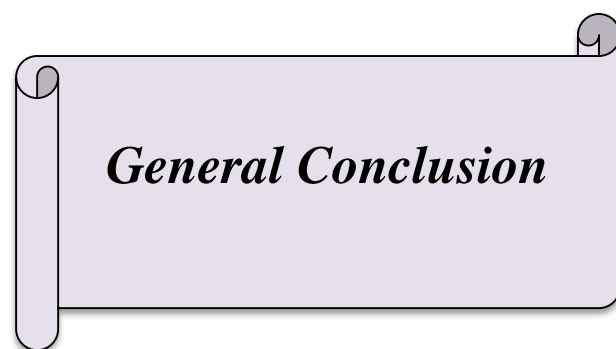
the training and the activities provided in these clubs have been highly influential and successful. This aligns with Hylland's (1993 as cited in Tho, T.T.C.2018) claim that when we create learning situations that immerse learners and interact with each other enhance their ability to use the target language. In contrast to the minor category of the students with 28% who still face challenges to speak the language in different situations. This struggle can be due to psychological blockages such as shyness. This goes in line with what Karya et al. (2022 as cited in Mashudi, A.2023) state about many students who are still struggling to overcome shyness to communicate. Thus, it is important to address the needs of the minor category students who still struggle to use the language in different contexts due to these blockages.

Consequently, as shown in diagram (18), all students with a percentage of 100% would recommend these clubs to the learners who are interested in developing their communicative competence. Students have given different answers concerning their experience with English-Speaking Clubs. As some respondents claim 'a speaking club is the place to discover what you think, but also how to think, all the way learning a language', 'the more you talk, interact with others in the club, the more you broaden your horizon of communication and learn a lot of things about different topics', 'the club is effective because it uses both methods, input (listening) and output (speaking)' and 'learning any language it is about to create the environment in order to familiarize with the language'. A deep analysis of this allows to conclude that joining English-Speaking Clubs is beneficial to develop the English language skills and improve learners' communicative competence as they provide enjoyable and comfortable learning environment to do so. As stated by Brown et al., (2004) English-Speaking Clubs provide students with opportunities and safe a learning environment.

To sum up, based on the findings that have been already discussed it cannot deny the fact that these clubs have had a positive influence on students' communicative competence. Accordingly, these findings answer the third question asked in the General Introduction as it also confirms the third hypothesis suggested which claims that 'EFL learners who participate in English-Speaking Clubs perceive a greater improvement in their communicative competence'. Therefore, it is preferable to consider the advantages of such clubs in improving various English language skills and suggest implementing these clubs in public schools as they benefit many students.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter of the dissertation has discussed the findings obtained from the students' questionnaire and the classroom observation checklist. These two research instruments have been employed to address the research questions and confirm the hypothesis suggested in the general introduction. Therefore, this chapter reveals that the first and the second hypothesis are proven true. Based on the results obtained from the students' questionnaire and the classroom observation checklist, teachers implement active learning activities and use scaffolding strategies to improve their learners' communicative competence. In addition, the obtained results affirm the third hypothesis and demonstrate that EFL learners perceive greater improvements in their communicative competence since joining English-Speaking clubs.



***General Conclusion***

## **General conclusion**

The present study has investigated the ‘role of English-Speaking Clubs in developing EFL learners’ communicative competence’ in two selected private schools in Tizi-ouzou namely, ‘ELITES for International Studies’ and LOGOS School’. It has captured our attention as the subject represents a new context for EFL learners to practice their English language. The research has aimed to reach two research objectives. The first objective is to investigate the activities teachers implement in English-Speaking Clubs to develop their learners’ communicative competence. The second objective is to examine the scaffolding strategies teachers use in English-Speaking Clubs to enhance their learners’ communicative competence. The third objective is to explore the students’ perceptions about the extent to which participation in English-Speaking Clubs improves their communicative competence. This investigation has been conducted relying on Vygotsky’s (1978) ‘Social Constructivism theory’ stressing two concepts namely ‘Scaffolding’ and ‘Active learning’.

For the aim of answering the research questions and to confirm or refute the suggested hypotheses presented in the General Introduction, this research has adopted a mixed-methods approach combining both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection and analysis. Indeed, the data obtained have been based on two distinctive research instruments, a questionnaire and a classroom observation. The questionnaire has been distributed to twenty five (25) students, while the classroom observation has been conducted in the two already mentioned private schools in a total of eight (8) sessions. The obtained quantitative data have been analyzed by means of Descriptive Statistical method. Meanwhile the qualitative data have been analyzed by means of Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA).

The findings extracted from the students' questionnaire and the classroom observation checklist have answered the research questions and confirmed the hypotheses advanced in the General Introduction. More explicitly, the obtained results have demonstrated that teachers in English-Speaking Clubs implement active learning strategies including debates, role plays, discussions and presentations' to develop their learners' communicative competence. This confirms the first hypothesis already mentioned in the General Introduction. Additionally, the findings also have revealed that teachers implement other activities in the clubs including songs, games quotes and speaking with the microphone. Besides, the outcomes gathered from the classroom observation checklist have affirmed the second suggested hypotheses that claims that teachers use scaffolding strategies including modeling, offering explanations, inviting students participation, offering feedback and inviting students to contribute clues' to develop their students' communicative competence. However, in some contexts, teachers remove some scaffolding strategies such as 'offering explanations' and 'providing feedback' for the benefits of the learners. Furthermore, the findings have uncovered that learners perceive greater improvements in their communicative competence since participating in English-Speaking Clubs. That is, most of the students claim that they have seen a considerable improvements in their vocabulary, grammar, fluency and accuracy since joining the clubs, as the clubs also positively influenced their confidence and motivation that are essential in stimulating students to speak the language appropriately.

