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Investigating Pakistani university students' level of Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in English as a foreign language: A case study of students from the Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, Sindh (SALU)

**Mumtaz Ali**

**A thesis submitted in the partial fulfilment  
of the requirements of the University of Northumbria at Newcastle  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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## **Abstract**

The current study sets out to investigate the level of Pakistani university students' willingness to communicate (WTC) in English and what affects users' willingness in a setting where English has been taught, learnt, and used as a foreign language. Pakistan is a linguistically complex society where ethnic diversity and multiple educational systems increasingly makes English language teaching (ELT) daunting and challenging. This thesis, therefore, highlights particularly the linguistic issues users of English face while perceiving their willingness to communicate in English in their day-to-day affairs. I argue that linguists and policy makers, in Pakistan, have largely neglected or failed to address the issues related to users of English ability to communicate in English. Moreover, I argue that studying these users' willingness to communicate in English has also been essential in a sense to comprehend that how such users perceive their level of willingness to communicate under various conversational contexts with different types of interlocutors.

The present study was conducted at Shah Abdul Latif University (SALU), Khairpur, Pakistan. Khairpur is one of the oldest cities of Pakistan with its rich cultural heritage and political history. However, the educational standard is still in its early stages of development due to the rural location and lack of interest from the government. Using mixed-method research measures, the current study recruited N=350 research participants for self-administered questionnaires and N=15 for semi-structured interviews. The findings of the present study suggested that users of English from SALU did not have a high level of WTC and their WTC was affected by a host of factors such as topic, task type, interlocutors, interactional contexts, desire to get good grades, gender, lack of self-confidence and communication anxiety, and some of the background variables. Evidence from self-report

questionnaires and semi-structured interviews indicated that familiarity with interlocutors and knowledge of the interactional contexts encouraged L2 learners to be more willing to communicate. Results of the study further revealed that the influence of the combination of variables differed between individuals and interrelationship could be too complex to be predicted. At the end, acknowledging the limitations of the current study, recommendations for future research have been proposed along with possible pedagogical implications.

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## **Declaration**

I declare that this thesis is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other award at University of Northumbria or any other institution

**Name: Mumtaz Ali**

**Signature:**

# **Chapter 01**

## **Introduction and Overview**

### **1.1 Background of the study**

The growing trends towards modern approaches of second language teaching (SLT) marked a new beginning with the publication of the MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) construct of the willingness to communicate (WTC) in English (MacIntyre & Doucette, 2010; Cao and Philip, 2006; Kang, 2005; Yashima, 2002; MacIntyre et al., 2003; Yashima et al., 2004). Based on that, it was further argued that interaction in a second language (L2) could further lead development and learning in an L2 (Kang, 2005:278). Given that, some of the researchers argued that the fundamental goal of both the second language and foreign language should be the cultivation of WTC in the language learning process, which would encourage L2 learners to seek out communication opportunities and use language for authentic interaction (Gass, 2003; MacIntyre et al., 2001). However, the unwillingness of users of English to engage in authentic communication has essentially been one of the major issues in both English as a foreign language (EFL) as well as English as a second language (ESL) contexts. Given that there are potential concerns about the L2 learners' unwillingness to use interaction as an authentic process of language learning, research into WTC has been conducted in a variety of EFL and ESL contexts: Korean (Kang, 2005; Kim, 2004), Chinese (Cheng, 2000; Liu & Jackson, 2009), Iranian (Riasati, 2012), Japanese (Hashimoto, 2002; Yashima 2002; Yashima, Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004), and Pakistani (Ali, 2010; Khan, 2013). Empirical research of such magnitude into a variety of contexts provided evidence that lack of self-

perceived level of communication competence, anxiety, and a low level of proficiency in an L2 were some of the major obstacles Asian EFL and ESL users of English faced when they intended to use an L2 for interaction purposes.

## **1.2 Scope of the study**

Pakistan is considered to be a linguistically complex country where many other regional languages are spoken in addition to Urdu, which is the national language. The impact of those regional languages could not be neglected considering the number of people who speak those languages. English is the official language of Pakistan, covering only the official correspondence of the country. There seems to be little or no role for English as a language for communication purposes in the daily affairs of the people. English as a language is also restricted to classroom settings where teachers are often found to be delivering lectures in English. Given that there is such restricted usage of English as a language for communication purposes, I assumed that in Pakistani setting people only communicate in offices or in English language classes. Thus, Pakistan offers a unique context for the investigation of willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language, where English is taught in schools, colleges, and even in universities as a subject rather than a language (Ali, 2010; Rahman, 2007). Warsi (2004) also pointed out that Pakistani students were unable to communicate in English despite studying English for about six to eight years.

Being an English language teaching (ELT) practitioner in one of the universities of Pakistan, I have frequently observed that L2 users of English often tried to get mastery of grammatical structure, remembering as many English words as they could, and improving reading and writing skills. The concept of using English as a language for communication purposes has not been prioritised in the midst of the other language learning skills. It was extremely rare to

find someone who could take interest in seeking out opportunities to communicate in English. Unfortunately, there has been an extremely limited amount of research conducted in investigating the factors affecting Pakistani university language learners' unwillingness to use English for oral communication.

Over the last two decades, the WTC construct has gained a substantial amount of attention in SLA research and has been extensively investigated by a number of researchers in a variety of contexts across the world. MacIntyre et al. (1998) postulated that the WTC heuristic model showed a number of linguistic, communicative, and social psychological variables that could affect the tendency users of an L2 to communicate orally in an L2. In this connection, several empirical research studies have been conducted across a variety of contexts in order to identify the factors that have been directly or indirectly predictive of WTC in an L2. The most immediate factors identified by some of the researchers were communication anxiety (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000; Clément, Baker, & MacIntyre, 2003), social support and learning context (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000; Clément et al., 2003), nature of topic and interlocutors, (Kang, 2005; Cao and Philp, 2006) gender and age (MacIntyre et al., 2002). Most of these studies have been conducted in Western contexts, and very little research has been conducted in EFL and ESL contexts where there is no immediate need required to communicate in English orally in day-to-day affairs.

In addition to that, research into WTC has dominantly been quantitative in nature, and fewer studies have been reported using mixed method. There seemed to be an immediate need of methodological diversification by combining both quantitative and qualitative research approaches in order to investigate the dynamic nature of WTC in an L2. The present study would essentially contribute to WTC research in an L2 by employing both quantitative and qualitative research measures. Moreover, the findings of the present study would increase the

scope and ability of ELT teachers to identify and understand the behaviour of the L2 learner by identifying the negative and facilitating variables influencing WTC of L2 learners.

### **1.3 Relevance of WTC in context**

The research into SLA field has undergone movement from more traditional cognitive classic perspective to more complex context-sensitive perspective. Presently, the shift in the research of individual differences variables (IDs) such as anxiety and motivation are seen as IDs variables situated in context rather than treating them as trait-like or enduring variables. Ellis (1985:04) argues that different learners learn L2 in different ways in a different environment which further emphasises the role of IDs variables. According to Dörnyei (2003 &2006), both the situation-specific approach and situated approach are process oriented and specifically pays central attention to the users of L2 behaviours in the given contexts. The most recent addition to IDs variables is the willingness to communicate (WTC), which according to Dörnyei (2005) needs to be investigated in the second language and foreign language contexts.

