Transforming Spoken English Learning Through Transformational Leadership: A Case Study of a Coaching Center

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Abstract

This case study explores how leadership practices impact student outcomes in a privately run spoken English coaching center. Coaching centers of spoken English play a significant role in shaping students' readiness to learn the skills of the English language. There is a huge number of students who go to coaching centers in Bangladesh for learning English as a second language (L2) because coaching centers use different teaching methods that help students learn the language (L2) better. Following case study guidelines, and through interviews and observations, the research identifies four key leadership behaviors—vision-driven direction, participative and supportive effort, structured feedback, and vision orientation—that significantly influence teaching effectiveness, student engagement, and learning progress. In line with a mixed-method research design, the current study seeks to determine the most frequently used leadership practices in a spoken English coaching center, in addition to exploring the leadership behaviors that impact student engagement, motivation, and performance in spoken English. It also distinguishes the leadership approaches that develop teachers' effectiveness in acquiring speaking skills in English. The findings contribute to a growing body of knowledge on educational leadership in non-traditional learning environments and offer actionable recommendations for institutional improvement.

Keywords: Leadership Behaviors, Transformational Leadership, Spoken English, Second Language, Coaching Center, Motivation, Peer Support, Performance

1. Introduction

Since World War II, English has emerged as the world's most widely used *lingua franca* (Canagarajah, 2014; Mackenzie, 2014). In Bangladesh, it has long been a compulsory subject from elementary to higher education, valued for its role in connecting students to global knowledge, higher education opportunities, and communication beyond national borders (Zamir,

2009). Political and geographic factors have positioned English as both an international and a second language for Bangladeshis, making proficiency essential for academic and professional success. This need has become even more pronounced as the number of Bangladeshi students pursuing higher education abroad, particularly in English-speaking countries, has tripled over the past 15 years (Alamgir, 2023).

However, classroom-based English instruction in Bangladesh often falls short of developing language skills. Lessons tend to focus on syllabus coverage and exams rather than communicative competence (Selim & Mahboob, 2001). Large class sizes, limited teacher supervision, insufficient feedback, and a lack of educational technology further constrain learning (Das, Haque, & Majumder, 2025). So, the majority of students in the class consequently struggle to comprehend their lessons and fail to gain the desired proficiency in the English language.

In the end, when the students or their guardians realize the necessity of learning English in their future course of study at home or abroad, they are found signing up for private tutoring in order to receive assistance outside of the classroom. Bray (1999) noted in his book "The Shadow Education System: Private Tutoring and Its Implications for Planners" that: Private tutoring can take many different forms. Some tutoring is done one-on-one in the tutor's or the client's home. Other tutoring takes place in large lecture halls with video screens to accommodate overflow, small groups, or even large classes. (page 21). Private tutoring is the term used in Bangladesh to describe one-on-one tutoring. Coaching is another type of tutoring in which students receive instruction in large or small groups, typically at the teacher's home or at a privately run institution with a very lucrative name. The second kind of tutoring is made possible by certain organizations or franchises, or individuals. These establishments are referred to as coaching centers. Some coaching centers specialize in teaching spoken English Courses and have emerged as key institutions of learning English outside government institutions like schools, colleges, and universities.

This case study investigates the linkage between leadership behaviors and student performance in a spoken English coaching center. The idea of teacher leadership is now commonly acknowledged and being discussed more and more by academics, researchers, and practitioners, especially in the field of educational leadership (Murphy, 2005). Teacher leadership has gained attention because it helps schools grow and get better. Teacher leadership's goal is to help students learn and do well, as well as to improve the institution as a whole (Wenner & Campbell, 2017). Furthermore, Nguyen, Harris, and Ng (2019) claimed that the goals of teacher leadership are to improve student learning, school efficacy, and teaching quality. So, it's obvious that educational leadership is not only administrative but also encompasses vision setting, motivation of teachers, engagement of learners, and institution building with a positive environment for learning (Pitriani, 2024).

Based on a single coaching center, this study aims to find out how styles of leadership, like transformational leadership, servant leadership, and so on, affect the improvement of students in learning spoken English. Research has shown that how teachers lead has a big impact on how well their students do in class.

Research indicates that students taught by teachers who demonstrate strong leadership qualities tend to perform better academically (Warren, 2021). Similarly, classroom leadership has been linked to improved grades, enhanced student behavior, and several other positive outcomes (Adams, Samat, & Abu Samah, 2018). Leadership and what teachers teach in the classroom are two sides of the same coin, so it is not optional but required. Teacher leaders could help students learn better, which would lead to better student performance. According to one study, the way a teacher leads has a big impact on how well students learn and how well they teach (Odey & Edward, 2021).

The purpose of this study is to identify the specific leadership behaviors and practices linked with improved student performance and satisfaction in English speaking abilities at the coaching center located in Feni, Bangladesh. The center provides a diverse range of programs, including:

- English Speaking Courses for kids and adults
- Foreign Language Courses (German, Spanish, French)
- IELTS, PTE, and OET Coaching
- TEFL, TESOL, and ESL Certification Courses Digital Marketing and Coding Classes
- Personality Development and Study Abroad Consultancy

These offerings cater to various learning needs, from language proficiency especially spoken English to professional development.

Based on a qualitative approach, the research uses interviews, observation, and institutional statistics to generate in-depth information about the impact of leadership on the learning process.

This analysis is important for coaching institutes and general educational setups where the development of the spoken English language is a key objective.

2. Theoretical Framework

This study draws on three key theoretical perspectives: transformational leadership, servant leadership, and second language acquisition (SLA) to explain how leadership behaviors influence learners' spoken English proficiency in a coaching center setting.

2.1. Transformational Leadership in Education

Transformational leadership theory emphasizes the ability of leaders to inspire, motivate, and support individuals to achieve beyond their initial expectations. In educational contexts, this involves establishing a clear vision, modeling high expectations,

providing individualized support, and fostering an inclusive learning environment. These practices have been shown to enhance student motivation, classroom engagement, and academic achievement (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006; Givens, 2008).

Towler (2019) identifies four core components of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. All of these can be observed in effective classroom leadership. In the context of second language learning, transformational teachers can reduce learner anxiety, encourage active participation, and build self-confidence. Winokur and Sperandio (2017) note that such teacher leaders play a central role in motivating learners to speak and take ownership of their progress, which is particularly important in skill-based subjects like spoken English. In coaching centers, these behaviors can directly address learners' hesitancy, creating a supportive space where students feel safe to experiment with language use.

