



Improving Communicative Competence through CLT Approach in Second Language Learning at the Undergraduate Level

Choudhry Shahid¹, Ishfaqe Ahmed Abbasi², Sobia Bhutto³

¹ Chairperson, Department of English, Acting Dean of Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Superior University Lahore, Pakistan. Email: chairperson.english@superior.edu.pk

² Department of Mathematics and Social Sciences, Sukkur IBA University, Pakistan. Email: ishfaqe@iba-suk.edu.pk

³ School of Educational Studies, University Sains Malaysia, Malaysia. Email: sobia.bhutto2018@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

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This study aimed to find the teachers' and students' beliefs about communicative language competence skills and their uses in undergraduate programs to improve educational careers. This study used a random sampling approach where 300 students from 6 departments (50 X 6) and 24 teachers from Superior University and the University of Lahore participated. The survey method was used to collect data for this study, and descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) were used to analyse the data. Universities help students develop their communication skills to meet workplace requirements, equally important for graduates' academic success. According to the study's results, teachers and students comprehend the idea of communicative competence and feel it is essential for academic and professional success. Student's potential to improve their communication skills is most inhibited by teachers' lack of language and disinterest in speaking English in the classroom. CLT's poor performance results from an outmoded curriculum, antiquated teaching methods, and a lack of teacher training. For the improvement of communication skills, innovative methods are necessary. CLT is important in Pakistan because it enables students to communicate effectively in social and cultural settings. In addition, CLT can help students develop critical thinking skills and a deeper understanding of their own culture and society. Furthermore, CLT aligns with the more pragmatic and communicative global approach to language teaching. It makes language learning for students more interactive, engaging, and meaningful. This can result in greater learning motivation and engagement. In addition, it can prepare students for success in academic and professional settings, where effective interpersonal ability is essential.

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Corresponding Author's Email: sobia.bhutto2018@gmail.com

1. Introduction

The nature of work is changing as a result of increased competition, technological advancements, and globalization for businesses. These changes affect graduates, educational institutions, and employers in two ways. First, college graduates expect degree programs that adequately prepare them for their careers. Second, according to (Ferguson, 2017), employers expect graduates to transition successfully into their careers. Ferguson (2017) states that employers consider interpersonal and communication skills to be essential qualities for graduates to possess. According to Jackson (2014), excellent job performance and achievement also require having strong communication skills. The perspectives of graduates have only been investigated in a limited number of studies, particularly those that concentrate on Chinese graduates. Much research has been done to investigate how managers see graduates' attributes, the significance of bettering communication skills, and the methods for

doing so (Jackson, 2014). In light of the disagreement among a wide variety of stakeholders regarding how graduate qualities manifest themselves in the working world, it is crucial to investigate how graduates understand and reflect on their application of graduate qualities, particularly communication skills (Barrie, 2006). Morreale and Pearson (2008) contend that schools should include instruction on efficient methods of communication in their curricula.

The use of and significance of communication skills are the subjects of this paper. The narratives of various stakeholders about their experiences developing and utilizing communication skills serve as inspiration for the literature review, which investigates prominent and current thinking regarding communication skills. The paper backs up the need to emphasize the significance of communication skills for employability. Additionally, it makes a case for expanding resources' availability in standalone programs and curricula. This paper considers the usefulness of graduates' communication skills to employers, the appropriateness of strategies for their development, and the need for further communication skill development. This study has been backed by Pakistani instructors and students who have utilised the CLT approach to assist students in improving their communication abilities. This study focuses on the role of instructors and students in using CLT in the classroom and maintaining a stable approach in selecting goals and activities to improve communicative competence. In order to achieve the subsequent goal, The National Qualifications Framework of Pakistan (2015) has specified the following knowledge and capability application objectives for undergraduate students:

According to The National Qualifications Framework of Pakistan (2015), "Communication competence must reflect a clear, coherent, and independent presentation of information and ideas, as well as application with responsibility and accountability for one's learning and professional activities, as well as collaboration with others within broad boundaries." For teaching English as a second language, communicative language education has grown famous as a theoretic framework. This technique is extensively used and recognised as essential for teaching languages (Karim, 2004). The communicative method's fundamental purpose is to develop learners' language use skills, changing the education paradigm from merely teaching grammar to a language students need for conversation (Chang & Goswami, 2011). The study's primary aim was to investigate the teachers and students of undergraduate programme students views on the communication skills, attributes, and activities needed to develop communication skills in the target language. The following questions were explored as part of the investigation of instructors' and students' views of communicative ability in this study:

- What are the teachers' and students' beliefs about communicative competence, and why is it significant for academic and career success?
- What learning and teaching attributes are important to enhance students' communication skills in undergraduate programmes?
- What CLT based classroom activities can develop the student's communication skills in undergraduate programmes?