With the publication of WTC construct in L2, WTC was defined as an individual readiness to engage in communication (MacIntyre et al, 1998). However, this readiness to engage in communication could vary according to types of audiences, topic and conversation contexts (Kang: 2005:291). Kang further argued that WTC is dynamic situational construct which could likely to change from moment to moment (p.277). Regarding the context-sensitive nature of the WTC as IDs variable, Ellis also suggested and believed that WTC and its impact could not be fixed but situation-dependent. In this connection, Bernales (2016) demonstrated that users of English decision to initiate communication, speech, or remain silent in English were largely influenced by contextual, social and individual variables. Thus, we can safely

argue that WTC could not remain single IDs variable in given situation, but it may rather be a direct result of the numerous surrounding conditions. Those underlying conditions may be some internal as well as external factors such as shyness by temperament, topical knowledge deficit or language deficiency or an impact of his/her cultural background or combination of all those factors (for details, see section 3.3). The current study attempted to investigate the dynamic nature of WTC in an L2 in the Pakistani context.

English has often been seen the language of progress and modernisation (Ali, 2010:04) and empowerment (Rahman, 2001) in Pakistan. According to Warsi (2004), English plays the role of lingua-franca in Pakistan which further emphasises the growing role of the English in Pakistan. The growing prominence of English as a language, in Pakistan, is so heightened that parents and students consider English as a language of development, mentioned (Shamim, 2010). However, the apparent concern that most of the educationist, researcher, teachers and policymakers seem to face is the growing dissatisfaction over the conditions of the learning English as a foreign language in Pakistan. There could be several reasons for the dismal conditions of EFL in Pakistan, yet multiple or parallel educational (for details, see cha: 02) systems seem to have worsened the already blurry situation. Shamim (2010) argued that the most recent discourse “education for all” has further added value to teaching and learning of English in Pakistan.

The status of English as a language is extremely and equally popular in Pakistan among all factions of the society. From poor to rich, everyone seems to be occupied with pre-conceived thought English as a language could only be the passport to success, argued (Shamim:2010). However, the access to better education is expensive and common people find it hard to afford quality English medium education (Rahman, 2001:248). In such a divided and fractioned society like Pakistan, there seems to be the immediate need to have a systematic

debate and debate to formulate the ways to encourage students to communicate in English. The development of the WTC construct by MacIntyre and his associates (1998) specifically focused on the reasons for the educational programmes which could encourage the users of English to communicate in English.

The increasingly growing need of English as a medium of communication has shifted the attention of educators and users of English from mastery of structures towards the use of English as a means and ends of educational programmes (MacIntyre et al, 1998; Yashima, 2002, Yashima et al, 2008, Kang, 2005). They all further argued that the aim of the L2 learning and teaching should be the encouragement of the educational programmes which could promote the use of L2 as a means of communication.

The relevance of WTC construct is could be measured from the fact Pakistani students are found to be interested in the communicating in English. However, the exposure to communicating in English is immensely limited specifically in small cities and the villages of the country. From schools, colleges and universities to the streets and shopping malls, the users of L2 have very limited opportunities to interact in English. Thus, most of the students during data collection of current study found to be eager to communicate in English, but their communication was hindered by a number of reasons (for details, see chapter 05 and 06). English mainly remains the language of contact in offices and educational institutes including civil bureaucracy and administration (Shamim, 1993).

#### **1.4 WTC and Second language acquisition (SLA)**

It has generally been seen that there is a great deal of variation among the users of the language learners in terms of their success in learning or mastering the use of an L2.

Therefore, it is important to study IDs especially language learning motivation and willingness to communicate (Dörnyei and Ryan, 2007). The construct of the WTC must be considered within the constructs of the other IDs as a whole. Dörnyei (2008) argues that the role of the IDs variables could be investigated in their interaction with specific environmental and contextual conditions. In this connection, the dichotomy between trait and state IDs factors such as personality, anxiety, motivation and WTC should be evaluated after considering the dynamic propositions of the ID factors which changes according to a situational parameter of task and environment (Dörnyei, 2005, 2006). It should be noted here that ID factors operate independently with learners of an L2 in the different contexts and environment and have increasingly been observed as situational and dynamic in nature rather than trait-like (Ellis (2008).

For the better understanding of the reader, the dichotomy between trait and situational level of the WTC construct is presented. Dörnyei (2005) believes that WTC, like all other ID variables such as anxiety, language motivation and personality, exhibits dual features, trait WTC and situational WTC. In his opinion, the former is expected to display the stable disposition and the latter is arguably assumed to be possessing a situated and dynamic in nature. However, WTC has been developed as having both trait and state features. The trait characteristics of WTC are defined as the enduring variables which remain stable across a variety of contexts. State or situational characteristics are described as variables which change with regard to communicational contexts and situations. The situational characteristics of the WTC are relatively new and have challenged the perspective that considers WTC as a trait-like construct (Kang, 2005).

Dörnyei (2008b) argues that L2 learners' characteristics should not be taken into account within the situated perspective of SLA, but those ID factors change and vary according to time to time and from situation to situation. In this connection, WTC as a relatively new ID construct in SLA, according to Kang (2005:291) proposed that WTC is an individual inclination towards engaging into act communication which is immensely dependent on the specific situation and could vary according to interlocutors, topic and conversation contexts. Kang (2005) further argues that WTC constitutes the significant component of the SLA and has been found influencing the frequency of the communication (Yashima, 2004) and can also contribute to SLA.

MacIntyre et al (1998) also suggested that WTC is the important component of the of modern language instruction. Dörnyei (2001) demonstrate that development of the WTC construct in the context of the L2 could draw together several factors, which have been potentially established influences on the acquisitions of an L2. The growing emphasis on the acquisition of an L2 communication as a necessary component of the L2 learning (Kang, 2005) and the shift of the teaching and learning communication, both as essential process and a goal of learning (Yashima, 2002) could possibly led the WTC as a potential construct in the field of IDs research. It is generally presumed that learning an L2 is often considered to be complex phenomena. No single SLA theory could ever be able to explain how an L2 is taught and learnt. Amon many other theories and constructs of SLA, the introduction of the WTC construct can be seen as a valuable addition to focusing on the programmes which could encourage learning L2 for the purpose of the communication. Given that, the emergence of the WTC as a construct in the field of acquisition of an L2 could be a starting point to inspire future studies towards the ultimate goal of the learning (Yashima et al, 2008; Kang, 2005).

## 1.4 Definition of key terms

It is generally regarded as essential to define key terms used in a research project because it provides readers with a better understanding of and clarity regarding the undertaken study.

The definition of key terms used in the current study are provided below.

