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Author(s): Sadia Ayub

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Sociocultural Factors Involved in the Oral Competency of ESL Students at Graduate Level

Sadia Ayub*

Imperial University Lahore, Pakistan

Abstract

The current research is aimed to highlight the obstructing sociocultural factors that influence the undergraduate students' English language communication skills in Pakistan. Undergraduates' English language communication skills are strongly affected by various sociocultural factors such as the environment, cultural variation, societal rank, and self-identity. In particular, the current research emphasizes the interconnectedness of language and culture and their influence on the English language communication skills of the undergraduate students. The investigation was carried out in the public institutions of Bahawalpur, Pakistan. It was based on simple random and cluster random sampling. Forty highly proficient ESL / EFL instructors and 498 ESL students contributed to the current investigation. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were followed throughout the research. Data analysis revealed that among all the contributing factors, the environment was the most prominent factor, which affected the learner's oral competency. The overall conclusion is that sociocultural issues affect the learners' communication skills in Pakistan where English is most often the third language. The study also recommends that instructors should recognize the source(s) of language anxiety to facilitate the learners and to make the language acquisition process more successful.

Keywords: social barriers, cultural identity, and gender differences

Introduction

Silence and speech are components of human communication. If silence occurs frequently, it becomes a severe issue in the language learning process (Tatar, 2005). If left untreated, silence can constantly shatter the learner's confidence. Giles et al. (1992) thought that quietness in the classroom might result from a lack of attentiveness and sometimes due to a reluctance to communicate. This may refer to feelings of aggression and rejection. It may be due to social conflicts, shyness, or an absence of vocal talent because of the absence of a useful vocabulary.

*Corresponding author: sadiaa_basit@yahoo.com

Problems in attaining proficiency in English cause an uneasiness among the students. Kim in 1998 found that language learners usually experience more anxiety in achieving oral competence than achieving reading competence. Background issues in oral competency especially the cultural differences and the educational background affect spoken English the most. The social and cultural differences create a hesitation among the learners to perform well in the target language's culture. This hesitation in adapting the target language's culture provokes even more anxiety (Tanveer, [2007](#)). Therefore, it is tricky for the learners, especially in Pakistan, to acquire perfect oral competency since they come from multicultural backgrounds. According to Onwuegbuzie et al. ([1999](#)), many researchers have found that issues in learning a foreign language create long lasting and adverse experiences. Although learners are keen to talk in the target language they're unable to do so thus destroying their confidence. Many students experiencing stress in learning a second language are outstanding learners of other skills (Howitz et al., [1986](#)). During second language learning, learners feel stress due to sociocultural factors, which hamper language learning as well as other talents (Tanveer, [2007](#)).

Statement of the Problem

In Pakistan, English has become a status standard of social life and has become essential for the education system of Pakistan. To progress the education system and adopt the latest scientific technologies, oral competency in English language is vital. Nonetheless, there is least interest in finding the sociocultural issues that generate English language communication nervousness. There is a need to focus on second language learning anxiety occurring due to sociocultural factors in order to reveal anxiety causes.

English is a global language and a language of science as well as the latest technologies. Sociocultural factors are a significant factor in hampering language learning, i.e., the culture and society in which the scholars learn the target language. (Hilario, [2018](#)).

Different sociocultural factors like social identity, social status and the social discrepancy can delay the language learning process. Further research on sociocultural behaviours is needed to examine the extensive speech anxiety issues in Pakistan.

This study was crucial in finding the factor affecting the learners' performance in controlling their fear and for teachers to recognize the source of apprehension, especially concerning the sociocultural background.

Aims and Objectives

The purposes of this investigation were:

- To find the impeding sociocultural factors and their effects on ESL student's performance.
- To uncover the relationship between sociocultural factors and communication skills.

Research Questions

1. What kind of sociocultural factors are involved in communication skills?
2. Which sociocultural factor outside the classroom is prominent and can affect the ESL learner's communication skills?

Hypothesis

- Sociocultural issues interrupt a learner's communication skills.

Significance of the Study

The study was a conceptualization of English speech problems encountered within and outside a classroom. The study tested the sociocultural issues impeding oral communication skills in order to highlight the communication anxiety faced by ESL learners in Pakistan at the graduate level. Conceptualizing speech anxiety related might have dual benefits, reflecting the difference between classroom interactions and speech anxiety issues outside the class extensively in Pakistan.