2. Literature Review

The literature has identified three broad themes. The significance of good communication skills first. Second, methods for incorporating communication abilities into lecture sessions. Thirdly, ways to incorporate communication skills outside of lectures. Subsidiary themes emerge from the literature within the larger themes. These include the expectations of employers and students, the intercultural setting, difficulties, particularly for Chinese students, and the appropriateness of university skill development methods. Two additional themes are work-integrated learning (W.I.L.) and student organizations and committees strategies for developing skills outside the lecture hall. According to Gerstein and Friedman (2016), since disciplinary knowledge alone is insufficient for a successful career, numerous businesses argue that universities should cultivate students' soft skills. There is much debate about what skills are needed, but good communication skills are needed (Jackson, 2016). According to (Brink & Costigan, 2015), the literature demonstrates that employers place a high value on graduates' communication skills and either expect graduates to have strong communication skills themselves. Although Stowe, Parent, Schwartz, and Sendall (2012) and Shahid, Abbasi, and Gurmani (2022) have demonstrated that all three of these skills are important, they have also shown that employers often value one above the

others. Heron (2019) and McNatt (2020) argue that interpersonal communication is the most important talent, but Robles (2012) insists that oral communication abilities, especially public speaking and presentation skills, are the most important (Ivanova, Gubanova, Shakirova, & Masitoh, 2020; Tsang, 2020).

The research is contradictory regarding graduate competency levels and industry communication standards. For instance, Moore and Morton (2017) add that the written communication skills taught are typically different from those necessary for the job (Fulwiler, 2020). Additionally, they contend that it might be difficult to define communication skills that are universally relevant to all jobs since the written communication skills needed in different industries can differ. Despite Moore and Morton (2017) suggesting that written communication skills are not as weak as is usually asserted in government reports, Jackson (2014) claims that communication is one of the graduates' least developed skills. Researchers Clokie and Fourie (2016) found that graduates lacked interpersonal and writing communication skills despite these skills being covered in the course. They advise adding communication skills at all curriculum levels to guarantee industrial applicability based on certain writers (Jackson, 2014; Jackson & Chapman, 2012).

According to Hussain (2017), CLT techniques and exercises are used to some extent in our higher education institutions, and statistical data shows that English language instruction in Punjab, Pakistan, is reasonably successful from various perspectives, including comprehension reading, test achievement, and oral familiarity. According to the professors, interaction with a native speaker is not as effective as it should be. The instructors encounter significant challenges, but they are justifiable in light of the CLT technique. Among those who have made this assertion are (S. Ahmad & Rao, 2013; Ahsan & Anjum, 2012; Akram & Mahmood, 2011; Z. Muhammad, 2016; Panhwar, Baloch, & Khan, 2017; Sarfraz, Mansoor, & Tariq, 2015). The training department should recognise the relevance of using the CLT approach to help students become English-literate training department and other partners should recognise the relevance of using the CLT approach to help students become English-literate. The English language education prospectus is subject to modification as needed. The utilisation of innovation in education and a focus on enhancing communication with students should be emphasised in educator preparation programmes. All language aptitudes should be evaluated, and the test framework should not just concentrate on writing abilities.

Students have inadequate language skills (Aqeel & Sajid, 2014), difficulties speaking, reading, and writing in English, and trouble complying with instructors' directions since English is taught in elite and non-elite institutions (Channa, 2017; Khattak, 2012; Warsi, 2004). Furthermore, instructors struggle with their students' poor communication abilities, lack of drive, limited language, and short practice issues (Almubark, 2016). There are teacher-related issues, such as a focus on traditional grammar procedures, vocabulary growth, a lack of feedback on students' weaknesses, and available correction of errors, which demotivates students (Aqeel & Sajid, 2014; Khan, 2011). According to Ahmed and Rao (2012), the English language is a critical component of Pakistan's academic and social success (S. Muhammad, 2011). Language competence is required for university graduates to complete their degrees (Nasir, Naqvi, & Bhamani, 2013), and instructors should provide tasks to help students improve their proficiency (Dar & Khan, 2015). Students must master all four skills since they are interconnected (Moreau, 2015).