2.2. Servant Leadership and Peer Leadership

Servant leadership, first introduced by Greenleaf (1991), focuses on prioritizing the needs of others, building trust, and enabling personal growth. In spoken English classrooms, servant leadership is evident when teachers or peers actively listen, offer help, and create opportunities for inclusive participation. This approach aligns closely with peer mentorship, where *students take on supportive roles that contribute to a collaborative learning atmosphere.*

Research by Uzorka, Akiyode, and Isa (2024) shows that student leadership roles foster responsibility, belonging, and motivation. Similarly, Schunk (1989) highlights that observing capable peers boosts self-efficacy and encourages active participation. Within coaching centers, providing students with opportunities to lead discussions or assist peers not only strengthens their own language skills but also nurtures a culture of mutual growth.

2.3. Affective Filter and Motivation in Language Acquisition

Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982) provides a key lens for understanding the emotional factors that influence second language acquisition. Learners with high motivation and low anxiety are more likely to acquire language successfully. Instructors who create a positive, supportive atmosphere can help lower the affective filter, allowing for greater input processing and verbal participation. Nath, Mohamad, and Yamat (2017) emphasize that classroom climate significantly impacts learners' willingness to speak and practice.

Ryan and Deci's (2000) Self-Determination Theory complements this view by explaining how intrinsic motivation develops when students feel competent, autonomous, and connected. Teacher and peer leadership behaviors that provide constructive feedback, shared responsibility, and a sense of community meet these needs and promote sustained motivation in language learning.

2.4. Classroom Leadership and Language Performance

Finally, teacher leadership, where instructors act as both subject experts and facilitators, has a direct link to improved academic and linguistic outcomes (Nguyen, Harris, & Ng, 2019; Adams, Samat, & Abu Samah, 2018). Practices that encourage collaboration, regular feedback, and learner autonomy enhance engagement and performance in language classrooms (Wenner & Campbell, 2017). In the coaching center context, such leadership can bridge gaps left by traditional classroom instruction, fostering both confidence and communicative competence in English.

3. Literature Review

This section reviews existing literature on the relationship between leadership practices and language education, with particular emphasis on teacher leadership, peer leadership, and the effectiveness of coaching centers in developing spoken English proficiency. The review highlights gaps in current research and positions the present study within broader scholarly discourse.

3.1. Teacher Leadership and Language Learning

Teacher leadership has increasingly been recognized as a key factor influencing student learning outcomes, particularly in second language acquisition. According to Wenner and Campbell (2017), teacher leadership extends beyond administrative roles to encompass instructional leadership, mentoring, collaboration, and fostering a positive classroom climate. Leithwood and Jantzi (2006) argue that transformational school leadership promotes student motivation, engagement, and academic progress by establishing a shared vision and enhancing the instructional quality delivered by teachers.

In the context of language education, Nguyen, Harris, and Ng (2019) assert that teacher leadership is strongly linked to improved classroom practices and student-centered instruction, both of which are vital in helping students build confidence in using spoken English. Teachers who model fluent language use, encourage participation, and provide personalized feedback help learners overcome the fear of speaking, a key barrier in English as a second language classrooms (Adams, Samat, and Abu Samah, 2018). Similarly, Murphy (2005) emphasizes that teacher leaders contribute to school improvement by enhancing pedagogical practices and cultivating professional communities within instructional environments.

3.2. Peer Leadership and Student Empowerment

While teacher leadership is central, peer leadership also plays a significant role in enhancing spoken English learning. Peer-led activities encourage learners to engage with one another in real-life communicative situations, offering opportunities for practice and feedback. Schunk (1989) found that students who observe peers successfully perform academic tasks often experience increased self-efficacy, which contributes to motivation and language performance. Recent findings by Uzorka, Akiyode, and Isa (2024) demonstrate that peer leadership within collaborative learning environments fosters student responsibility, emotional safety, and mutual accountability.

Philp, Adams, and Iwashita (2014) highlight that peer interaction offers authentic occasions for negotiation of meaning and collaborative dialogue, which are central to the development of communicative competence. The presence of supportive classmates and student-led discussions can lower performance anxiety and create a more inclusive atmosphere for language use. Such environments reflect the principles of servant leadership, where leadership is enacted through service, encouragement, and empowerment of others (Greenleaf, 1991; Hossain, 2021).

3.3. The Affective Domain in Second Language Acquisition

The affective dimension of language learning is a recurring theme in SLA literature. Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982) proposes that emotional variables such as motivation, anxiety, and confidence significantly affect a learner's ability to acquire and use a second language. When classroom leadership, either by teachers or peers, reduces anxiety and fosters emotional security, students are more likely to engage in spoken interaction. Nath, Mohamad, and Yamat (2017) support this claim, showing that classroom environments emphasizing encouragement, low pressure, and student voice significantly enhance oral fluency (Hossain, 2020; Hossain & Younus, 2025).

Complementing this, Ryan and Deci's (2000) Self-Determination Theory explains that learners are more intrinsically motivated when they experience autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Transformational teaching practices that incorporate constructive feedback, a supportive classroom climate, and opportunities for student agency help fulfill these psychological needs and enhance spoken English performance (Pachler, Kuonath, & Frey, 2019). In similar ways, research on Bangladeshi undergraduate learners reveals that limited motivation and lack of learner-centered support can contribute to recurring language errors, suggesting the importance of emotionally attuned instruction that promotes confidence and independence (Hossain, 2024).

3.4. Spoken English Coaching Centers and Shadow Education

In countries like Bangladesh, coaching centers have become a major part of the educational landscape, particularly in areas where traditional schooling does not meet the communicative needs of students. Bray (1999) conceptualized such institutions under the term "shadow education," describing them as privately run, supplemental learning systems operating parallel to formal education. Similar shadow education, including coaching centers, is prevalent in diverse contexts beyond mainstream schooling, notably in countries such as Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Vietnam, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Egypt, Mauritius, and Kenya (Bray, 2022). Das, Haque, and Majumder (2025) and Das (2024) note that many mainstream classrooms in Bangladesh are exam-focused, lack technological support, and fail to develop communicative competence. Consequently, as in these other contexts, Bangladeshi students turn to spoken English coaching centers that offer interactive, learner-centered approaches. However, while global scholarship has examined pedagogical innovation and learner motivation in private language institutes, the role of institutional leadership in shaping outcomes, particularly in informal settings like Bangladesh, remains underexplored (Hasan et al., 2024).

3.5. Research Gap

Although considerable research has been conducted on leadership in formal educational institutions, limited empirical work has focused on how leadership, particularly transformational and peer leadership, operates within non-traditional learning environments such as spoken English coaching centers. Most existing studies emphasize curriculum, instruction, and motivation but do not examine leadership as a central mechanism for improving language outcomes.