Delimitations of the Study

The present study explored the effects of sociocultural issues which affect the speaking skills of ESL learners. The data was gathered from the undergraduate students of Bahawalpur.

Literature Review

Anxiety

Initially stated by McCroskey (1977) anxiety is defined as an individual's level of fear during communication with an individual or a group (Pršić, 2013). Moreover, anxiety is known as the apprehension of harmful evaluations which can be outlined as "apprehension about other's" assessments; learners avoid questioning conditions expect that other learners would assess their performance adversely (Pršić, 2013).

Facilitating and Debilitating Anxiety

Sometimes anxiety facilitates while at other times it becomes debilitating. The anxiety that enhances language performance is called facilitating anxiety, which helps the students improve their abilities and automatically relaxes them from unbearable stress (Scovel, [1978](#)). Debilitating anxiety shatters the learner's self-reliance, stimulates the learner to avoid the learning assignment, and encourages the learner to adopt "reluctant behaviour", such that anxiety reduces language acquiring and functioning (Scovel, [1978](#)). Several investigators stated an undesirable connection between language nervousness and success; if anxiety will be superior then lower will be the presentation (Onwuegbuzie et al., [1999](#)). More than half of the language learners feel anxiety, distressing in the language learning process (Campbell & Ortiz, [1991](#)). Na ([2007](#)) investigated that high anxiety plays a debilitating role during language acquisition and hampers the student's skills.

Communicative Competence

Hymes ([1966](#)) coined the term "communicative competence" to interpret language ability such as sensitive information of social, functional, and contextual characteristics of the language (Kunyot, [2005](#)). Oral competence is needed for interaction within communities. When language learners communicate with others to construct meaning it is called "communicative competence" (Savignon, [2008](#)). Communicative competence is related to the four language skills, i.e. reading, writing, listening, and speaking, where speaking is the most important and stressful (Kunyot, [2005](#)). According to Pršić ([2013](#)), apart from understanding the linguistics, students need to know the social situation in which the language is used, the proper way of utterances and the written language to form a meaningful interaction, since communicative competence involves grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and different communication strategies.

Sociocultural Factors

Sociolinguists argued that social relationships' influence on oral competency can be profound and severe (Tanveer, [2007](#)).

Environmental Factors

Past research mentions that learners pointed out that environmental factors matter in developing communicative competency. Due to English's limited exposure in their countries, learners feel trouble acquiring excellent communication skills (Tanveer, [2007](#)). According to Wariyachitra ([2003](#)), learning becomes unsuccessful due to environmental factors because usually, the students avoid communication in daily life. Those who study English in ESL

contexts lack the degree of English phonological skills that those who learn it in native like contexts due to environmental and sociocultural limitations (Ayodabo and Acheoah, [2013](#)).

Cultural Difference

The learners' changing cultures and target language flatter anxiety due to the uncertainty and strangeness with the target language culture (Tanveer, [2007](#)). The prominence of English, its use in the educational system, and the traditional cultures are the different blending factors that create a tense environment that leads to fears (Alsaraj, [2011](#)). According to Tseng ([2012](#)), the cultural difference between learners and the target language is also the primary anxiety-producing element due to the target language culture's hesitation or strangeness (Tseng, [2012](#)).

Relatively, in Jone's ([2004](#)) findings of the culture factor in an Asian setting, a skillful instructor stated that the main issue is not anxiety in the language learning process rather the differences in cultural practices. Worries with identity focus on the activity known as "subtractive bilingualism". According to Ellis in 1994 that negligible people acquire language as L2 then experience some loss of religious, national, and self-identity and their language L1 skills.

One anxious participant in Hilleison's ([1996](#)) study said that due to the fear of losing one's self-identity, she felt uncomfortable speaking English and speaking her language abnormally. Consequently, students are more stressed who feel that English acquisition is a frightening procedure known as "subtractive bilingualism" and they will lose their cultural, religious, and self-identity and mother language skills. These are observed socio-psychological factors observed in different societies, where students are not acquiring the English language. While focusing on issues related to language anxiety and self-identity, there is a need to interpret the cultural difference (Horwitz, [2001](#)).

Some students carry their traditional standards or lifestyles with them into the linguistic classroom. Consequently, because of different sociocultural standards, students come to class with their own culture and reluctantly participate in studies, and due to lack of confidence, they prefer to keep silent (Tusi, [1996](#)). Moreover, Allen ([2003](#)) also submitted that cultural difference is the main issue associated with language nervousness. According to Liao ([1999](#)) one more issue, which could become a barrier in the language learning process, is parents' "unlimited expectation" from their child to learn English. Liao ([1999](#)) informed that parents expect that students get full command over the English language, as

communication in English is fascinating, and this situation leads students towards deep nervousness.