In Pakistan, language competence measures students' skills rather than academic accomplishment (Khan, 2011). Most teachers in Pakistan have degrees in English literature and prioritize the development of just one skill, writing, while disregarding the other four language skills (Pathan, 2012). Pakistani students learn languages to pass examinations, not for daily use (Shamim, 2011). English language teachers employ traditional teaching techniques, and students repeat the lectures and information on their papers to pass examinations. Language learners should be taught ways to increase their learning capacity, and teachers may serve as role models for students in this respect (Çakici, 2015). Most teachers do not use the new technique, which has resulted in a low percentage of success among university students in communicative competence. In the classroom, interpersonal, emotional, and cultural factors influence language acquisition more than cognitive ones (Wang & Wang, 2016). Teachers must be encouraged to adopt creative approaches in the classroom,

and form-focused language training to satisfy students' language learning goals in the contemporary environment. Yusoff, Gurmani, Sanif, and Noor (2022) and M. Gurmani, LATIFF, Shahid, Abbasi, and Bhutto (2022) suggest using technology to learn the English language to communicate proficiently at the tertiary level, while M. T. Gurmani, Salmani, Shahid, Abbasi, and Ali (2022) suggested improving academic vocabulary to be able to communicate proficiently.

The classroom is the best setting for instilling a sense of freedom and responsibility in students, enabling them to benefit from language learning throughout their academic careers (Najeeb, 2013). In light of new paradigms in language education that have prioritised learner-centered teaching, every English language teacher works hard to create a classroom with a better atmosphere where students may fully use the language (Maccintyre, 2007). Those students who are dissatisfied with their communication requirements lack inherent motivation to learn the target language, negatively impacting their interest and attitude toward the course (Jurik, Gröschner, & Seidel, 2014). Communicative language competence is important because it enables individuals to understand others in various contexts, such as at work, school, and personal life (Gilbertson, Ewert, Siklander, & Bates, 2022). Additionally, it is crucial for fostering connections and understanding other cultures, both of which are increasingly crucial in today's globally interconnected society (Munezane, 2021).

In Pakistan, where many different languages are spoken, and communication is essential for social and economic growth, communicative language competence is especially important (F. Abbas, Rana, Bashir, & Bhatti, 2021). First, English is extensively used and understood in Pakistan, particularly in the commercial and educational sectors. For individuals in these industries, having a high degree of communicative language competence in English may lead to various possibilities. Second, a variety of regional languages are spoken in Pakistan, including Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, and Pashto. Being proficient in these languages is essential for communicating effectively with communities and understanding the subtle cultural differences between various areas. Thirdly, Pakistan is a multilingual and multicultural country in which social cohesiveness is aided by good communication between diverse communities. Communicative language competence may aid individuals in better understanding and appreciating the viewpoints of others, which is essential for promoting respect and understanding among people. Finally, Pakistan is a developing nation, and as a result, there is a growing need for individuals who can communicate successfully in various languages. Pakistan's inhabitants must have a high degree of communicative language competence for their country to participate in the global market.

A person must be able to communicate effectively and properly with a variety of individuals, and with a variety of communities. Hence communicative language competence is essential in Pakistan. Numerous chances for social, economic, and personal growth may be presented. Therefore, this study was conducted to fill the research gap, as sufficient studies have not been conducted where the opinion of both students and teachers at the tertiary level was collected and descriptively analyzed.

3. Methodology

Canale and Swain (1981) provided a theoretic framework for the study's basis. Communication in English requires more than simply grammatical competence; it also necessitates social, conversational, and strategic competence. The data for this study came from the University of Lahore and Superior University in Lahore, Pakistan, where the descriptive survey method was used. A suitable sampling strategy was used to assemble data from B.S. Education, English, Clinical Psychology, Computer Science, Commerce, and B.S. Accounting and Finance, who attended three English-language courses in the previous semester. Fifty students from each department completed the survey, including 24 English Language teachers. The Yufrizal (2017) communicative competence questionnaire was adapted for use in the Pakistani context for this study. The scale's reliability was tested, and teachers' Cronbach's Alpha of 0.80 and students' Scale of Cronbach's Alpha of 0.84 show close relativity of the items. The survey has one descriptive section, and the second section has further sub-sections with 40 items.