This study addresses that gap by investigating how both teacher and peer leadership behaviors contribute to students' spoken English proficiency. It explores how leadership influences learners' motivation, engagement, and classroom dynamics in a coaching center context, offering insights that extend the understanding of language learning beyond conventional school systems.

4. Research Questions

This case study explores how leadership practices influence student outcomes in a spoken English coaching center. To guide the investigation, the following research questions were developed:
1. What leadership practices are most commonly employed within the coaching center of spoken English?
2. In what ways do leadership behaviors affect student engagement, motivation, and performance in spoken English?

5. Methodology

This case study adopts a mixed-methods research design to facilitate a comprehensive and in-depth investigation into the leadership practices observed in a spoken English coaching center and their impact on student outcomes. The qualitative approach was purposefully selected to explore the complex and context-specific nature of classroom leadership, emphasizing the nuanced interactions between instructors and students. This methodology enables the researcher to delve into the lived experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of both teachers and learners, thereby uncovering the underlying dynamics that influence student motivation, engagement, and language acquisition. To assess the extent of the impact of leadership qualities on students' English language learning, a quantitative method was also employed to analyze the data collected from students. By prioritizing rich, descriptive data over numerical generalizations, this approach supports a more holistic understanding of how leadership behaviors shape the learning environment, particularly in the context of spoken English instruction.

5.1. Research Setting

The study was conducted at a privately-owned spoken English coaching center located in Feni district of Bangladesh. The center serves a diverse group of learners ranging from high school students to working professionals seeking to improve their spoken English fluency.

5.2. Participants

Participants included:

- The Chief instructor (leader/administrator who owns the center)
- Four English instructors (randomly selected by the chief instructor)
- Ten students (selected through purposive sampling to represent different proficiency levels and backgrounds)

Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and ethical guidelines regarding confidentiality and voluntary participation were strictly followed while collecting data for the case study.

6. Data Analysis

The data collected for this study were analyzed using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to develop a comprehensive understanding of the leadership qualities demonstrated by instructors and students, and their influence on students' spoken English learning. Analysis drew on three main sources: two student questionnaires (with quantitative data from the second visualized in graphs and charts), a focused group discussion (FGD) with four teachers, and a semi-structured interview with the chief instructor, all guided by structured interview protocols. Quantitative trends from the questionnaires, for instance, a significant proportion of students reporting increased motivation from constructive feedback, were triangulated with qualitative insights from the FGD and interviews, which illuminated how timely, supportive feedback enhanced students' confidence and fluency. This integration facilitated the development of core themes grounded in both statistical patterns and rich contextual evidence.

6.1. Analysis of Student Questionnaires

Responses from the first questionnaire were compiled and manually reviewed to identify common keywords and patterns in students' descriptions of how their teachers support, motivate, and guide them during spoken English lessons. Open-ended responses were coded line-by-line and grouped into initial categories such as encouragement, constructive feedback, clear instructions, and classroom interaction.

The second student questionnaire contained both closed-ended and open-ended questions. Quantitative responses were processed using Microsoft Excel to calculate frequencies and percentages, which were then illustrated through bar charts and pie charts to show key trends- for example, the proportion of students who felt motivated by their teacher's encouragement or who found group activities effective for building speaking skills. These visual representations complemented the qualitative findings by highlighting overall patterns in students' perceptions.

6.2. Analysis of Focused Group Discussion with Teachers

The FGD with four teachers was audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed thematically. Initial open coding captured teachers' shared experiences, examples of successful leadership strategies, and perceived observations in managing diverse learner needs. Codes were compared and grouped into overarching themes that illustrated common leadership qualities, including collaborative planning, individualized attention, maintaining a supportive classroom climate, and setting clear expectations.

6.3. Analysis of the Chief Instructor Interview

The semi-structured interview with the chief instructor was similarly transcribed and coded to extract insights about leadership at an institutional level. Themes emerging from this interview helped contextualize how the institution's vision and management style influence individual teachers' practices, students' behaviors, and the overall spoken English learning environment.

To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, all coding and theme development were independently cross-checked by a second researcher, with any discrepancies resolved through discussion and consensus. Triangulating data from student feedback, teacher discussions, and the chief instructor's perspectives strengthened the reliability of the identified themes.

Using an integrated approach, the analysis yielded a set of core themes that represent the leadership attributes most essential for encouraging student engagement, boosting motivation, and enhancing spoken English competence. These findings form the foundation for the subsequent Results and Discussion section.

7. Results and Discussion

The findings from this case study offer a comprehensive understanding of the leadership practices commonly employed and their impact on learners' motivation, engagement, and participation in spoken English classrooms at a private coaching center. A total of ten students were randomly chosen from the coaching center and provided with two sets of questionnaires. Additionally, a focused group discussion was held with four teachers from the same center, and a semi-structured interview was conducted in accordance with the guidelines of the questionnaires. Drawing data from Questionnaire 1 for students, from 10 student responses, several patterns and implications emerge that are crucial for improving language teaching outcomes through effective leadership.

7.1. Common Leadership Practices

The highest mean scores in the Likert-scale data (Q1–Q10) were seen in:

- Encouraging students to speak freely (Q1 – Mean: 4.6)
- Creating a confident and positive classroom environment (Q10 – Mean: 4.3)
- Building rapport and motivating students (Q7 – Mean: 4.3)

These practices reflect transformational leadership behaviors, where the teacher acts as an inspiration and motivator, helping students overcome hesitation and fear. Transformational leadership behaviors serve as catalysts that ignite inspiration, commitment, motivation, and vision among students, resulting in a transformation of ideals and practices, with teachers recognized as the primary agents of change (Winokur & Sperandio, 2017). In contrast, delegation of leadership roles to students (Q9 – Mean: 2.7) was one of the least frequently observed practices. This reveals a significant gap in shared or distributed leadership. When students are not provided opportunities to lead group activities or take ownership of tasks, they miss a key component of communicative competence: autonomy. Providing individuals with leadership opportunities and responsibilities enhances their sense of ownership and motivation, resulting in improved performance and commitment levels. (Bastea, Catalano, & Dohotaru, 2023)

7.2. Student Preferences in Teaching Strategies and Motivation

The categorical responses to Q11 and Q12 reinforce the importance of interactive, student-centered strategies:

- Group discussion (60%) was the most preferred activity.
- Friendly teacher attitude (60%) was cited as the strongest motivational factor.