Intercultural Communication Apprehension (ICA)

Kim (1998) points out that encoding, decoding, vocal, and non-vocal information lies in the intercultural adaptation process known as communication. An intercultural communication apprehension can be described as the nervousness connected through contact with people of changed sets, mostly cultural and racial groups (Tanveer, 2007).

Social Status, Self-Identity, and Social Setting II

Well off learners get the best communication opportunities and are less anxious than students from remote areas (Tanveer, 2007). Peirce (1995) exposed through his research that people of the higher status usually speak perfect English compared to a lower status. Moreover, people feel uncomfortable talking to the opposite sex, especially in those cultures where men and women study in separation at the primary level (Tseng, 2012). According to Tanveer (2007), within a sociocultural evaluation, status reflects people's communication with one another in social dealings and an essential aspect of social interaction is that interlocutors in a status relationship play a meaningful role in language and language learning, like what and how the individual would say something, in which language and how much. No doubt, focused language represents another social population, thus the learners sense such worries and the sense that speaking of any language means the adaptation of culture of that language (Tanveer, 2007).

Research Methodology

Research Design

The research was based on a survey study related to devastating sociocultural issues. First, all public institutions were preferred for data gathering. A two-stage sampling technique was used.

At the primary stage, different arts and science classes were chosen through cluster random sampling. In the next phase, samples from those clusters were chosen through random sampling. An instructors sample was chosen through convenient sampling from the similar colleges, established with persons most approachable in the limited time.

Investigations were held during the regular class hours. Questionnaires were given to the students in printed form. Initially, the summary was given in the research area, directed, and explained in Urdu to inhibit mistakes. Learners were

permitted to give their personal and valid answers. Learners were allowed privacy of their names if they felt awkward. Additionally, it was optional to give responses in Urdu if they could not express in English to understand the real reason during communication in the focused language. A direct semi designed interview in English was preferred for the instructors.

Research Population

The focus population was the male and female learners from various disciplines of science and humanities departments. The estimated population of learners at the undergraduate level was about 4000 from Bahawalpur City. The population of the study included the students and teachers of the following colleges of Bahawalpur.

1. Govt. Degree College for Women
2. Govt. Sadiq Degree College
3. Govt. S.E. College
4. Govt. Post Graduate College
5. Govt. Degree College for Women Satellite Town

Sample Size

The size of the population was 498, and both male and female learners. The mean age of the sample was between eighteen to twenty-two years. For the study, highly skilled forty English language instructors were preferred from the same colleges. The instructors' known age was from thirty to fifty years, and their coaching practice ranged from eight to twenty five years.

Data Collection Tools

For the study, the data was gathered through open-ended and close-ended questionnaires from learners and language trainers using an interview. In the survey under sociocultural factors, there were environmental factors related to the cultural difference, and questions related to the social setting, status, and family factors. A semi-structured interview covered the possible sociocultural issues.

Tools Validity

The professionals and professors with more than ten years of educational practice of the relevant subject had examined the research tool strength; ten PhD doctors authenticated the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

The research applied quantitative and qualitative approaches in data gathering, examining, and explanations.

Analysis of Data

The data analysis was planned along with the declaration of authenticity to document the data processing strategies and software. Besides, with the aid of tables and graphs, the chapter is based on a full statistical study of questionnaire results and compares all variables. Besides, the segment also reveals interview information obtained from teachers, which was qualitatively evaluated.

Research Participants

Participant Group

Table 1

Groups of Participants Participating in the Research

Groups	Frequency	Percent age
Science	281	56.4
Arts	217	43.6
Total	498	100.0

498 students participated in this research of which the science groups were 56.4%, and 43.6% were from the arts group.

Participant Age

Table 2

Age of Participants Participating in the Research

Age	Frequency	Percent age
18	168	33.7
19	131	26.3
20	16	3.2
21	51	10.2
22	132	16.5
Total	498	100.0

The table shows that 498 participants were aged between 18 to 22; 33.7% of students were of age 18, and 26.3% were of age 19. Students of age 20 were only

3.2%, while 10.2% of the students were of age 21. Only 16.5% of the students were of age 22.