4. Data Analysis

4.1 What are the teachers' and students' beliefs about communicative competence, and why is it significant for academic and career success?

The mean outcome of 3.85 demonstrates that the definition of communicative competence is the capability to speak English and that students regard it as an all-around capability to utilize language efficiently for all drives. This is shown by the fact that the mean score of the students was 3.85. However, teachers who awarded scores of 3.96 and 3.88 feel that students can read, write, and communicate in English. Students think strong communication skills are crucial when applying for jobs, followed by having them while interacting with others. On the other hand, instructors place a significant amount of significance on communication skills for academic achievement 3.96 and socialization.

Table 1: Demographic Information of the participants

	Students	Teachers
No. of Participants	300	24
Gender	150 Males, 150 Females	12 Males, 12 Females
Degree Programs	BS Education, BS English, Clinical Psychology, Computer Science, Commerce, and B.S. Accounting and Finance	English Language Teaching Department
Background	Rural 140 Urban 160	Rural 11 Urban 13
Name of the University	Superior university and University of Lahore	Superior university and University of Lahore
Qualification		Ph.D. 4 M.Phil. 20 teachers
Study abroad		3 teachers studied abroad

Table 2: Group Statistics

	Sample	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Definition of communicative competence	Students	300	2	5	3.71	.643	.053
	Teachers	24	3	5	3.84	.444	.089
Objectives of language learning	Students	300	2	5	3.91	.609	.050
	Teachers	24	2	5	3.90	.409	.082
Importance of communicative competence	Students	300	2	5	3.68	.651	.053
	Teachers	24	2	5	3.76	.635	.127
Qualities needed to develop communicative competence	Students	300	2	5	3.68	.700	.057
	Teachers	24	2	5	3.84	.539	.108
Difficulties in developing communicative competence	Students	300	2	9	3.73	.762	.062
	Teachers	24	2	4	3.89	.452	.090
Activities to develop communicative competence	Students	300	3	5	3.77	.561	.046
	Teachers	24	3	5	4.03	.424	.085
Changes needed to develop communicative competence	Students	300	2	5	3.89	.485	.040
	Teachers	24	2	5	3.93	.504	.101

4.2 What learning and teaching attributes are important to enhance the communication skills of the students in undergraduate programs?

Students’ primary goals in language study include developing the competence to think and read in the target language, as shown by the mean score distributions of 4.13 and 4.06. Fewer students are interested in studying foreign languages for academic or professional goals. Teachers aim for students to be able to apply it in social situations and writing. According to instructors, self-reliance and accountability are the two most important personal attributes for developing communicative competence. In order to be a good language learner, students believe in taking responsibility and trying out different tactics. Students say that professors' lack of English proficiency is the most significant barrier to developing their conversational skills. Principal obstacles include teachers’ lack of competence, outmoded curricula, and the battle to maintain control in the classroom. Teachers concur that their competency in the target language is limited and that their inability to talk in the target language due to the conventional teaching technique prevents them from serving as role models in the class.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics of Students' Responses

	N	Range	Min	Max	Sum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Language Learning Objectives							
I learn English in order to use it for communication purposes.	300	4	1	5	1116	3.72	1.048
I learn English in order to use it for my writing purposes	300	4	1	5	1162	3.87	.956
The goal of my learning English is to enable students to communicate in the target language appropriately within social contexts	300	4	1	5	1126	3.75	.939
The purpose of my learning English is how to communicate by learning to think in the target language	300	3	2	5	1238	4.13	.778
The desired outcome of my students learning English is the ability to read and understand texts written in English	300	4	1	5	1218	4.06	.836
Communicative Competence							
an ability to speak in English	300	3	2	5	1154	3.85	.894
an ability to write in English	300	4	1	5	1086	3.62	1.113
an ability to read in English	300	4	1	5	1100	3.67	.965
an overall ability to use language effectively for all purposes	300	4	1	5	1106	3.69	.897
Communicative Competence							
it is important for socializing	300	3	2	5	1104	3.68	.852
it is important for academic success	300	4	1	5	1092	3.64	1.049
it is important for a job	300	4	1	5	1112	3.71	.838
Difficulties in developing Communicative Competence							
teachers are not speaking in English	300	40	2	42	1238	4.13	3.237
teachers are using the traditional lecture approach	300	4	1	5	1090	3.63	.906
syllabus is outdated	300	4	1	5	1098	3.66	1.040
teachers are not good language models for the students	300	4	1	5	1096	3.65	1.133
teachers have low proficiency in English	300	4	1	5	1110	3.70	1.007
teachers only try to control the class	300	4	1	5	1108	3.69	1.097
Teachers do not focus on students learning "How to Learn."	300	4	1	5	1090	3.63	1.004
Personal Qualities Needed for Developing Communicative competence							
ready to make mistakes	300	4	1	5	1118	3.73	1.059
responsible for learning	300	4	1	5	1124	3.75	.934
self-reliability	300	4	1	5	1086	3.62	.993
try new strategies	300	4	1	5	1090	3.63	.928