**English as a second language (ESL):** Oxford and Shearin (1994:14) define ESL thus: “a second language is one that is learned in a location where that language is typically used as the main vehicle of everyday communication”. For instance, English is always used for everyday communication in countries like the United Kingdom (UK), the United States of America (USA), Australia, and Canada. English could be associated with an ESL context when it is being learnt by the non-native speakers of that language in the countries mentioned above.

**English as a foreign language (EFL):** Oxford and Shearin’s (1994:14) definition is that “a foreign language is one that is learned in a place where that language is not typically used as the medium of ordinary communication (for example, French as it is usually learned in the United States)”. Thus, we can safely argue that English could be termed as EFL in countries where it may not be spoken as the main vehicle for day-to-day communication, and Pakistan is one of the examples of countries where English is not used as the major mode of communication.

**Willingness to communicate (WTC):** Willingness to communicate refers to an intention to initiate conversation in an L2. Kang (2005:291) defines it as such: “willingness to

communicate is an individual's volitional inclination towards actively engaging in the act of communication in a specific situation, which can vary according to interlocutor(s), topic, and conversational contexts, among other potential situational variables".

**Self-perceived communication competence:** Communication competence is defined as an "individual's view of their own competence as a communicator" (Burroughs et al., 2003:231). McCroskey and McCroskey (1988:109) relate this term to an individual's level of self-awareness regarding ability to communicate either by speaking or writing.

**Communication anxiety:** Communication anxiety is defined as an "individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons" (McCroskey, 1997:192).

## **1.5 Research questions**

This research study address four of the research questions which involve several factors affecting L2 learners' WTC. Those factors range from background variables to situational variables, as can be seen below. The first research question (RQ1) aims to determine the level of Pakistani university students' willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language. The RQ2 deals with background variables and would highlight whether or not these underlying variables affect L2 learners' WTC. The RQ3 and 4 would deal with factors associated with interlocutors and interactional contexts.

Q1. What is the overall level of willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language of Pakistani university students who are residents of the Lower Sindh province area?

Q2. Are there any significant differences between Pakistani university students' level of willingness to communicate in English in the following background variables?

- (i) Provenance
- (ii) Types of education
- (iii) Self-perceived level of English
- (iv) Exposure to English

Q3. Are there any significant differences between Pakistani university students' level of willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language with the following interlocutors?

- i. Friends
- ii. Acquaintances
- iii. Strangers

Q4. Are there any significant differences between Pakistani university students' level of willingness to communicate in the following conversational contexts?

- i. One-to-one situation
- ii. Small meeting
- iii. Large meeting

## **1.6 Organisation of the thesis**

The main purpose of this study is to measure, by combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches, the level of Pakistani university students' willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language across different interlocutors and a variety of interactional contexts. The organisation of the thesis reflects this aim.

This thesis comprises eight chapters. Besides introductory **Chapter 01**, **Chapter 02** introduces the context of the study and discusses the socio-linguistic profile of the English language in Pakistan. This is followed by the general discussion of the educational policies at different levels of teaching English in Pakistan.

**Chapter 03** begins with a specific critical review of the literature pertaining to the conceptualisation of the WTC in L1 and then L2 contexts in both Western and Eastern contexts. This chapter provides a critical summary of the major findings of the research studies conducted into WTC across a variety of contexts. This is followed by the advancement of the WTC construct into an L2 in both Western and Eastern contexts. In the end, this chapter identifies the research gaps in the previous studies conducted into WTC in an L2.

**Chapter 04** introduces the detailed description of the research design, aims of the research study, choice of the data collection procedure, research instruments, strategies of the data analysis, sampling approach, the reliability as well as the validity of the research instrument, and ethical considerations.

**Chapter 05** provides preliminary quantitative results with discussion of the each of the research question. This chapter is dedicated to analysis of the quantitative results with preliminary discussion

**Chapter 06** begins with the qualitative insights of the present study and elaborates the empirical findings of each of the research questions at length.

**Chapter 07** introduces the summary of the findings of both the quantitative and qualitative results with detailed discussion in the light of previous empirical studies on WTC especially in EFL and ESL contexts.

**Chapter 08** concludes the thesis by providing pedagogical implications and the contribution of the present study and offers recommendations for future studies on WTC for researchers, policy makers, and teachers of an L2. The chapter ends with the limitations of the study.

## **Chapter 02**

### **The socio-linguistic profile of the English language in Pakistan**

This chapter provides a core, in-depth view of the past and present use of the English language in Pakistan. The penetration of English as a language, in Pakistan, started as early as the independence of the country in 1947. English was reported to be the language of the elite in the Indian sub-continent ruled by the British even before 1947 (Mehboob, 2003). After independence, English as a language continued to enjoy a supreme role in the power corridors of Pakistan and even India because English had become entrenched in the political and social fabric of both countries (see Kachru, 1985; Baumgardner, 1993). It could be linked to the fact that most of the political leaders including the founder of Pakistan, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, was educated in Britain. This chapter aims to comprehensively describe the way the English language is being taught and used in Pakistan. First, it explains, though briefly, the historical perspective of English and the socio-linguistic profile of Pakistan. This is followed by a description of the status of English language teaching in the madrassas (religious centres), schools, and colleges. After this, it continues to highlight the contents of national educational policy at higher education level. In the end, it sums up with some discussion of English language teaching policy with reference to Shah Abdul Latif University (SALU), Khairpur, Pakistan, which is focused on in this research study.

#### **2.1 Historical perspective of English in Pakistan**

English as a language during British rule was initially disseminated through social and economic mobility, and it is reported that people learnt English either through social contact or formal schooling (Mehboob, 2003). Since there was not a sufficient number of English-

medium schools or colleges and native teachers for English teaching in the Indian sub-continent, the opportunities to learn English were relatively few. The situation further deteriorated after independence because contact with native speakers was reduced greatly along with resources. Thus, people who were fluent in English began to enjoy special attention in educational and other sectors (Rahman, 2006).

With the partition of the Indian-subcontinent into Pakistan and India, English was initially maintained as an official language of Pakistan even at the cost of the resentment of some of the religious parties (Mehboob, 2003). In the early days of independence, the opposition of the religious parties remained unsuccessful, and English continued to establish itself as the medium of official discourse. The intense resentment and opposition of religious parties was not considered, because Pakistan did not have sufficient material in local languages to be used in education and other sectors. Secondly, there was no other neutral language that could replace English as an official language of the country. Thirdly, the religious parties initially could not gather enough support across the country to pose a serious threat, ended their intense opposition sooner rather than later. Those religious movements did gain momentum up until the military coup of General Zia-ul-Haq in 1977. His policies of Islamisation and Urduisation and decentralisation of English largely decreased the role of English as a language and medium of instruction. His policies of decentralising the role of English was seen at first as a real threat to the status of English in Pakistan. Zia's opposition to English was first manifested in the language policy of 1978, in which he advised all English-medium schools to switch to Urdu. Shockingly, this policy did not affect the elitist English-medium schools, which were attended by the children of the people who were in power. However, this decision was not welcomed by the common people and was retracted

after nine years in 1987, though it left the children of the common people deprived of English language teaching and learning (ibid., 2003).