Participant Gender

Table 3

Gender of Participants Participating in the Research

Gender	Frequency	Percent age
Male	250	50.2
Female	248	49.8
Total	498	100.0

The table shows 50.2% being male and 49.8% being female participants.

Data Analysis Techniques and Software

In the descriptive analysis, the following techniques were used:

1. Frequency analysis
2. Charts
3. SPSS
4. Microsoft Excel
5. T-test (for significance and comparison)

Declarations of Validity

The response rate of a survey was 100 %. The data was collected during the official working hours in the presence of a class teacher. The questionnaire was collected before the class ended. The questionnaires were given to all participants. Questions were repeated in different manners to know the prominent sociocultural factors. The data was also collected from teachers via interviews.

Interpretations of Results

Sociocultural Impacts on Oral Performance

Environmental Factors. The purpose of asking this question was to evaluate the speaking of different languages that result in poor English oral communication. The data in the table revealed that 26.3%+ 62.7 % = (89%) students agreed with the statement. The overall mean score was 4.06, which showed a strong inclination towards the agreement; its *p-value* was significant and was less than 0.05. Standard deviation was 0.680, the *t-value* was 0.049, and *df* was 496.

Table 4*Use of Different Languages at Different Places*

Statement	Scale	F	%	Gender		Groups		Mean	S.D	Sig.
Students speak different languages at different places according to the environment, resulting in delay in oral competency	Total	498	100	M	F	Sci	Arts			
	Strongly agree	131	26.3							
	Agree	312	62.7	4.06	4.06	3.91	4.26	4.06	.680	0.00
	Don't know	10	2.0							
	Disagree	45	9.0							
	Strongly disagree	0	0.0							
t-value: 0.049		df.496								

Table 5*Low Exposure to English Language in Our Culture*

Statement	Scale	f	%	Gender		Groups		Mean	S.D	Sig.
In our environment, ESL learners feel trouble to acquired excellent communication skills due to narrow exposure of English	Total	498	100	M	F	Sci	Arts			
	Strongly agree	214	43.0							
	Agree	253	50.8	4.42	4.29	4.26	4.47	4.35	.708	.001
	Don't know	23	4.6							
	Disagree	8	1.6							
	Strongly disagree	0	0.0							
t-value: 2.249		df. 496								

The aim of the question was to ascertain the limited exposure to English results in reduced oral competency. The data revealed that 43.0%+ 50.8% = (93.8) students were in support of the statement. The general mean score was 4.35, which indicated a strong tendency towards the agreement; its *p-value* was significant and was less than .05. Standard deviation was 0.708, *t-value* was 2.249, and *df* was 496.

Cultural Difference. The question aimed to evaluate that learners were reluctant to adapt to the new culture and hesitate to learn English. The overall mean score was 3.54, which showed the inclination towards the statement; its *p-value* was insignificant and was more than .05. Standard deviation was 1.396, *t-value* was 4.052, and *df* was 496.

Table 6*Fear in Adapting to the Culture of the Target Language*

Statement	Scale	<i>f</i>	%	Gender		Groups		Mean	S.D	Sig.
	Total	498	100	M	F	Sci	Arts			
Speaking any language means the adaptation of culture of that language.	Strongly agree	213	42.8							
	Agree	59	11.8	3.79	3.28	3.45	3.65	3.54	1.396	.438
	Don't know	22	4.4							
	Disagree	191	38.4							
	Strongly disagree	13	2.6							

t-value: 4.052 *df*. 496

Table 7*Self-Identity and Adaptation of the English Language*

Statement	Scale	<i>f</i>	%	Gender		Groups		Mean	S.D	Sig.
	Total	498	100	M	F	Sci	Arts			
The adaptation of English language affects learner's cultural and self-identity.	Strongly agree	54	10.8							
	Agree	242	48.6	3.38	3.19	3.08	3.55	3.29	1.073	.000
	Don't know	22	4.4							
	Disagree	153	30.7							
	Strongly disagree	27	5.4							

t-value 1.785 *df*. 496

The goal of asking this question was that some learners really believed that they will lose their identity while acquiring the English language. The overall

mean score was 3.29 which showed the preference towards the statement; its *p-value* was significant and was less than .05. Standard deviation was 1.073, *t-value* was 1.785, and *df* was 496.