Changes that can help develop communicative competence							
Teaching methodology needs to change	300	4	1	5	1172	3.91	.853
Learning activities need to change	300	4	1	5	1172	3.91	.906
Course materials need to change	300	3	2	5	1170	3.90	.894
The evaluation system needs to change	300	4	1	5	1176	3.92	.877
The syllabus design needs to change	300	4	1	5	1172	3.91	.876
In-service teacher training to change	300	4	1	5	1148	3.83	.923
After-class activities in which oral English is practiced need to change	300	3	2	5	1162	3.87	.868
The English-speaking environment on campus needs to impose	300	3	2	5	1172	3.91	.845
Class activities that promote communicative competence							
Communication games	300	3	2	5	1148	3.83	.856
Pair and group work	300	4	1	5	1108	3.69	1.097
Role plays and simulations	300	4	1	5	1076	3.59	1.068
Problem-solving	300	4	1	5	1118	3.73	1.001
Teacher is facilitating the communication activities	300	4	1	5	1138	3.79	.868
Authentic materials (newspaper, articles, reports)	300	3	2	5	1122	3.74	.971
Course book exercise	300	4	1	5	1170	3.90	.931
Dialogues, speech lessons	300	4	1	5	1172	3.91	.860
Syllabus focusing on grammar	300	3	2	5	1162	3.87	.820
Lectures only	300	4	1	5	1110	3.70	.909

4.3 What are the CLT based classroom activities that can develop the communication skills of the students in undergraduate programmes?

Instructors feel that there must be modifications to in-service teacher training and that students must have verbal practice opportunities outside class. Teachers also believe in modifying instructional activities, methodologies, and curricula to enhance students' communication abilities. On the other hand, students favor altering the campus atmosphere, assessment system, methodology, and course content. The students and the professors have different perspectives about the activities that take place in the classroom, such as communication games, the use of actual content, and dialogues. Teachers' emphasis on group projects, critical thinking, more attention to grammar, and lectures have increased. The students in the class exhibit a lower level of interest in activities that include working in groups and listening to lectures. They are more interested in the class conversations and activities are taken from the course book.

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics of Teachers' Responsibilities

	N	Range	Min	Max	Sum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Language Learning Objectives							
My students learn English in order that they are able to use the target language communicatively	24	2	3	5	95	3.80	.500
My students learn English in order that they are able to write in the target language	24	2	3	5	99	3.96	.676
The goal of my teaching English is to enable students to communicate in the target language appropriately within social contexts	24	2	3	5	100	4.00	.645
The purpose of my students learning English is that students learn how to communicate by learning to think in the target language	24	3	2	5	99	3.96	.735
The desired outcome of my students learning English is the ability to read and understand texts written in English	24	3	2	5	94	3.76	.779