Indeed, based on the findings, it is clear that English-Speaking Clubs offer supportive environments for EFL learners to socialize and practice their English. That is, these clubs allow students to freely interact with each other, engage in different activities and most importantly to put into practice their language skills for the purpose of becoming competent communicators in the English language. This in fact can inform various educational systems

about the importance of incorporating such clubs in schools.

For this reason and to further broaden the areas of investigation, additional researches are recommended for better exploration of English-Speaking Clubs. For instance, studies can examine the impact of English-Speaking Clubs on students' educational performance and outcomes. In addition, researchers can investigate the contributions of these clubs to the development of their intercultural competence.

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## **Appendices**

## Appendix 01: Students Questionnaire

Dear EFL learners

The present questionnaire is designed for the purpose of gathering information in order to complete our master dissertation which aims at investigating the role of English Speaking Club in developing EFL learners' communicative competence. We kindly invite you to answer the following questions. Please keep in mind that your responses will be kept anonymous and confidential. Feel free to cross (x) the appropriate box which indicates your choice and to justify your answer when needed.

Thank you for your cooperation and for the time you devoted to answer the questionnaire.

### Section One: Participant information

Q.1 What is your proficiency in English?

Beginner  Intermediate  Advanced

Q.2 How long have you been a member of the English-Speaking Club?

2 Months  2-5 Months  5 -1 Year  More than a year

### Section two: English Speaking Club

Q.3 How often do you participate in the English-Speaking Club?

Always  Sometimes  Rarely

Q.4 Which of the following activities does your teacher implement in the club?

Role-Play  Debates  Discussions  Presentations

Q.5 Do you think the activities that your teacher uses make you actively engaged in the learning process?

Yes  No

Q.6 Do the activities make you feel motivated to communicate with your peers and teacher?

Yes

No

Q.7 Does your teacher provide you with guidance and feedback during the club activities?

Yes

No

Q.8 Does your teacher encourage you to communicate in English during the club meetings?

Yes

No

**Section three: Communicative Competence**

Q.9 Communicative competence simply means the ability to use the English language structures including grammar rules and vocabulary appropriately in different social contexts. According to you, how would define communicative competence?

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Q.10 To what extent do you agree with this statement “interaction with peers and teacher within the English-Speaking Club activities helps me develop my ability to communicate effectively in English?

Strongly agree

Agree

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Q.11 Do you believe that having rich vocabulary helps you achieve communicative competence?

Yes

No

**Section four: The role of English-Speaking Clubs in enhancing Communicative Competence**

Q.12 Since joining English-Speaking club, have you noticed any improvements in your communication abilities?

Yes

No

Please explain.....

Q.13 Since joining the club, are you able to use the English language in different real-life situations outside the club meetings?

Yes  No

Q.14 Do you think your English pronunciation has improved after joining the English-Speaking Club?

Yes  No

Q.15 Has your understanding of English grammar structures and rules increased since joining the club?

Yes  No

Q.16 Has your participation in English-Speaking Club influenced your confidence in speaking in English?

Yes  No

Q.17 In your opinion, which types of the activities implemented in the club do you find most effective in enhancing your communicative competence?

Debates  Role plays  Presentations  Discussions

Please explain why you think so.

Q.18 In your opinion, how effective is the English-Speaking Club in helping you become a competent communicator?

Very Good  Good  Average  Very Bad  Bad

Q.19 Would you recommend and suggest English Speaking Club to other learners who are interested in developing their communicative competence?

Yes  No

Please justify your answer.....

## Appendix 02: Classroom Observation Checklist

Scaffolding and active learning	Always	Sometimes	Often	Never
Items to be observed				
1. Teachers use modeling strategy, demonstrating natural language use in various situations to improve their learners' communicative competence.				
2. Teachers provide their learners with different explanations and adding extra details about what is being learned.				
3. Teachers invite their learners to participate in the club activities.				
4. Teachers provide their learners with corrective feedback about their pronunciation and clarifying their understanding during the club activities.				
5. Teachers encourage their learners to contribute clues and provide suggestions during the club meetings.				
6. Teachers act as facilitators during the club meetings.				
7. Teachers make use of active learning activities and scaffolding strategies to develop their learners' communication abilities in the English-Speaking Clubs including debates, role-plays, discussions, presentations, modeling....				
8. Learners are actively engaged in the activities that are provided by their teachers in the English-Speaking Clubs.				
9. Learners are able to initiate and engage in conversations with peers and teachers during the club sessions.				
10. Learners listen attentively to the teachers' explanations.				
11. During the club activities, learners work collaboratively by seeking explanations and asking questions from their peers and teachers using the English language.				

12. Teachers give their learners the chance to brainstorm and present their ideas during the club sessions.				
13. Learners are able to use the English language appropriately when they are engaged in conversations with their teachers and peers during English-Speaking Club meetings.				
14. Learners make use of varied vocabulary and expressions during their communication with the club members.				
15. Learners interact and communicate fluently with the club members.				