Table 8*Adaptation of English and its Impact on Religion*

Statement	Scale	f	%	Gender		Groups		Mean	S.D	Sig.
				M	F	Sci	Arts			
The students do not want to become fluent in English, they are afraid of change of their religious views	Total	498	100							
	Strongly agree	93	18.7							
	Agree	156	31.3	3.17	3.27	3.08	3.40	3.22	1.367	.000
	Don't know	59	11.8							
	Disagree	147	29.5							
	Strongly disagree	43	8.6							

t-value: -0.816 df. 49

The goal of asking this question was to find how learners believe that speaking English might change their religious belief. The overall mean score was 3.22, which favours the statement; its *p-value* was significant and was less than .05. Standard deviation was 1.367, *t-value* was -0.816, and *df* was 496.

Table 9*Strangeness with the Target Language Culture*

Statement	Scale	f	%	Gender		Groups		Mean	S.D	Sig.
				M	F	Sci	Arts			
Due to the uncertainty and strangeness with the target language culture, ESL learners are anxious.	Total	498	100							
	Strongly agree	53	10.6							
	Agree	180	36.1	2.71	3.31	3.19	2.78	3.01	1.343	.000
	Don't know	54	10.8							
	Disagree	141	28.3							
	Strongly disagree	70	14.1							

t-value: -5.365 df. 496

The pursuit of this question was how uncertainty and strangeness with the target language affects language learning? The overall mean score was 3.01, the

p-value was significant and was less than .05. Standard deviation was 1.343, *t-value* was -5.365, and *df* was 496.

Social Setting, Status & Family Factors. The objective of this question was to know the role of educated family in language learning. The overall mean score was 3.38, the *p-value* was significant and was less than .05. Standard deviation was 1.560, *t-value* was -5.188 and *df* was 496.

Table 10

Role of Educated Family, its Impact on Language Learning

Statement	Scale	<i>F</i>	%	Gender		Groups		Mean	S.D	Sig.
	Total	498	100	M	F	Sci	Arts			
Sound and educated family hampers the ESL learner's communication skills.	Strongly agree	119	23.9							
	Agree	189	38.0	3.05	3.70	3.43	3.31	3.38	1.560	.000
	Don't know	43	8.6							
	Disagree	54	10.8							
	Strongly disagree	93	18.7							

t-value -5.188 *df.* 49

The objective of this question was to know the role of educated family in language learning. The overall mean score was 3.38, the *p-value* was significant and was less than .05. Standard deviation was 1.560, *t-value* was -5.188 and *df* was 496.

Table 11

Parent's Great Expectations from Children

Statement	Scale	<i>F</i>	%	Gender		Groups		Mean	S.D	Sig.
	Total	498	100	M	F	Sci	Arts			
Students are conscious because their parents want them to get full command over English	Strongly agree	218	43.8							
	Agree	192	38.6	4.11	4.12	4.02	4.23	4.11	1.192	.000
	Don't know	37	7.4							
	Disagree	28	5.6							
	Strongly disagree	23	4.6							

t-value: -0.093 *df.* 496

The question intended to know the parent's great expectations and its effect on language learning. The overall mean score was 4.11, which showed the strongest inclination towards the agreement; its *p-value* was significant and was less than .05. Standard deviation was 1.192, *t-value* was -0.093, and *df* was 496.