Both preferences suggest that students value a low-anxiety, collaborative environment, where they can express themselves without fear of judgment. These circumstances reinforce Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, which suggests that emotional factors, such as motivation and anxiety, are crucial in language acquisition. This perspective encourages learners to engage with the language freely, thereby reducing the affective filter and enhancing their experience of learning English. Essentially, a friendly environment that allows learners to feel relaxed and comfortable during the learning process helps open the filter, resulting in more effective language acquisition (Krashen 1982; Nath, Mohamad, and Yamat 2017). Students' preference for activities like role play, games, and audio/video discussions also highlights the need for varied instructional methods. A rigid, lecture-driven model does not suit the dynamic nature of language learning, especially for speaking skills. Yan, Lowell, and Yang (2024) noted that language teachers have employed a range of teaching methods to create authentic contexts for students to practice the language, aiming to provide opportunities for conversation that reflect real-world situations where language is naturally used. Students' responses indicate that they experienced a classroom environment in which discussing real-world scenarios helped them excel in their language learning.

7.3. Perceptions of Effective Leadership

Open-ended responses to Q13 provided a deeper understanding of how students define a "leader" in a spoken English classroom. Dominant themes included:

- Being encouraging and patient
- Leading by example (speaking fluently)
- Giving students a voice
- Creating a friendly and inclusive atmosphere

These align with the servant leadership model, which focuses on meeting the needs of learners first. Greenleaf (1991) explains that the servant-leader is a servant first, and this begins with the natural inclination to serve. Following the desire to serve may be the decision one makes that results in the desire to lead. Similarly, teachers are seen as mentors, rather than just authorities, fostering more effective learning environments.

Representative student feedback, such as *"The teacher should give each student time and avoid rushing,"* and *"A good teacher encourages everyone to speak without fear,"* emphasize that emotional safety and individualized support are central to effective classroom leadership.

7.4. Teacher Leadership Encourages Student Engagement

The results of Questionnaire 2 were intended for ten students who participated in the study to investigate how leadership behaviors, from peers and teachers, affect their educational path in learning English. The answers offer a rich tapestry of insights into the dynamics of classroom leadership and how it affects student performance.
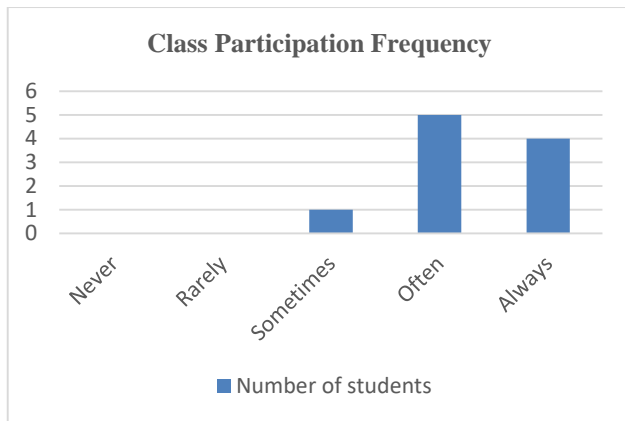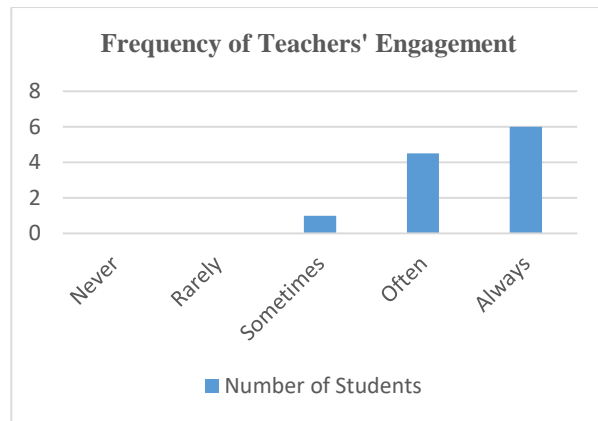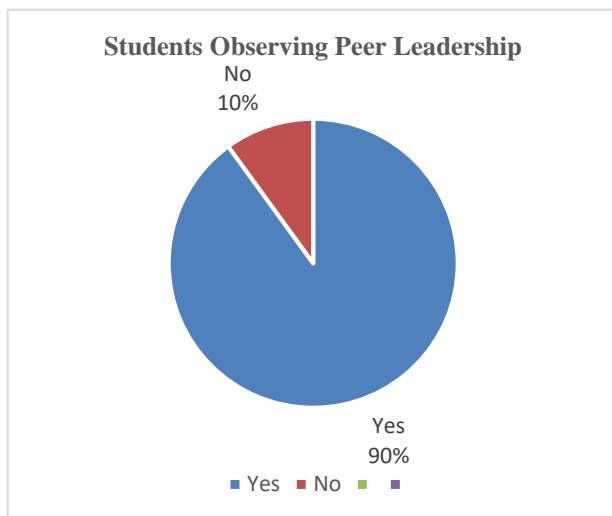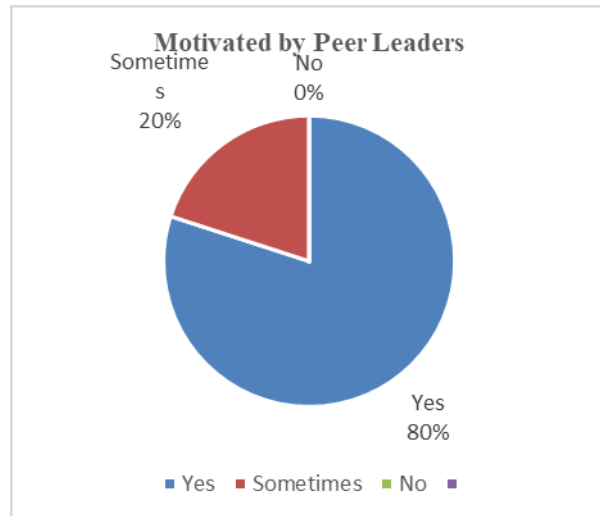
Chart – 1