## **2.2 Linguistics map of Pakistan**

The birth of Pakistan was a direct result of the division of the Indian sub-continent, which eventually brought about the existence of a country without much of its own history (Kazi, 1987:01). Kazi (1987) further revealed that Pakistan, as a nation, was ironically formed out of the history of the established 'nations with history'. At the time of partition, Muslim majority states/units were comprised of Sindh, Baluchistan, the partitioned provinces of Bengal and Punjab, and North-West Frontier Province (currently named as Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa). Interestingly, these units/states which were formed into the state of Pakistan were culturally, politically, and economically different nations having their established distinct history or identity. Syed (1974b:21) claims that Pakistan was built by 'the denial of the existence of the old and historically well-established nationalities inhabiting the Bengal, Sindh, Baluchistan and the Pakhtoons areas'. He further revealed that Pakistan was carved out of already distinct states which were culturally, politically, and even economically functioning independently within its rich history. Thus, the creation of Pakistan was invariably the amalgamation of different established cultures into one independent country coupled with a complex and diverse linguistic picture.

Joyo (2005) claimed that Pakistan faced some serious problems over the issue of language and education due its complex linguistic profile. Bengal, which was known as East Pakistan, had the largest population and wanted the Bengali language as the national language of the country. On the other hand, Punjab, the most influential province of West Pakistan, wanted the Urdu language to be the national language of the country. Jinnah (1948), the founder of

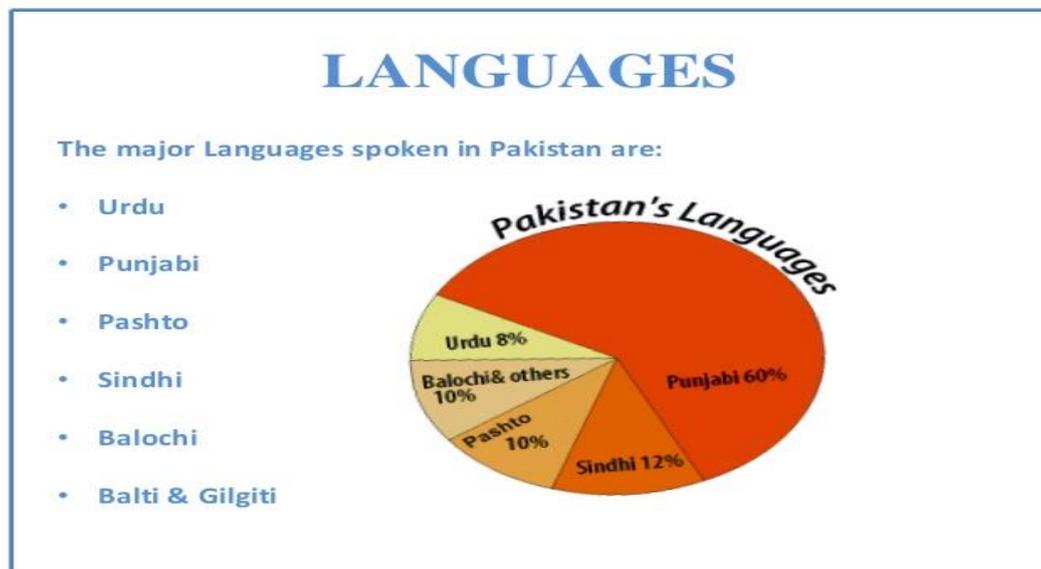
Pakistan, while addressing students in Dacca University made it emphatically clear that “The state language of Pakistan is going to be Urdu and no other language. And anyone who tries to mislead you is enemy of Pakistan.” (Hoodbhoy, 2016). However, Punjab maintained its dominance as the most powerful province of Pakistan, and Urdu was declared the national language of Pakistan without considering the resentment of Bengalis. Thus, a language controversy created political and linguistics rifts between East and West Pakistan even soon after its creation.

Pakistan, located in south Asia, has a population of approximately 180 million. Besides Urdu being the national language and English an official language, several other regional languages (Sindhi, Punjabi, Birohi, Hindhko, Saraiki, and many others) are spoken in Pakistan, demonstrated Ali (2010:05). Interestingly, only 8% of the total population speak Urdu (the national language of the country), which clearly indicates the linguistic diversity in the country (Rahman, 2010:20). Punjab, with approximately 60% of the total population, is the largest populated province of the country, where Punjabi is the dominant language and spoken by 44.2%. Sindhi is spoken by (12%) of total population, Balouchi and others are only spoken by (10%) of total population, and (10%) of total population speak Pashto interestingly Urdu, which is the national language of the country, is only spoken by (8%) of total population in the country. This multilingual picture clearly depicts the overall linguistic diversity in Pakistan, where besides these languages, 61 other languages are spoken (Rahman, 2010:20).

The linguistic map of Pakistan indicates that each of the provinces of the country has one dominant language and a number of other minor languages, which makes Pakistan a plural society in ethnic and linguistic terms. Even before the partition of Pakistan, the proponents of the partition movement were struggling to define the terms identity,

community, and nationalism in the context of Islam (Mehta and Schaffer, 2002:04). Soon after the bloody partition of the sub-continent, Pakistan was the homeland of Muslims who were struggling to define nationalism in the context of Islam (ibid.).

Figure 2. 1. Linguistic Profile of Pakistan



Source: <http://www.slideshare.net/CaptainCoCo92/multi-lingual-culture-of-pakistan> (accessed on 15/12/2015)

Thus, the independence of Pakistan laid the foundation for a pluralistic society in ethnic and linguistic terms.

At the time of independence, the all inhabitants of Pakistan were Muslims, but soon after they were recognised as Bengali, Punjabi, Sindhi, Pakhtoons, and Balouchi including many others. Bengal was separated from Pakistan in 1971 due to a number of differences in which language was one of the dominant problems among many other intriguing issues. The remaining four provinces in one way or another represent their linguistic or ethnic groups first and then Pakistan. The ethnic and linguistic roots were so strong that the people of all four provinces were primarily based in their home province: Punjabis in Punjab, Balouchis in

Baluchistan, Sindhis in Sindh, Pakhtoons in NWFP now known as Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, and Mahajirs, who migrated from India, and mainly settled in the urban areas of Sindh.

### **2.3 The status of English in Pakistan (aspirants and challenges)**

English is the official language of Pakistan and is widely spoken in both governmental and private administered sectors, i.e. bureaucracy, military, media, judiciary, commerce, and research at the highest level (Ali, 2010:05). Historically, the importance of English in Pakistani society could be associated with the fact that the first Governor General of Pakistan, Quaid-ie-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, gave his inaugural speech to the first constituent assembly of Pakistan on the eve of its independence (Mahboob, 2009:178). Since then, English has continued to rule the official discourse of Pakistan. In recent years, English has increasingly become the language of attaining both government or corporate jobs in Pakistan. To secure a state job, average English proficiency has become essential. In short, the lowest scaled pay jobs for most well-paying nongovernmental organisations, private educational institutions, and the corporate sectors all essentially require a high level of proficiency in English (Rahman, 2007:222). Thus, the ever-increasing need of English has convinced parents and students to position English as the language of power and a bright career domestically and internationally (Ali, 2010:06).