Table 12*Male's and Female's Hesitation While Interacting with Each Other*

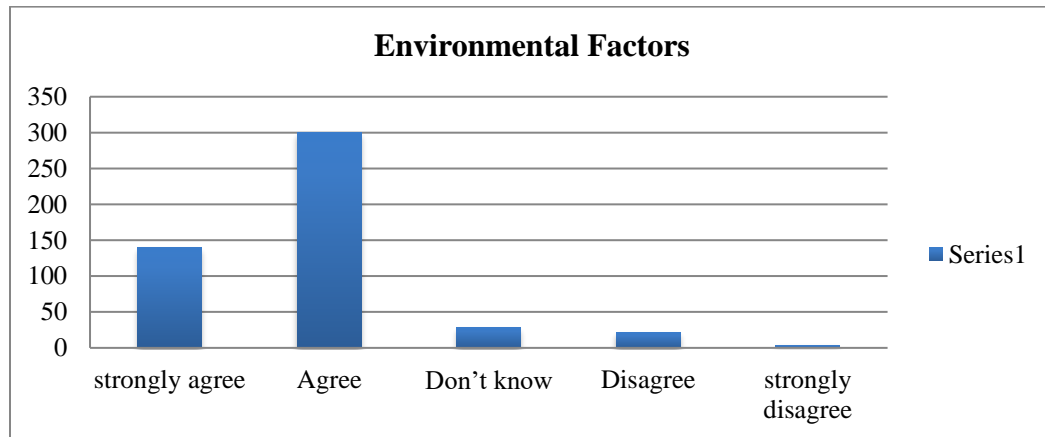
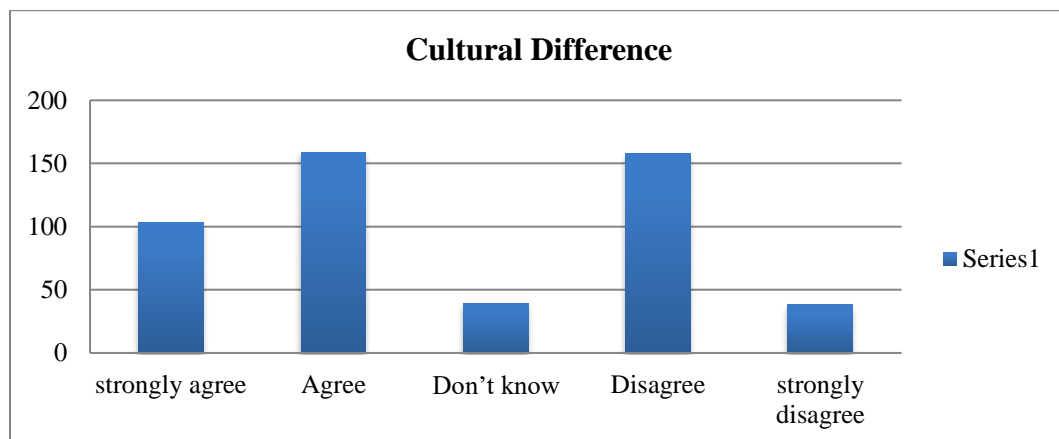
Statement	Scale	<i>f</i>	%	Gender		Groups		Mean	S.D	Sig.
				M	F	Sci	Arts			
Cultures where males and females study in separation at initial level, then at the graduate level; the learner feels uncomfortable interacting with the opposite sex.	Total	498	100							
	Strongly agree	176	35.3							
	Agree	190	38.2	3.69	4.15	4.04	3.76	3.92	1.032	.728
	Don't know	70	14.1							
	Disagree	40	8.0							
	Strongly disagree	22	4.4							

t-value: -4.739 *df*. 496

The purpose of the inquiry was that in Pakistan, most education systems are separate at the school level, and students feel uncomfortable due to this system when they reach to coeducation. The overall mean score was 3.92, which showed a strong inclination towards the agreement; its *p-value* was insignificant and was more than .05. Standard deviation was 1.032, *t-value* was -4.739, and *df* was 496.

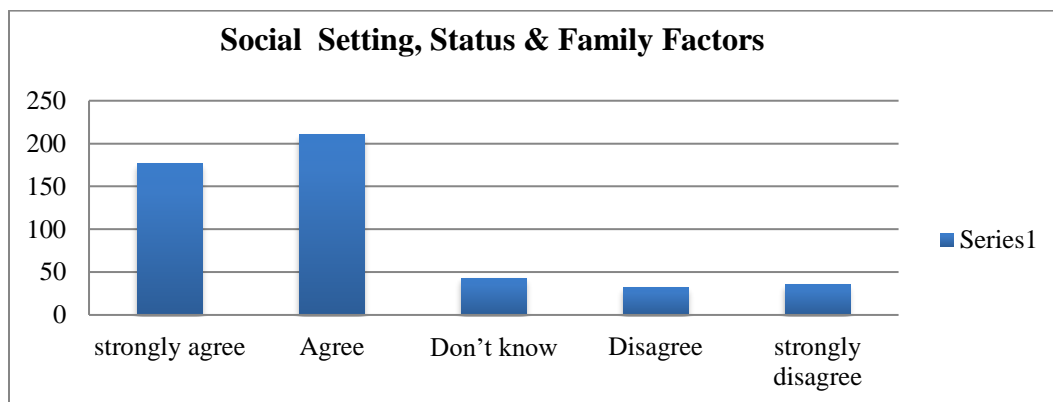
Assessment Between Factors***Sociocultural Factors***

This examination aimed at comprehending the environmental factors, which affect the oral communication of ESL learners. The analysis indicated mixed opinions, as shown in the graph. Data demonstrated that environmental factors were involved in acquiring oral competency and learners agreed that students used different languages at different places according to the context and due to interactional incompetency in the society and the little exposure of English in our environment. ESL learners felt trouble in acquiring excellent communication skills.