Class Participation Frequency

Chart – 2

Frequency of Teachers' Engagement

Chart - 3

Students Observing Peer Leadership

No
10%

Yes
90%

■ Yes ■ No ■ ■

Chart – 4

Motivated by Peer Leaders

Sometimes
20%

No
0%

Yes
80%

■ Yes ■ Sometimes ■ No ■

Chart - 5

Motivation to improve Spoken English

Chart – 6

Change of Spoken English Performance
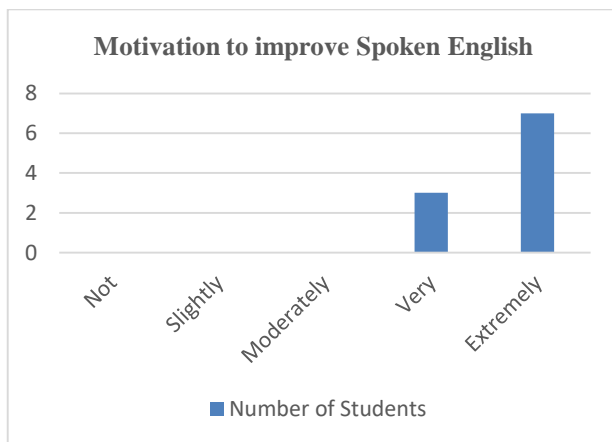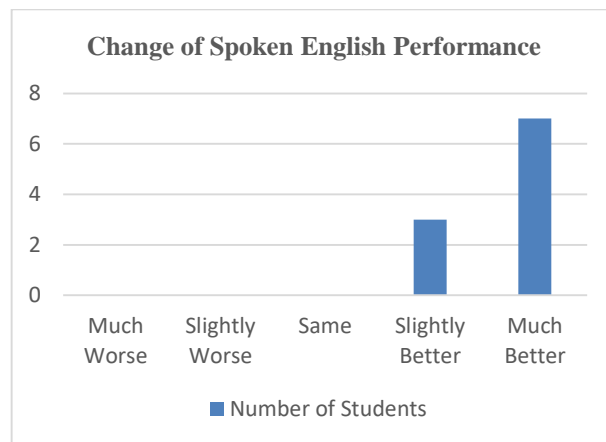
Figure 1. Visual Summary of Students' Questionnaire Responses

Here are the visual graphs and charts illustrating the questionnaire findings:

- Chart 1: Most students participate in class *often* or *always*.
- Chart 2: Teachers frequently encourage students to speak.
- Chart 3: 90% of students have observed peer leadership.
- Chart 4: Peer leaders motivate most students to speak better.
- Chart 5: Most students are *very* or *extremely* motivated to improve their English.
- Chart 6: All students report performance improvement, especially *much better*.

Most students began as beginners and have been with the center for at least 6 months, indicating stable engagement and potential for noticeable progress. From the outset, the data points to an engaged group of learners. When asked how actively they participated in spoken English activities like discussions and presentations, 9 out of 10 students reported they "often" or "always" participate, while none selected "never" or "rarely". This engagement is not accidental — it is clearly influenced by leadership. When asked what motivates them to participate more, all 10 students selected "Encouragement from the teacher", followed by 8 who noted "Supportive classmates" and 7 who cited "Interesting activities." This highlights a dual dynamic of influence: teacher-led encouragement and peer support both act as key drivers of student participation. Furthermore, 9 out of 10 students said their teacher "often" or "always" encourages them to speak English, emphasizing the active role instructors play in creating a safe and motivating space for verbal participation. Therefore, Regular active participation by students, supportive quality, and encouragement from teachers signify the presence of transformational leadership practices in the classroom. Active participation in co-curricular activities has been shown to significantly contribute to the development of students' leadership skills. In a study conducted in Malaysia, Sayuti Ab Ghani, Awang, Ajit, and Amzari (2020) surveyed 237 secondary school students and found a strong positive correlation between regular involvement in such activities and enhanced leadership abilities. This finding underscores the idea that consistent engagement allows students to practice communication, decision-making, and teamwork- core components of effective leadership.

7.5. Peer Leadership: A Quiet Force for Confidence

Interestingly, 8 out of 10 students acknowledged seeing peers take on leadership roles, such as leading group discussions or helping weaker students. These student leaders are not formal figures but emerge organically, often modeling behaviors like confidence in speaking, helping others with vocabulary, or initiating speaking games. When asked if these peer leaders motivated them, 8 said "Yes", 2 said "Sometimes", and no one said "No." In narrative comments, one student mentioned:

"Seeing my classmate lead a group activity encouraged me to try speaking more in front of others."

Another reflected:

"They make mistakes, too, but they try. That gives me courage."

This reveals the peer model effect — a key tenet of transformational leadership — where observing others can lower the fear of failure, normalize mistakes, and raise personal expectations. This also supports Schunk's (1989) observation of how students observing competent peer models performing academic tasks can boost their own confidence and learning motivation.

7.6. Performance Growth Linked to Leadership Climate

When asked to compare their current spoken English abilities to when they started:

- 7 students said "Much better."
- 3 said "Slightly better"
- No one reported any decline or sameness in performance

This performance growth mirrors the motivational and engagement data, suggesting that leadership behaviors create the emotional and cognitive climate necessary for language acquisition, particularly in learning spoken English. Many researchers have also found many factors that influence performance, one of which is transformational leadership (Park, Han, Crystal, Kim, & Kim, 2021).

7.7. Student Reflections: Leadership in Their Own Words

The open-ended responses yielded several strong themes:

"When teachers push us and believe in us, we feel more confident to speak."

"Classmates who help others or encourage speaking help reduce fear."

"Supportive leadership makes mistakes feel okay, and that's how we learn."

These insights echo the transformational principle of empowerment, where students feel ownership and shared responsibility in learning. Uzorka, Akiyode, and Isa (2024) noted that assigning leadership roles to students within sustainability initiatives not only empowers them but also instills a sense of responsibility. This sense of ownership frequently leads to a more enthusiastic and committed attitude towards accountability and achievement.

7.8. Student Empowerment & Ownership

The "Teacher Interview Report" following teachers' semi-structured guideline questionnaires reveals several key insights into how transformational leadership, both modeled by teachers and fostered among students, affects engagement, motivation, and spoken English performance. The teachers working in the coaching centers possess teaching experience ranging from two to five years and conduct approximately 12 classes weekly. Each of them noted the emergence of leadership roles among students within the classroom. All four educators emphasized that transformational leadership promotes student accountability for their own learning. This is illustrated by examples such as coordinating group activities, providing peer tutoring, creating educational resources (including vocabulary games or role-plays), and forming support networks (like the "Speak Up" club). Cultivating a sense of ownership enhances both individual and collective commitment and responsibility for success. As Koiranen and Karlsson (2003) explain, a sense of ownership fosters commitment and proactive engagement, which often translates into assuming leadership roles.