Communicative Competence							
an ability to speak in English	24	2	3	5	95	3.80	.707
an ability to write in English	24	3	2	5	97	3.88	.971
an ability to read in English	24	3	2	5	99	3.96	.841
an overall ability to use language effectively for all purposes	24	3	2	5	93	3.72	.843
Communicative Competence							
it is important for socialising	24	3	2	5	93	3.72	.792
it is important for academic success	24	3	2	5	99	3.96	.935
it is important for a job	24	3	2	5	90	3.60	.957
Difficulties in developing Communicative Competence							
teachers are not speaking in English	24	3	2	5	98	3.92	.862
teachers are using the traditional lecture approach	24	3	2	5	98	3.92	.812
syllabus is outdated	24	3	2	5	94	3.76	.970
teachers are not good language models for the students	24	3	2	5	97	3.88	.971
teachers have low proficiency in English	24	3	2	5	105	4.20	.816
teachers only try control the class	24	3	2	5	94	3.76	1.052
Teachers do not focus on students learning "How to Learn."	24	3	2	5	94	3.76	1.012
Personal Qualities Needed for Developing Communicative competence							
ready to make mistakes	24	4	1	5	94	3.76	1.052
responsible for learning	24	3	2	5	96	3.84	.800
self-reliability	24	2	3	5	99	3.96	.735
try new strategies	24	3	2	5	95	3.80	.913
Changes that can help develop communicative competence							
Teaching methodology needs to change	24	3	2	5	98	3.92	.909
Learning activities need to change	24	4	1	5	99	3.96	1.060
Course materials need to change	24	3	2	5	93	3.72	.936
The evaluation system needs to change	24	3	2	5	95	3.80	1.000
The syllabus design needs to change	24	3	2	5	98	3.92	.862
In-service teacher training to change	24	3	2	5	103	4.12	.927
After-class activities in which oral English is practiced need to change	24	3	2	5	103	4.12	.781
The English-speaking environment on campus needs to impose	24	3	2	5	97	3.88	1.054
Class activities that promote communicative competence							
Communication games	24	2	3	5	98	3.92	.702
Pair and group work	24	3	2	5	104	4.16	.746
Role plays and simulations	24	2	3	5	98	3.92	.572
Problem-solving	24	3	2	5	103	4.12	.927
Teacher facilitates the communication activities	24	2	3	5	102	4.08	.640
Authentic materials (newspaper, articles, reports)	24	3	2	5	94	3.76	.970
Course book exercise	24	3	2	5	99	3.96	.790
Dialogues, speech lessons, etc.	24	3	2	5	99	3.96	.790
Syllabus focusing on grammar	24	3	2	5	108	4.32	.690
Lectures only	24	3	2	5	103	4.12	.971

5. Discussion

This research aimed to investigate the perspectives of instructors and students in undergraduate programs developing communication skills. The applicants had divergent perspectives on the objectives of English language acquisition and the development of their capability in English language learning. According to Heron (2019) and Valdez (2015), to support students' development, teachers need to improve their skills in oral communication and ensure that local and international students have equal opportunities to participate in classroom discussions. This is necessary in order to assist the growth of students. For instance, before class sessions, educators may send students study questions that go along

with the reading material to encourage pre-class preparation (Tatar, 2005). Two methods that may motivate students to participate in classroom discussions include cold calling and grading their involvement (Dallimore, Hertenstein, & Platt, 2008). In addition, there has to be a greater emphasis placed on developing the student's writing skills. Morgan (1997) and Anderson (2013) stress the importance of teaching students how to improve their writing communication skills. One example of a programmed signed to help international students improve their spoken and written English language skills is the English Language Teaching Enhancement Strategy (GELES) programs offered at the university.

Daly, Hoy, Hughes, Islam, and Mak (2015) recommended another pertinent one which suggests that universities involved in international education should consider offering a standalone intercultural communication course that encourages students from both domestic and international backgrounds to actively learn about specific cultural differences. Lastly, according to Dune et al. (2018), e-portfolios can assist students in reflecting on their cultural responsiveness and communication abilities. In order to increase student participation in the classroom and assist graduates in understanding the significance of communication skills for the job market, resources for academic staff professional development are required (Heron, 2019; Valdez, 2015). For universities to implement the initiatives mentioned above, a framework that targets domestic and international students and embeds communication skills throughout the curriculum (Arkoudis, 2014; Johnson, Veitch, & Dewiyanti, 2015).

According to Deci, Koestner, and Ryan (1999), regardless, aims are only compelling partners if they progress toward being slightly acknowledged, a supposition expressed in Deci and Ryan (2013) essential capacity between learning features and external enthusiasm. Cook (1983) distinguishes two types of objectives: external and internal. External purposes pertain to using the second tongue outside the classroom, regardless of whether local or individual L2 speakers are involved. Internal aims pertain to the students' internal lives as individuals instead of their social relationships. Typically motivated students participate in the learning process because they find it fascinating and enjoyable; excessively driven students complete the learning task to get a reward or avoid reprimand. In language learning motivation, trademark language learning objectives are identified by Noels, Pelletier, Clément, and Vallerand (2003), which relate to outcomes of enjoyment and improvement experienced throughout the language learning process. According to Zimmerman (2008), however, persuasive goals are perceptive and enable students to concentrate on the target language. In addition to their motivating influence, objectives apply their passionate energy. This study indicated that students are more interested in acquiring English competence for professional purposes. Teachers feel it is essential for academic achievement. According to Dar and Khan (2015) and others, to become self-motivated and autonomous to meet their personal and interpersonal communication requirements and to fulfil their duties as future leaders, managers, instructors, and entrepreneurs overseas and at home, they must acquire these skills.