In the centre of the complex linguistic map of Pakistan, English seems to enjoy an undisputed place and has no competition from other languages. English has arguably remained the primary medium of instruction in the colleges and universities of Pakistan for a long time. Most of the people in Pakistan appear to be preoccupied with the idea that English is essential for better and bright careers because since the independence of Pakistan, English has been a relatively consistent feature in the educational system of the country.

From lower middle to affluent class, the people of Pakistan are found to be keen to communicate in English and learn it as fast as possible because there is little evidence that it is possible to progress or further a career by studying indigenous languages indigenous languages (Mehboob in press). However, the challenges to learn English as a language are far difficult than one could ever imagine. English, since the independence of Pakistan, has been taught as a subject in the schools and colleges of the country (Ali, 2010 and Rahman, 2007). In the absence of trained teachers, a lack of updated materials and unfurnished classrooms puts most of the users of English in an alarming state where cramming the lessons and memorising rules, and translating Urdu sentences into English and vice versa seems to be the only option left, so students are learning English as a subject rather than a form of language. By subject I meant to say that little time is given to the usage of English in everyday conversation. It is taught as a compulsory subject in the classroom, and most of the students take English as a subject like any other subject on their courses. Consequently, such practices result in a low level of competence and inversely force students to pass exams without getting any real competence in English (ibid., 2007). The instrumental appeal of English is so high that most of the private centres (self-proclaimed institutes for teaching spoken English) are found to be advertising across the country to attract aspirant English learners (Mansoor, 2003). Notably, these private tuition centres, though in the past found only in the less developed areas for the targeted population of the country, can now be found in the metropolitan cities of the country for commercial and economic interests (Mehboob, 2011:04).

### **2.3.1 English-medium schooling: The gap between the privileged and unprivileged classes**

The demand for English-medium schools seems to be on the rise because the users/learners of English desire to achieve high academic, professional, and social status in Pakistan. Parents generally want their children to be educated in English-medium schools as they think that vernacular-medium schools and colleges cannot prepare students for challenging academic competition in the country (Rahman, 2003:243). Consequently, the high demand has given rise to different English-medium types of schools and tuition centres. These English-medium centres claim to make you competent in English and enable you to pass all kinds of interviews for jobs, which are conducted in English. As mentioned earlier, these English-medium tuition centres range from those found in the less developed areas to those in the most affluent areas of the country. But most of the English language tuition centres are located in the vicinity of the lower middle-class people (ibid., 2003).

Broadly, there are three types of English-medium schools in Pakistan: (a) private elitist English-medium schools, (b) cadet college/public schools, and (c) non-elitist English-medium schools (Rahman, 2003; 2007). The private elitist English-medium schools were initially run by the missionaries in 1960s, and in schools like Saint Mary's, Presentation Covent, and Burn Hall, students not only created the environment of studying English but also use it informally (Rahman, 2004:246). Private elitist schools are run by the businessmen, armed forces, and some of the important political figures in the country in the metropolitan cities of Pakistan. Some of the schools are run in chains (such as the Beaconhouse System and the City School System) and are found in every major city of the country (Rahman, 2007:223). Those schools charge very high fees and could only be affordable for rich people because they generally prepare you for British Ordinary and Advanced Level school examinations. In such schools, students often come from the high or upper class. These

schools have all updated material and resources required for teaching English, which consequently enable students to use English fluently (ibid., 2007).

Cadet colleges and schools are directly run and owned by the military personnel in Pakistan. Like with most of the private elitist schools, land is also given by the state to cadet colleges and schools for nominal charges. The startling fact is that since the children of the armed forces tend to have easier access to high private elitist schools, most of the students at cadet and public schools come from lower socio-economic backgrounds (Rahman, 2004:158). Like the students of the private elitist schools, students of the cadet college and public schools are found to be more tolerant towards religious minorities and equal rights for women than madrassa students (Rahman, 2007:225).

The non-elitists schools, or state-run schools, solely depend on the funding of the state. Unlike private elitist schools and cadet colleges, these schools are unfortunately not given their due share in the allotment of funds. Thus, there seems to be no quality education, proper buildings, and trained teaching faculty. Most of the teaching takes place in Sindhi or Urdu, which is really saddening since there is no proper system available to scrutinise it (Rahman, 2002; 2003).

Besides those for Urdu and some of the other regional languages, the teaching conditions regarding English, which is the official language of Pakistan, in the vernacular schools and colleges seem to be less than satisfactory. Both teachers and students were found to be scared of English and considered it alien if they were not competent in it (Rahman, 2004:253). Students seem to be lacking in all four major linguistic skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). It is often seen that users of English, even after studying it for about six to eight years, still find it difficult to communicate in English with relative ease (Warsi, 2004:01). There was a survey conducted in Lahore in 1982 which looked at the teaching of

English in twenty state-owned schools that suggested that students were unable to understand or speak English (Rahman, 2004). The most common problem was that users of English hardly used it inside or outside of the class. Besides that, inexperienced/untrained teachers, defective teaching methods, inappropriate books and faculty examination system, and lack of supervision could be familiar causes of the users' inability to communicate in English (Warsi, 2004). Apart from that, teachers in the vernacular-medium schools attempt to explain everything in the local language, and even in the nursery classes, the teacher is found to be reading word by word and then explaining it to students in one of the local languages (Rahman, 2003). The vernacular-medium schools, by far the largest number of schools in Pakistan, have not unfortunately yielded desired results.

### **2.3.2 English in the madrassas**

In the midst of growing extremism in Pakistan, the role of the madrassas is considered to be extremely vital in terms of maintaining modernity and tolerance. According to Coleman (2010:11) *dini madaris* provide education, food, accommodation, and other necessary care for their students free of charge. These madaris function in remote areas of Pakistan and are reported to be very attractive to poor families.

English is generally considered to be symbol of modernity in a society such as Pakistan, and so it was resisted by madrassas, which were meant to promote conservative ways of Islam (see Mehboob, 2003 and Rehman, 2006). Madrassas or religious schools were meant to provide religious education for those students who could not afford education either in governmental or privately run schools and often functioned in areas where access to governmental schools was difficult (Coleman, 2010:11). It is generally believed that some 30% of madrassas operate in Pakistan in parallel to the formal education system. These

madrassas aim to offer Islamic teachings and provide religious information to their pupils (Bano, 2007). These religious schools run in parallel in Pakistan and aim to project religious teachings (Rahman, 2002).

Table 2. 1 provides the profile of madrassa education in Pakistan given by Ahmed (2004).