7.9. Transformational Leadership as a Driver of Motivation and Engagement

Findings from the student questionnaires, FGD, and the chief instructor's interview consistently highlight transformational leadership as a central factor in enhancing motivation, engagement, and spoken English performance. Questionnaire data reveal high ratings for teachers' leadership behaviors such as setting clear goals (4.6), motivating focus (4.5), providing helpful feedback (4.8), serving as role models (4.7), and building supportive classrooms (4.9), demonstrating strong characteristics of

inspirational motivation, idealized influence, and individualized consideration. These qualities foster trust, encourage participation, and give students a clear sense of purpose, aligning with Given's (2008) view that transformational leaders inspire followers to build relationships and engage actively.

Motivation levels among respondents were notably high, with seven students reporting being "Extremely motivated" and three "Very motivated." The main drivers identified were positive feedback, a friendly class environment, and leadership from other factors that align with transformational leadership's ability to create an intrinsically motivating climate. This is reinforced by Ryan & Deci's (2000) Self-Determination Theory, which suggests that feelings of competence, autonomy, and relatedness enhance intrinsic motivation. Both teachers and students noted that when learners lead, they engage more willingly, support peers emotionally, and participate regularly in speaking activities. Peer-led initiatives, such as daily speaking challenges, were observed to boost fluency, vocabulary, and confidence while reducing fear of mistakes.

The chief instructor emphasized that student leaders, through confidence, empathy, initiative, responsibility, and strong listening skills, model constructive participation, create psychologically safe spaces, and promote collaborative learning. Their leadership extends beyond task management, providing intellectual stimulation by posing open-ended questions, framing discussions meaningfully, and encouraging critical thinking. This aligns with findings by Pachler, Kuonath, and Frey (2019), who suggest that intellectual stimulation promotes trust and engagement in complex communicative tasks. The instructor also noted a bidirectional relationship between leadership and motivation, as described by Buble, Juras, & Matić (2014): motivated students often become leaders, and leadership itself further fuels motivation by increasing investment in learning.

Peer leadership benefits not only leaders but also their peers. Students mentored by leaders demonstrated improved fluency and a greater willingness to speak, supporting the assertions of Philp, Adams, and Iwashita (2014) and Schunk & DiBenedetto (2020) that interaction with capable peers enhances L2 learning and self-efficacy. However, challenges such as dominant personalities overshadowing others were acknowledged, highlighting the need for rotating leadership roles to ensure inclusivity and shared responsibility.

Ultimately, both quantitative and qualitative findings point to a cultural shift in classrooms where leadership is distributed. Transformational student leadership transforms spoken English from a teacher-led exercise into a peer-driven, collaborative practice, creating a high-energy, low-anxiety environment where students learn from one another. As the chief instructor summarized:

> "Student leadership, when nurtured carefully, transforms the classroom. It creates a collaborative space where students learn from each other, not just from the teacher. It boosts confidence, especially in spoken English, where fear is a big hurdle. I believe leadership is a key tool for both engagement and skill development."

7.10. Observational Insights on Leadership Practices and Spoken English Proficiency

The researchers conducted a structured observation of leadership practices across four classrooms within a private coaching center over four consecutive days. The findings revealed several critical insights into how leadership dynamics influence student engagement and language learning outcomes. Teachers who promoted open communication, delivered personalized feedback, and fostered a supportive and positive classroom atmosphere were particularly successful in enhancing student engagement.

Importantly, leadership was not limited to the teacher's role; peer leadership emerged as a significant and influential force in the classroom. Students frequently initiated discussions, supported one another, and helped mitigate the anxiety commonly associated with speaking English, and it was observed that observing capable peers can strengthen self-efficacy and promote active participation.

Additionally, students were often assigned roles in group activities or voluntarily organized speaking tasks, thereby demonstrating increased responsibility and initiative. A further critical aspect identified was the emphasis on emotional safety. Leadership behaviors such as patience, active listening, acceptance of mistakes, and encouragement of inclusivity were instrumental in establishing a psychologically safe classroom environment. These practices contributed to a shift in classroom culture toward one that was more collaborative, dynamic, and student-centered. This reframed spoken English learning not as an isolated academic task but as a shared communicative endeavor.

In conclusion, the presence of transformational and shared leadership within the classroom creates a motivational, inclusive environment that enhances student-centered learning. These leadership practices significantly improve students' spoken English proficiency by encouraging participation, reducing language anxiety, building confidence, and fostering learner autonomy (Towler, 2019; Park et al., 2021).

8. Conclusion

This study examined the role of leadership behaviors in influencing student engagement, motivation, and performance in spoken English classes at a private coaching center, with a specific focus on transformational leadership practices. The data collected through student questionnaires indicate a strong association between leadership behaviors, particularly those involving goal setting, encouragement, feedback, role modeling, and positive learner outcomes.

Students reported high levels of participation and motivation when instructors demonstrated clarity of purpose, created a supportive learning environment, and actively encouraged verbal engagement. In addition, peer-led leadership behaviors, such as assisting classmates and guiding group activities, were found to further enhance students' confidence and class cohesion. These results demonstrate that transformational leadership fosters an inclusive, motivating, and learner-centered environment.

Several key motivators emerged, including teacher encouragement, engaging classroom activities, and a friendly, respectful atmosphere. These factors appear to contribute not only to increased classroom participation but also to measurable improvement in spoken English skills.

In conclusion, transformational leadership-manifested through both instructor and peer behaviors, significantly enhances student engagement and performance in spoken English education. These findings underscore the need for coaching centers and language institutes to adopt leadership-informed pedagogical strategies. Future research could benefit from incorporating longitudinal methods and mixed data sources (e.g., classroom observation, performance assessment) to deepen the understanding of leadership's role in language acquisition.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaires for Students

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COLLECTING DATA

Student Questionnaire - 1 on Leadership Practices in Spoken English Classrooms

Purpose:
This questionnaire is intended to gather student feedback on the leadership practices most commonly observed in your spoken English coaching classes. Your responses will help identify teaching methods that are effective and commonly used.

Instructions:

- Please answer all questions honestly.

- There are no right or wrong answers.

- Your responses will be kept confidential and used only for research purposes.