According to Nasir et al. (2013), English is the language of teaching in higher education, and students must possess strong language abilities to advance academically. According to F. Abbas et al. (2021), students with poor abilities do poorly in English and other disciplines. This circumstance has made language proficiency essential for students' academic advancement (Dar & Khan, 2015). Low academic achievement causes unhappiness; nonetheless, student satisfaction is essential for higher education objectives. Better academic achievements may be attained by providing emotional support (Najeeb, 2013) and increasing student motivation (Jurik et al., 2014). This study indicated that instructors had poor competency in the target language, which negatively affected the confidence and competence of their students.

According to Yaqoob and Zubair (2012), most university-level students in Pakistan attend public institutions. According to S. Muhammad (2011), students with a background in lecture-based instruction have a weak foundation in the English language and have difficulties in college. University students from an Urdu-medium background cannot keep up with those from an English-medium background and have difficulty continuing their education (Akbar, Burney, Aslam, & Mubin, 2014). According to Asif, Bashir, and Zafar (2018), the students' communication competence is essential to university-level study. Unfortunately, instructors do

not design their activities to meet the diverse requirements of their students (Akbar et al., 2014; Yasmin & Sohail, 2018). According to Fareed, Jawed, and Awan (2018), careful preparation is required because a teacher's demeanor affects students' learning. This research also revealed that students strongly wish to build communicative competence and feel that an English-speaking atmosphere and extracurricular activities for oral practice are essential for enhancing their spoken language abilities. The study also revealed that instructors do not speak English, preventing students from learning from their teachers as target language models.

The main motive of the students is to pass the test, and professors of the English language use conventional teaching techniques. Students memorize the lectures and regurgitate the information for their exams. Teachers may act as a model in strategy development for language learners who need instruction to create ways to maximize their learning capacity (Çakici, 2015). Universities have a poor level of communicative competence since most professors do not use the new method, leading to low student success rates. According to Wang and Wang (2016), interpersonal, emotional, and cultural aspects impact classrooms more than cognitive elements, which influence language instruction. To meet the language learning objectives of the children, the current context must urge instructors to use innovative classroom strategies in addition to form-focused language instruction. This study's findings confirm that instructors employ conventional techniques, place more emphasis on grammar, and choose lectures as a teaching approach. Students' competence in the target language cannot be established under these circumstances. This is why students spend 18 years learning English in school and college yet find it difficult to explain themselves in English at the university level.

Shamim (2011) notes that rigorous review and debate of English requirements in Pakistan are necessary. She repeated that the education system and teaching techniques, primarily focused on examination-based material and giving no opportunity for students to enhance their reading abilities and utilize language effectively in and out of the classroom, should be overhauled. Teaching beliefs, strategy, and curriculum are the most important aspects of language instruction, and instructors should establish ambitious objectives to satisfy the learners' demanding requirements (Hameed & Jan, 2016). Assessment of language learning is essential, but the evaluation system in Pakistani institutions is flawed due to several external and internal factors (S. I. Ahmad & Malik, 2011; Rehmani, 2006). According to (S. I. Ahmad & Malik, 2011), external factors include context and teaching methods, while internal factors include opinions, motivation, individual ability, and attitude. According to research studies, the failure rate in objectives, colleges, and universities is significant because students lack English competence (Khattak, 2012). The study results indicate that instructors feel that new ways of competence, training, and modifications to the curricula may involve students in activities like communication games, debates, and discussions of real-world problems to improve their language skills.

"One country – One vision" is the government of Pakistan's 2025 motto, increasing the Gross Domestic Product (G.D.P.) through the increase of tertiary education built on the knowledge economy. According to Nasir et al. (2013), English is the language of teaching in higher education, and students must possess strong language abilities to advance academically. According to N. Abbas, Ashiq, and Abrar ul haq (2018), students with poor abilities do poorly in English and other disciplines. This circumstance has made language proficiency essential for students' academic advancement (Dar & Khan, 2015). Low academic achievement causes unhappiness, and student satisfaction is crucial for achieving higher education objectives. According to Najeeb (2013) and others, their motivation level may be increased to obtain improved academic performance through emotional support. According to Doménech-Betoret and Gómez-Artiga (2014), students' inadequate English ability has broken their self-assurance and rendered them unable to participate in the classroom. According to Alzubair (2016), the teaching method and instructor's demeanour in the classroom exacerbate the divide between students and teachers. According to instructors and students, this study uncovered some essential adjustments, including a new curriculum, teacher training, communication games, group activities, and more verbal practice for students to increase their communicative competence.