**Table 1. Profile of madrassa education in Pakistan**

Number of secondary and higher madrassas	6,000
Senior and graduate level madrassas	4,335
Deobandi madrassas	2,333
Barelvi madrassas	1,625
Ahl-i-Hadith madrassas	224
Shia madrassas	163
Number of all students	604,421
Local students (Pakistani)	586,604
Foreign students	17,817
Afghan students	16,598

To integrate madrassas with other regular schools and colleges, the state tried to teach Ulemas (teachers in the madrassas) English, Urdu, and other social studies. In addition to that, mathematics, general science, and computer science have recently been introduced into madrassa education (Ahmed, 2004). According to Ayub Khan's commission on the national education, emphasis was placed on both English and Urdu (Rahman, 2004).

Following the Iranian revolution (1979) and rise of the Taliban's in Afghanistan (1989), madrassas seemed to have gained more confidence and recommended some appropriate elements of modernity in their teaching without compromising the essence of Islam. This was done by allowing English teaching in madrassas to students by political parties like Jamiat -i-Islam and Dawat-i-Islam (Rahman, 2004:254-55). This decision was further consolidated by the initiative taken by the International Islamic University, Islamabad,

when the university administration introduced its Master studies in English (ibid., 2004). In continuation with Ayub Khan's policy, General Pervez Musharraf also brought some educational reforms and emphasised the need for teaching English to students in madrassas. Thus, these initiatives of the government somehow managed to persuade Ulemas to learn and then teach English to their students, which could promote modernity and liberalism in the future.

## **2.4 Education policies in Pakistan**

After the independence of Pakistan in 1947, more than 85% of the total population was illiterate and uneducated (Bengali, 1999:07). Like most ex-colonial countries, Pakistan faced the problem of educational policy (Mehboob, 2003:07). The need to improve educational conditions and literacy rate was taken to be the issues of survival for Pakistan. In this regard, the first 'National Educational Conference' was held in 1947 with the sole aim of improving education. The then Governor General and founder of Pakistan, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, emphatically said:

“... the importance of education and the type of education cannot be over-emphasized ... there is no doubt that the future of our State will and must greatly depend upon the type of education we give to our children, and the way in which we bring them up as future citizens of Pakistan ... we should not forget that we have to compete with the world which is moving very fast in this direction.”

The sole purpose of the first National Educational Conference was to improve primary and secondary education, and it considered this essential for national development (Bengali, 1999). Various committees were set up from primary to university education level to ensure smooth development. Committees for primary and secondary education, a scientific committee, a technical educational committee, an adult education committee, a women's educational committee, and a university education committee were formed to address all

possible problems and to bring about some improvement at every single level of education (Bengali, 1999). The findings of the committee identified that it would take them approximately 140 years to liquidate the problem and further singled out problems such as training adult school teachers, acquiring teaching material and literature for adult schools. The committee strictly advised that these issues should be addressed with immediate effect and further recommended the following time framework for the execution of the educational plan. The recommendations included that the first five years were to be devoted to planning, recruitment of teachers, and training. According to the findings of the report, in the sixth year of the plan, some 500,000 students were to be educated, with a further increase of another 300,000 annually (ibid., 1999).

#### **2.4.1 National Plan of Educational Development 1951-57**

Considering the urgency of the need for literacy in Pakistan after independence in 1947, another educational conference was held in 1951 to devise a six-year plan to presumably first identify the problems and then recommend some of the practically possible solutions. Likewise, the committee as in the last conference identified the main problem of untrained teachers in the schools as a major issue to be addressed with immediate effect. Members of the committee stated that “it’s obvious that we have to revise plan in order to provide for more training institutions, for otherwise our education would gravely remain deficient in quality”. It further suggested the expansion of primary schools along with the appointment of 86,000 new teachers. The reason behind revising the previous educational plan was to meet further requirements of establishing more training institutes in order to provide better education (Bengali, 1999:02). In the conference, the committee found that two-thirds of children aged between six and 11 were out of school and recommended some 24,000 more schools to be built with the capacity of 2.7 million students being enrolled.

The committee argued that previous plans failed to address the problems identified in the conference. Unfortunately, the decade-long plan could not produce the desired results even after putting in a lot of effort and expenditure. Shockingly, the review committee found that decade-long efforts had failed to increase the literacy rate, rather it had marginally declined from 16.4% to 16.3% from 1951 to 1959. The failure to achieve the much-needed results of the previous conference on national language policy was associated with the lack of administrative and organisational stability in Pakistan. This conference wanted the view “towards education...held by people...to be altered” (Bengali, 1999:04). Hence, further recommendations were put forward with the intent of making some progress in the field of education.

A review committee was formed in 1959 to find out the major reasons for the failure of the previous national language policy, which was formulated for the six years from 1951 to 1957. The review committee found that people towards public duty and called upon people to change their concept towards government and their relationship to it (Bengali, 1999:04).

The lofty aims of achieving a better literacy rate unfortunately failed to yield the anticipated desired results. The aim to build yet another educational plan for the period of five years but it started by looking at the disappointing results of the previous plans in several areas. It was further revealed that no significant development had been made for the betterment of education since the beginning of the initial educational plan. Contrary to the desired results, even enrolment at the primary level failed to increase in 13 long years. Primary teachers were not trained as substantially as recommended in the first plan. No change was seen in the field of improving the curriculum content, provision of teaching aids, and teachers’ training. Having identified these problems, it was pointed out that females

received little or no attention, so special attention must be given to female education. The five-year plan included greater opportunities for females to get primary education.

A commission was set up to examine the language issues in Pakistan with reference to Urdu, Bengali, and English. The commission decided that Urdu and Bengali would be used as the medium of instruction from class 6 to matriculation. The commission believed that Urdu would be the medium of instruction in universities after approximately 15 years (Mansoor, 1993:10). The committee recommended that English could continue to be a second language and would be the medium of instruction in universities since advanced knowledge was in English. In contrast, English was allowed to be the medium of instruction in the elitist private schools where children of people in power were getting education. The biased attitude of people in power indicated that government schools were ignored in favour of private English-medium schools where funds were allocated non-proportionally (Mehboob, 2003:10).

#### **2.4.2 The five-year educational plan 1965-70**

The educational plan began with the recognition of the “concept of education as a vital national investment and a major determination of nation’s economic growth” (Bengali, 1999:05-06). Hence, some 2,652 million were allocated to improve the educational sector of the country. The aim of the second plan was, like previous plans, to improve and increase primary enrolment and proposed to set up some 42,500 more schools in the country. It ensured that students must be provided with the kind of educational system which could facilitate their transition into the era of science and technology. It promoted the political, social, and economic development of the country. It further emphasised that the educational level must be raised so that it could meet national task building (Bengali, 1999:06). Besides

that, the decision was taken to improve retention rates, teachers' training, teachers' salaries, and physical conditions of schools.