Figure 1*Average Value of all Environmental Factors***Figure 2***Average Value of Cultural Difference Factors in the Second Language*

The examination's objective was to know the debilitating factor due to cultural differences, which affects the oral communication of ESL learners. The analysis indicated that there is a mixed opinion, as shown in the graph.

Average Value of Social Setting, Status & Family Factors. The research intended to apprehend the weakening factor related to social setting, status, & family, which affect ESL learners' oral communication. The gathered data evaluation showed a diverse opinion, as shown in the graph.

Figure 3*Average Value of Social Setting, Status & Family Factors***Interview Data Analysis**

How would you say that adaptation of the English language in Pakistan is complicated because of the cultural differences?

Teachers have exposed that the Pakistanis are intensely rooted in their cultures. Every society has its rules and regulations; wherein, people hardly tolerate other language culture in their civilization. Another important belief is that many students are conscious of their religious views and are afraid of losing their self-identity. They are reluctant to communicate in English as they feel pressure from their social setup. The teachers agreed that adaptation of English in Pakistan is complicated because of multi sociocultural factors.

How does the social status of the students matter in the language learning process?

Teachers explained that social status always matters, as the students from the remote areas often remain silent due to inferiority complexes, which interrupted language learning. A few teachers agreed that it was valid to some extent, but the students quickly overcome this weakness.

Can you describe if the medium of instruction is in English; why students do not acquire speech competence?

Second language learning becomes the third language when the mother tongue is not Urdu in Pakistan. Due to cultural differences, English learning is not an easy task. Some learners feel that the English language is imposed on them due to the discrepancies in Pakistan's education system. Some students are not interested

in learning English in the class as well as communicating in daily life. Therefore, students do not acquire oral competency entirely and feel it as challenging due to environmental factors.

How does higher anxiety lower the performance of students?

Learners do not want to expose their deficiencies and often underestimate reaching at the best level. They prefer to keep silent and not discuss queries related to their studies. This hesitation automatically lowers their performance. Therefore, speaking the second language is challenging, which affects performance.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

The analyses indicated that 89% of the students favoured the statement that they use various languages at different places depending on the context. The overall score was 4.06.

The statistical study showed that most ESL learners want to communicate in English. Still, because of their limited English language exposure, they face difficulties in learning good communication skills. The mean composite score is 4.35.

The study's findings showed that 59.4% of students favoured the argument that learners' cultural and self-identity changes while acquiring the English language. The average mark is 3.29.

The research shows that 50% of the students favoured the argument that religious ideology could be changed in adapting to another language culture. Therefore, the students do not try to become fluent in speaking English. The average was around 3.22.

The survey showed that 82% of people believe that their parents feel proud when their children are fluent in English. Therefore, due to the parent's over expectations, the stress level increases. The overall rating was 4.11.

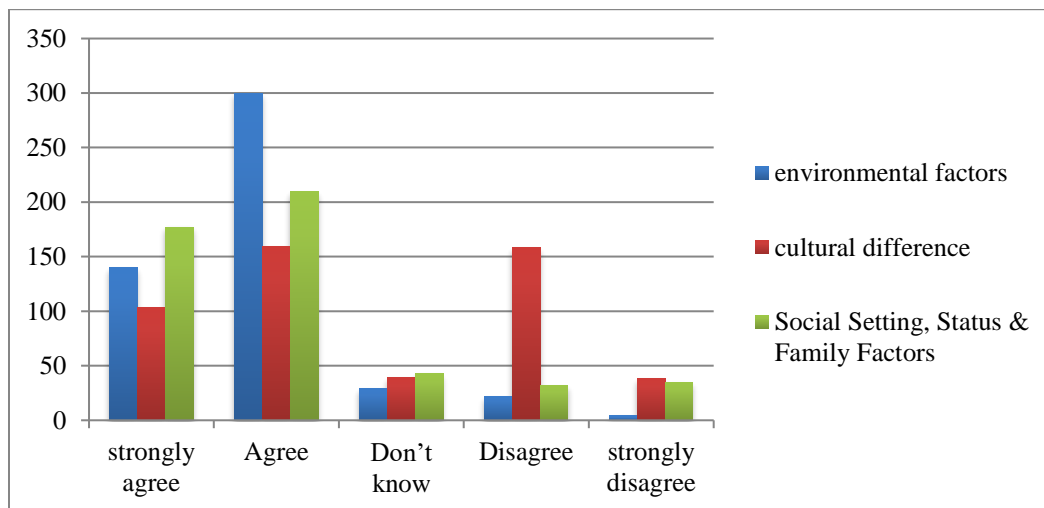
The data showed that 86.4% of learners found that students from remote areas are nervous about participating in class activities. The mean average score was 4.18.