In addition, ways for bringing work-integrated learning into curricula are recommended to enhance students' skills in written and verbal communication (De la Harpe & David, 2012). Students may receive assistance in overcoming challenges that arise during their W.I.L. programmes through the utilization of various instructional methods, including preparation for W.I.L., feedback and mentorship during the programs, and peer reflections following the completion of the program (Jackson, 2014).

6. Conclusion

First, this study added to the body of knowledge by focusing on graduates' perceptions of the significance of workplace communication skills rather than employers' perceptions. In addition, the study included the perspectives of Chinese graduates, which broadened the scope of the investigation because very few studies have focused on the perspectives of this particular group. Second, most graduates from both studies were pleased with their university communication skills development. For developing their communication skills, graduates from both studies cited class presentations, participation in class discussions, and written assignments as important. Even though most students in Study 2 were pleased with the classroom teaching methods, one student suggested that educators should provide more explanations to Chinese students who did not follow instructions well. Another student believed that universities ought to place a greater emphasis on writing, discussion, and analysis. During their studies at a foreign university, the participants in Study 2 developed effective group working skills. However, there appeared to be no guidelines for intercultural collaboration among students. It was thought that participating in W.I.L. and student organizations was important for developing communication skills. Finally, suggestions were made for incorporating a variety of pedagogical approaches and structural enhancements into universities to assist students in overcoming obstacles related to their W.I.L. experiences and encourage them to improve their communication and intercultural skills. It is suggested that curricula, standalone programs, and W.I.L. programs provide greater access to resources. According to Bhatti (2013), education aims to educate students to accept their societal positions confidently. According to Sarwar, Alam, Hussain, Shah, and Jabeen (2014), a student might have the knowledge to do daily tasks but learning "how to learn" is a specific problem.

Students lack intrinsic motivation because their communicative requirements are unmet (Jurik et al., 2014). According to Doménech-Betoret and Gómez-Artiga (2014), they want a feeling of belonging, and their accomplishment suffers if they have no part to play in the competence; the development of their skills and their connection to class activities are also important. The research findings reveal that instructors and students are conversant with the idea of communicative competence and recognize its significance for academic performance and future career requirements. Students and instructors agree that self-sufficiency, accountability, and the adoption of innovative tactics are necessary to develop communicative competence. Teachers' limited capability in English and preference for the mother language, out-of-date curricula, and adopting old tactics are among the primary obstacles to fostering students' communicative competence. Instructors and students at the tertiary level in Pakistan agree that modifying the curriculum, training for teachers, oral practice, and introducing innovative approaches would enhance students' communication skills. Communicative competence must be presented in language courses to engage students and assist them in performing their roles successfully and responsibly. To guarantee the excellence of language teaching and learning in Pakistan's higher education institutions, there is a need for more research in the EFL setting at the tertiary level to investigate the communicative competence perceptions of instructors and students.

6.1 Limitations of the Study

The following are the limitations of the current study:

- The study was delimited to only one city and from two private universities to establish validity. Study samples from public institutions and different cities might provide different results.
- Lack of funding and resources was another cause of conducting research at a small level.
- Limited access was provided to the research participants, and qualitative data could not be collected.

- Limited access to technology and lack of participants' training was another cause where large-scale data was not being collected.

6.2 Practical Implications

The communicative language teaching approach emphasizes the utilization of authentic and meaningful conversation in the language classroom. The following are some applications of this approach.

- Emphasis on communicative competence: Rather than only memorizing rules, students are urged to apply the language in everyday contexts to improve their communicative competence.
- To expose students to the language as it is used, authentic sources like newspapers and media should be utilized in the classroom.
- Students should be offered the opportunity for role-playing and simulation.
- It is necessary to include peer group and collaborative learning for students in the lesson plans, where they work and interact by working in groups to accomplish tasks.
- Instructional strategies in classrooms should be student-centered and action-oriented.

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