In the fifties and sixties, we do not see the role of the government in English language education. Perhaps, the government could be seen focusing on the primary level, which indicated that the people of Pakistan should be able to first read and write in the vernacular language. Coleman (2010:15) claimed that there was no major shift in the language policy of Pakistan from 1947 to 1977. It was also revealed that Urdu-medium education was given to the masses and English-medium education was solely reserved for elites. With the government of Benazir Bhutto, English was introduced from year 1, but very little change was seen in the overall development of English as a language in Pakistan (ibid., 2010).

### **2.4.3 The educational policy of 1970**

Like all previous educational policies, the government was committed to improving the literacy rate of Pakistan. On the contrary, Pakistan had one of the highest illiteracy rates in 1970 despite devising several educational plans in a number of educational conferences held from time to time since the creation of Pakistan. The decision was taken to allow free enrolment up to class V by 1980 with reference to female education (Bengali, 1999:06). It was revealed that about 100 million people in Pakistan were reported to be illiterate, out of which 90% were from rural areas of the country. The recommendations of this policy were never implemented due to the war with India in 1971, which unfortunately divided Pakistan. According to the Population Census of 1972, the literacy rate of Pakistan was seriously low.

Table 2. 2 Literacy rate of Pakistan according to the Population Census 1972

	Total	Urban	Rural
total	21.7%	41.5%	14.3%
male	30.2%	49.9%	22.6%
female	11.6%	30.9%	4.7%

#### **2.4.4 The educational policy of 1972-1998**

There were three educational policies formulated between 1972 to 1998. All of them recommended a series of the proposal on the eradication of the illiteracy, universalisation of the elementary education and adult education. The policy of the 1983 was only dedicated to evaluating the causes of failure the previous policies. Nothing new was recommended and it unfortunately pointed out that all previous plans failed to bring the required level of the results either due to substantial administrative failure or lack of resources in the given circumstances. The educational policy of 1988 to 1993 began with deplorable note that almost 40% children of Pakistan didn't have access to basic education. Consequently, it was decided to build more schools and aimed to provide access to state run schools within reachable distance. The third and final five-year educational policy formulated in 1993. It began with a mission statement that education is an indispensable part of the development of Pakistan. However, like all previous plans and policies, it was revealed that standard of education was less than satisfactory because of the outmoded methodology of instruction and testing (Eight five-year plan 1993-1998). In short, all policies could not make standard of education any better.

#### **2.5 The educational policy of 2009**

The most recent educational policy, of 2009, indicated the shortcomings of the previous policies and urged some serious attention towards the deteriorating educational conditions of the country. Like all other previous policies, it highlighted that the current educational policy miserably failed to meet the needs of the students, both children and adults. The failure of the past educational policies and repeated attempts to readdress those failures created a wide between reality and desired outcome. Although the government has pledged to spend 4% of GDP on the educational sector and promised to increase it to 6%, the future still looks uncertain in the field of educational development. Seemingly, the current educational policy or document has addressed the immediate need for high standards of assessment, an updated curriculum, fully trained teachers, and a conducive learning environment (Ministry of Education: 2007 and 2009).

The educational document or policy of 2009 recognised the huge disparity in the standard of education provided to urban and rural areas of the country, which further created a wide gap between the rich and comparatively poor classes of society. Low-standard education in the public sector clearly indicated that Pakistan's educational policy did not mean to provide equal services in education to its citizens. Ghost schools, unqualified and untrained teachers, substandard classrooms and infrastructure, and outdated curricula were identified in the latest educational document, 2009 (Ministry of Education: 2009). Unfortunately, the state of the educational system in Pakistan has worsened since its independence. These educational documents first identified the problems and then repeatedly addressed these alarmingly negative issues, which were the cause of the substandard vernacular educational system of the country. However, no desired results have yet been yielded in the domain of education, and disparity between poor and rich has been a constant factor in terms of providing education. With education in such a critical condition,

comparatively little attention has been given to improving the English language education in Pakistan. However, we have discussed and highlighted English language policy in Pakistan in our next section.

## **2.6 English language teaching policy in Pakistan**

English has dominated the political and official discourse of Pakistan for a long time, like in many other developing countries in the world (Shamim, 2011:02). Pakistani students and parents see English as linked to an academically and professionally successful life. The idea of “Education for all” according to Shamim (ibid.) added a universalistic dimension to the teaching and learning of English as a language in Pakistan, thus making it one of the most complex issues, particularly in terms of disparity in the form of education for poor and rich in Pakistan. English was and perhaps still is a passport to success and key to national progress. (ibid.). Since 1947, English has dominated the official discourse of the country, and many policies have been formulated to provide English language education to both rich and poor citizens of the country. However, the disparity between rich and poor has been one of the constant features of the Pakistani English language educational system.

Over the years, the elitist class of Pakistan seem to have enjoyed the privilege of getting a standard form of English language education, whereas a substandard form of English language education was offered to the poorer or middle classes of society. Rahman (2007:225) claimed that students from the elitist or private schools looked down on their fellow students from vernacular-medium schools. Rahman (1996) further demonstrated that the upper class of Pakistan continued to have easy access to a standard form of English language education in order to distinguish themselves from the comparatively poorer class of society. Shamim (2011:09) found that students who were educated in the private or elitist

English-medium schools at the initial stage of their education rated their English skills as very high, which was largely due to the high income that their parents earned. On the other hand, students who rated their English skills as low were educated from state or vernacular schools, which indicated that their parents could not afford the expenditure of the private schools. Thus, she claimed that there seemed to be a positive relationship between students' socio-economic condition and their proficiency in English.

The 1973 Constitution of Pakistan, though, recommended English as an official language of the country for the period of the first 15 years and later to be replaced by Urdu, which was and is still the national language of the country. The following provisions were formulated in the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan with regard to English:

1. *The national language of the Urdu and arrangements shall be made for its being used for official and other purposes within fifteen years of commencing day.*
2. *Subject to Clause (1) English language may be used for official purposes until arrangements are made for its replacement by Urdu.*

Although it was clearly formulated in the Constitution of Pakistan that English would be replaced by Urdu in the next 15 years as an official language of the country, it never happened, which revealed the powerful and dominating status of English among the ruling elites of the country. After the formulation of the Constitution of 1973, different governments came and went, but none of them altered or replaced the dominating discourse of English. According to Rahman (1996) and Cohen (1994:162), English was firmly established as a medium of official discourse in the power corridors of Pakistan, which was dominated by civil servants and army officials who had been anglicised since 1947.

After all the inconsistencies in terms of policies with regard to English, Benazir's government (1988-1990) eventually introduced English as a compulsory subject to be taught right from the class one. This was initially taken as a positive step on the part of the government because English was already taught in the private schools as a medium of instruction. This was an attempt by the government to maintain balance in the educational system of the country; however, it could not succeed in getting positive results due to untrained teachers and the extremely bad infrastructure of the state-run schools (Mahboob, 2002:26).

According to Rahman (2002:09), language has become the marker of socio-economic background in Pakistan, where English is associated with the upper class, whereas Urdu is represented by the middle or low-class people, who only speak in indigenous languages. With the coup of 1999, which removed the elected government of Pakistan, General Musharraf gave his first press conference in English and asked to reply to questions in English, which implied that his government would come up with some different policy regarding English (Mahboob, 2002:27). However, no substantial change was found in the status of English language teaching during Musharraf's tenure (1999 to 2008).