Section A: Basic Information

1. Age: _____

2. Gender:
   ☐ Male   ☐ Female   ☐ Other

3. How long have you been attending this spoken English coaching center?
   ☐ Less than 1 month
   ☐ 1–3 months
   ☐ 4–6 months
   ☐ More than 6 months

4. How many days a week do you attend classes? _____ days

Section B: Teacher's Leadership and Teaching Style

Please indicate how frequently your teacher does the following in class:

Statement	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1. Encourages students to speak freely in English.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Sets clear learning goals for speaking English.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Provides feedback on student performance.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Involves students in group or pair discussions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Motivates students through praise or encouragement.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Adapts teaching methods to student needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Statement	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
7. Leads by example by speaking fluent English.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Shows respect and listens to students' opinions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Encourages leadership roles among students (e.g., group leader in activities).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. Creates a supportive and confident classroom environment.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section C: Preferred Practices

11. Which teaching activity helps you the most in improving spoken English?
    ☐ Role plays
    ☐ Group discussions
    ☐ Presentations
    ☐ Teacher-student conversations
    ☐ Games and interactive activities
    ☐ Listening to English audio/video and discussing
    ☐ Other: _____

12. What kind of teacher behavior motivates you most to speak English in class?
    ☐ Friendly attitude
    ☐ Giving praise
    ☐ Asking questions regularly
    ☐ Giving real-life speaking tasks
    ☐ Other: _____

Section D: Open-Ended Questions

13. In your opinion, what qualities make a spoken English teacher a good leader in the classroom?
    _____

14. What changes would you suggest to improve leadership in your spoken English classes?
    _____

(This Questionnaire was provided in the Bengali language for better understanding by the students. The Bengali version is given below)

স্পোকেন ইংলিশ শ্রেণিকক্ষে ব্যবহৃত নেতৃত্বমূলক শিক্ষণ কৌশল সম্পর্কে শিক্ষার্থী প্রশ্নপত্র

উদ্দেশ্য:

এই প্রশ্নপত্রের মাধ্যমে জানা যাবে, আপনার স্পোকেন ইংলিশ কোচিং সেন্টারে শিক্ষকরা শিক্ষাদানের সময় কোন নেতৃত্বমূলক কৌশল সবচেয়ে বেশি ব্যবহার করেন।

নির্দেশনা:

- অনুগ্রহ করে প্রতিটি প্রশ্ন সততার সাথে পূরণ করুন।
- এখানে কোনো সঠিক বা ভুল উত্তর নেই।
- আপনার উত্তর সম্পূর্ণ গোপন রাখা হবে এবং শুধুমাত্র গবেষণার উদ্দেশ্যে ব্যবহার করা হবে।

অংশ A: প্রাথমিক তথ্য

১. বয়স: _____

২. লিঙ্গ:

☐ পুরুষ ☐ নারী ☐ অন্যান্য

৩. কতদিন ধরে আপনি এই স্পোকেন ইংলিশ কোচিং সেন্টারে ক্লাস করছেন?

☐ ১ মাসের কম

☐ ১–৩ মাস

☐ ৪–৬ মাস

☐ ৬ মাসের বেশি

৪. সপ্তাহে কয় দিন ক্লাসে আসেন? _____ দিন

অংশ B: শিক্ষকের নেতৃত্ব ও শিক্ষাদান পদ্ধতি

নিচের বিবৃতিগুলোর সাথে আপনি কতটা একমত, তা নিচের মতো করে টিক চিহ্ন দিন:

বিবৃতি	সবসময়	প্রায়ই	মাঝে মাঝে	খুব কম	কখনো না
১. শিক্ষক আমাদের ইংরেজিতে কথা বলার জন্য উৎসাহ দেন।	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
২. শিক্ষক স্পষ্টভাবে শেখার লক্ষ্য নির্ধারণ করেন।	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
৩. শিক্ষক আমাদের ভুল সংশোধন করে গঠনমূলক মতামত দেন।	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
৪. শিক্ষক আমাদের গ্রুপ ও জোড়ায় আলোচনা করতে বলেন।	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
৫. ভালো কাজের জন্য প্রশংসা ও উৎসাহ দেন।	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
৬. শিক্ষার্থীদের প্রয়োজন অনুযায়ী শিক্ষণ পদ্ধতি বদলান।	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
৭. শিক্ষক নিজে সুন্দরভাবে ইংরেজি বলেন ও উদাহরণ তৈরি করেন।	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
৮. শিক্ষার্থীদের মতামত গুরুত্ব সহকারে শোনেন।	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
৯. শিক্ষার্থীদের মাঝে নেতৃত্বের ভূমিকা প্রদান করেন (যেমন: গ্রুপ লিডার নির্বাচন)।	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
১০. শ্রেণিকক্ষে একটি সহানুভূতিপূর্ণ ও আত্মবিশ্বাসী পরিবেশ তৈরি করেন।	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

অংশ C: পছন্দের কৌশল

১১. নিচের কোন শিক্ষণ পদ্ধতি আপনার স্পোকেন ইংলিশ দক্ষতা বাড়াতে সবচেয়ে বেশি সহায়ক?

☐ রোল-প্লে (ভূমিকা-ভিত্তিক অভিনয়)

☐ গ্রুপ আলোচনা

☐ উপস্থাপনা

☐ শিক্ষক-শিক্ষার্থী কথোপকথন

☐ গেমস ও মজার কার্যক্রম

☐ অডিও/ভিডিও শুনে আলোচনা

☐ অন্যান্য: _____

১২. শিক্ষক কিভাবে আচরণ করলে আপনি সবচেয়ে বেশি অনুপ্রাণিত হন ইংরেজিতে কথা বলার জন্য?

☐ বন্ধুত্বপূর্ণ আচরণ

☐ প্রশংসা করা

☐ নিয়মিত প্রশ্ন করা

☐ বাস্তবভিত্তিক স্পিকিং টাস্ক দেওয়া

☐ অন্যান্য: _____

অংশ D: মুক্ত প্রশ্ন

১৩. আপনার মতে, একজন ভালো স্পোকেন ইংলিশ শিক্ষকের কী কী নেতৃত্বগুণ থাকা উচিত?

_____

১৪. আপনার কোচিং সেন্টারে নেতৃত্বমূলক শিক্ষাদান উন্নত করার জন্য আপনি কী পরামর্শ দিতে চান?

_____

Student Questionnaire - 2

This questionnaire aims to investigate how leadership behaviors affect student engagement, motivation, and performance in Spoken English classes at your private coaching center, where you are enrolled.