The analysis aimed to recognize the most impeding sociocultural issues, which affect the ESL learners' communication skills. The analysis revealed that different factors displayed different trends and showed a strong inclination towards all the factors' statement. It can be seen that among all factors the

environmental factor was the most prominent factor affecting learner's oral competency among sociocultural factors.

Figure 4

Comparison between Sociocultural Factors



Discussion

The findings indicated that both interior and exterior factors had ruined English communication skills' adaptation process. The data was gathered from both the learners and the instructors to get the appropriate information about the issues. Analysis of the data has successfully proved the research hypothesis. As claimed, this research effectually describes the possible sociocultural issues. Communities in Pakistan are multicultural and a barrier in acquiring a second language, the researcher frequently noticed during data analysis that the English language is not a second language for most of the students in Pakistan rather a third language. The students usually communicate in the mother language at home and outside the home in Urdu while the medium of instruction of institutions is English. Average values of environmental factors in results have shown that almost all learners strongly agreed that students use different languages at different places according to the context, therefore, due to interactional incompetency in the society ESL learners feel trouble to obtain good communication skills.

Additionally, learners from educated families adapt good communication skills earlier than those from remote areas. On the other hand, parents' over

expectations from their children to get full command over English is also a debilitating factor, and the same factor was also explored by Tanveer in 2007 and Liao in 1999 in their research. The research revealed significant sociocultural factors, i.e., environmental, social status and family factors. These factors were also revealed by (Lightbrown & Spade, [2006](#); Tanveer, [2007](#)). The researcher has observed that Pakistani communities are intensely rooted in their societies; wherein most students practice their religious beliefs and cultural tendencies, and they do not want to lose their self-identity.

Recommendations

As a specific goal, the HEC should play an essential role in improving students oral skills: (1) By ensuring spoken classes separately and compulsory at the graduate level, (2) by demonstrating a suitable education atmosphere to enhance the learner's interest, (3) By providing proper training aids like multimedia and projector in colleges, (4) By organizing healthy competition among learners.

Moreover, the second language acquisition is difficult but not impossible. If we are sincere with our culture and a loyal follower of religion, then adaptation of any language and observation of the related culture never changes our identity and religious views, by wisely catering to certain regional, spiritual, and national limitations.

Furthermore, it is also recommended that the investigation of sociocultural factors should be evaluated from the school level as anxiety mostly nurtures at the initial level. To some extent, primary education is also responsible for flourishing these debilitating factors, it would be supportive of identifying which type of involvements are essential to decline unfavourable anxiety, relieved by facilitating the kind of anxiety, which may support the learners in the acquiring development (Hewitt & Stephenson, [2012](#)). Debilitating factors and their countermeasure factors may also be communicated to all those ESL instructors in Pakistan to get fruitful results at the national level.

Conclusions

The purpose of this examination was to evaluate the level of communication anxiety among ESL undergraduate students. The investigation indicated severe oral anxiety phases in a maximum of the ESL learners who were learning English due to sociocultural issues. Many sociocultural issues are disturbing ESL learners' oral competency. Language is directly or indirectly related to its civilization and society. Thus, students who are very concerned about their culture can find it hard

to progress in other language learning. The research concluded that many sociocultural factors affect language acquiring progress. The acquisition of other languages is already very tough due to the students' sociocultural factors since they are not acquiring. This study will help learners control their fear and for teachers to recognize the source of apprehension, especially concerning the sociocultural background.

Thus, empirical evidence offers useful knowledge about the value of language development with sociocultural factors. One of the required conditions for successful second language learning is making decisions according to societies and cultures. Namely, the variations in the systems of speech actions of native and learned languages, the framework of values of the target community, peculiarities of verbal and nonverbal behaviour under the norms of national culture. In Pakistan, we must consider that the English language is an essential part of life. Besides, this aspect needs to be addressed when developing education and teaching. More research should be planned to assess the degree to which English is taught in foreign countries and to differentiate how English is taught in such environments.

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