Section A: Background Information

1. **Age:** _____

2. **Gender:** ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other

3. **How long have you been attending this coaching center?**
   ☐ Less than 3 months
   ☐ 3–6 months
   ☐ 6–12 months
   ☐ More than 1 year

4. **Level of spoken English when you started:**
   ☐ Beginner
   ☐ Intermediate
   ☐ Advanced

Section B: Student Engagement in Class

5. **How actively do you participate in spoken English activities (e.g., discussions, presentations)?**
   ☐ Never
   ☐ Rarely
   ☐ Sometimes

☐ Often

☐ Always

6. **What motivates you to participate more in class?**
(Select all that apply)

☐ Encouragement from the teacher

☐ Friendly competition

☐ Supportive classmates

☐ Interesting activities

☐ Other: _____

7. **How often does your teacher encourage or push you to speak English in class?**
☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always

Section C: Leadership Behaviors Observed

8. **To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your instructor?**
(*Rate: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree*)

Statement	1 2 3 4 5
a. My instructor sets clear goals for spoken English improvement	
b. My instructor motivates us to stay focused and participate	
c. My instructor provides helpful and regular feedback	
d. My instructor is a good role model for speaking English	
e. My instructor builds a supportive and respectful classroom	

9. **Have you seen any students take leadership roles in class (e.g., helping others, leading group work)?**
☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, give an example:

10. **Do these student leaders motivate you to speak or improve your English?**
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes
Explain how:

Section D: Motivation and Performance

11. **How motivated are you to improve your spoken English?**
☐ Not motivated

☐ Slightly motivated

☐ Moderately motivated

☐ Very motivated

☐ Extremely motivated

12. **What increases your motivation the most?**
☐ Positive feedback from teacher

☐ Friendly class environment

☐ Personal goals

☐ Leadership from others

☐ Other: _____

13. **How would you describe your spoken English performance now compared to when you started?**

☐ Much worse

☐ Slightly worse

☐ About the same

☐ Slightly better

☐ Much better

Section E: Open-Ended Reflections

14. In your opinion, how do leadership behaviors (by teachers or students) influence your learning?

_____

15. What kind of leadership behavior helps you the most in class?

_____

Thank you for your kind cooperation.

Appendix B: Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guide for Teachers

Purpose of the FGD

The purpose of this Focus Group Discussion is to explore teachers' perceptions, experiences, and insights regarding leadership behaviors in the classroom and how these influence students' engagement, motivation, and spoken English performance.

FGD Duration: 60 to 75 minutes

Moderator Role:

- Facilitate open-ended discussion using this guideline
- Encourage balanced participation from all group members
- Use probes when needed to explore specific experiences or clarify responses
- Maintain neutrality and confidentiality

Discussion Sections and Key Questions

Section 1: Background Information

Objective: Understand the participants' teaching roles and context.

- Can you briefly describe your teaching experience at this coaching center?
- How many spoken English classes do you conduct weekly?
- What level of students (beginner/intermediate/advanced) do you mostly work with?

Section 2: Observing Student Leadership Behaviors

Objective: Explore how and when students take leadership roles in class.

- How often do you observe students taking on leadership roles in your classes?
- What kinds of leadership behaviors do students usually demonstrate?
- Can you share a few examples of student-led activities or initiatives?
- Do you think these behaviors come naturally, or do they require teacher encouragement?

Section 3: Impact on Student Engagement and Motivation

Objective: Understand how student leadership influences class participation.

- In your experience, how does student leadership affect class engagement?
- What impact does it have on students' motivation, especially those who are usually passive?
- Have you noticed any changes in class energy or atmosphere when students lead?
- How do peer dynamics change when leadership roles shift?

Section 4: Impact on Spoken English Performance

Objective: Examine the effects of leadership on learning outcomes.

- In what ways does student leadership influence spoken English fluency or confidence?
- Do you observe better performance in classes with active student leaders? Why or why not?
- Can you recall any specific stories that show how student leadership contributed to learning improvement?

Section 5: Suggestions for Improvement

Objective: Gather recommendations for enhancing student leadership in class.

- What strategies can help develop positive student leadership behaviors?
- How can the coaching center better support and promote student leadership?

Wrap-up & Closing

- Is there anything we didn't cover that you'd like to add?
- How do you feel about contributing to this discussion?

Appendix C: Semi-Structured Interview Guide with the Chief Instructor

Purpose:

This **Semi-Structured Interview Guide with the Chief Instructor is intended** to gain an in-depth understanding of the chief instructor's perspectives on leadership practices, program design, student development, and the role of teacher and student leadership in enhancing spoken English performance.

Estimated Duration: 30–45 minutes
Interview Format: In-person or virtual (audio/video recorded with consent)
Interviewer: Researchers (1st Author)
Interviewee: Chief Instructor

Opening Remarks

"Thank you for joining this interview. We're interested in understanding how student leadership—like peer support, volunteering, or group coordination—impacts engagement, motivation, and spoken English performance among students. Please feel free to elaborate and give examples from your experience."

Consent Confirmation:
I have explained the purpose of the interview and obtained verbal/written consent to record and use the information for research or improvement purposes.

Interview Questions & Suggested Prompts

Section 1: Observing Student Leadership Behaviors

1. What types of leadership behaviors do students typically demonstrate during spoken English classes?

Prompt: Do some students take initiative, encourage peers, or lead discussions?

2. How often do students voluntarily lead or take charge during group speaking activities or class discussions?

Prompt: Is it common or limited to certain students?

Section 2: Impact on Student Engagement

3. In what ways do student leaders influence the participation of their peers in speaking activities?

Prompt: Do others seem more comfortable or more involved?

4. Have you observed any specific student-led actions that resulted in more engaging or dynamic classroom interactions?

Prompt: Group energizers, topic setting, peer feedback?

Section 3: Impact on Motivation

5. How does student leadership influence others' motivation to speak or improve their English?

Prompt: Do peer role models make a difference in attitude or effort?

6. Are motivated students more likely to become leaders, or do leadership roles help increase motivation?

Prompt: Which comes first, in your experience?

Section 4: Impact on Spoken English Performance

7. From your perspective, do students who take leadership roles tend to perform better in speaking tasks or assessments? Why or why not?

Prompt: Are they more fluent, confident, or better prepared?

8. Have you noticed improvements in performance among students who were supported or influenced by peer leaders?

Prompt: Any examples of peer-led improvement or transformation?

Section 5: Reflection and Strategy

9. What qualities define a good student leader in the context of spoken English classes?

Prompt: Confidence, empathy, initiative?

10. Have there been any negative effects of student leadership, such as dominating conversations or excluding others? How do you manage these?

11. What strategies or practices could be introduced to encourage more students to take on leadership roles in class?

Prompt: Role rotation, peer facilitation, leadership tasks?

Closing Questions

12. Is there anything else you'd like to share about how student leadership affects classroom learning, language development, or group dynamics in spoken English?

"Thank you for your valuable insights. Your responses will help us understand and improve how leadership roles, among both instructors and students, can enhance learning outcomes."