### **2.6.1 English in the vernacular-medium schools**

According to Rehman (2001:253), English was not a second language in most of the vernacular-medium schools (Sindhi and Urdu). English was a foreign language in these schools because most of the students were from rural areas and could not afford to get education from private or elitist schools. A curriculum report published in 1982 (in Rehman 2001 and Naqvi 1999) revealed that most of the students were unable to speak or understand English, nor could they read it or write anything creative in it. It was found that students'

skills were largely limited to reading their formal lessons and simple sentences, and English was rarely used outside the classroom or even within the classroom. Warsi (2004) believed that even after studying in schools for about six to eight years, students were unable to communicate in English with relative ease. Khalique (2007) argued, though more recently, that English in vernacular-medium schools is seen to be an intimidating and alien language. Warsi (2004) mentioned that inexperienced teachers, defective teaching methods, inappropriate books, and inadequate or outdated teaching materials were the main cause of the poor English language skills of the students of vernacular-medium schools.

### **2.6.2 English in the madrassas**

As discussed earlier, madrassas were understood to be conserving the traditional or orthodox Islamic world view. Teaching English was seen and viewed to be anti-Muslim or anti-Islamic in the opinion of many religious scholars of Pakistan (Malik, 1996). However, the government of Pakistan in the past made serious efforts to introduce changes by teaching Ulemas English, Urdu, and social sciences for the purpose of bringing some radical transformation in the overall approach of religious scholars. In this regard, Ayub Khan's commission on 'National Education' recommended English as an alternative medium of instruction in madrassas, the other being Arabic (Rahman, 2001). Most of the Ulemas resisted the move and argued that changes in the language teaching could threaten their world view because their students would be exposed to a liberal outlook on life. In other words, Ulemas related English to modernity and associated English with the West, and they considered English as a symbol of the West, which was not Islamic in their view of the world (Amin, 1998 and Malik, 1996). Thus, all proposed changes were suspected and later rejected by the Ulemas because of their medieval perception of the world. Even more recently, in 2000,

Musharraf's suggestion of including some of the modern subjects in the curricula was resisted and rejected by the Ulemas.

After long deliberation over consistently unsuccessful policies regarding English education in Pakistan, it was eventually decided to take some concrete steps to improve English language education, particularly in state-run schools, colleges, and universities. In collaboration with the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC), the government finally formed the English Language Teaching Reforms (ELTR) Project in 2004. The national commission on English under this project was the first initiative to train the teachers of schools, colleges, and universities both in the public and private sectors to further promote the role of English in the educational system.

### **2.6.3 English language projects under ELTR in Pakistan**

The introduction of ELTR projects aimed to bring qualitative and substantive improvement in English language teaching and learning in order to develop a capacity for the effective and sustainable role of English language teachers in higher education in Pakistan [www.hec.gov.pk](http://www.hec.gov.pk). The projects under ELTR offered both short-term and long-term International Scholarships and Indigenous Fellowships. It also arranged different short-term workshops for English language teachers. HEC in collaboration with the National Committee on English (NCE) devised various projects to cater to the growing needs of English language faculties across the country. Phase 1 of the ELTR projects introduced the following committees to achieve its goals.

1. Faculty Development
2. Research and Publication
3. Testing and Assessment

4. Curriculum and Material Development
5. Computer Assisted Language Learning
6. Reorganisation of the Department of English

Considering the challenges faced by both teachers and students, this initiative on the part of HEC was welcomed by English language faculties across the country. In order to cater to the growing needs of English language teachers, the ELTR Projects offered various International Scholarships and Indigenous Fellowships to provide adequate training for teachers. These scholarships were MS leading to PhD in Applied Linguistics, Two-year Master's in TESL and TEFL, and one-year PGD in TESL, TEFL, and CELT. Besides that, the ELTR Project arranged Short Certificate Courses in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP).

After the successful completion of phase 1 of the ELTR Project, phase 11 was launched to further meet the needs of English language teachers across Pakistan. For this purpose, 53.67 million was granted by the government, which was an extremely positive gesture to further train ELT teachers. Phase 11 offered, like phase 1, long-term and short-term programmes to meet the demands of ELT teachers. The long-term indigenous programmes included MS in Applied Linguistics and other related disciplines, and Master's in Applied Linguistics, TEFL, and TESL. The short-term fellowship and courses included Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), Testing and Evaluation, Research Methodology and Skills, Practicum and Communication Skills and Open and Customised programmes in ELT-related areas.

The introduction of ELTR Projects actually began the paradigm shift of teaching English from literature to language. Previously, teachers without any relevant experience taught English to students and found themselves in deep trouble due to lack of practical

training. However, with such programmes funded by HEC, things have improved and are set in the right direction to achieve the desired results in the long run.

## **2.7 English language teaching in the universities of Pakistan**

English is a medium of instruction in all the universities of Pakistan at undergraduate and postgraduate level in all disciplines excluding the regional languages. While there have been some inconsistencies in governments' policies regarding the medium of instruction in schools since the creation of Pakistan in 1947, the medium of instruction in universities has arguably been English since independence (see Irfan, 2013; Mansoor, 2005). One of the main reasons for maintaining English as a medium of instruction, in the Pakistani context, seemed to be historical, and a deliberate decision was made in order to improve and internationalise the Pakistani educational system. The choice of English as a medium of instruction was seen to be the right decision on the part of the government because English was the language of higher education and government machinery even before the creation of Pakistan. People of the region were familiar with English and have been influenced to accept it as a medium of instruction in higher education and as the language of official correspondence (see Mansoor, 1993). In short, acceptability and familiarity was already present in the region.

According to the Ministry of Education (2009:71), 15.5% of educational institutes in Sindh use Sindhi as a medium instruction, 68.3% use Urdu as medium of instruction in government schools, 9.5% use other languages (Pushto, Balochi, Arabic, etc.), and 10.4% use English as a medium of instruction in schools. More than 70% of private schools use English as a medium of instruction, although the precise statistic was difficult to procure (see Coleman and Capstick, 2012 and Mansoor, 2003).

Some of the researchers (Bari, 2013 and Rahman, 2010) working in the Pakistani context of this area argued that having English as a medium of instruction in private schools and Urdu or any other regional language in government schools perpetuated socio-economic class differences. Consequently, the socio-economic status (SES) of the students determine their level of proficiency in English. Students from higher SES backgrounds are more likely to have better understanding of English when they enter into higher education in university, whereas students who are educated in the government schools or are from lower SES backgrounds are likely to have less understanding of English as a language when they enter university.

### **2.7.1 Perception of Pakistani university students towards English as a medium of instruction (MOI)**

In this section, we will present the findings of some of the empirical research studies conducted since the 2000s. Some of the notable studies in this area were conducted by Mehboob (2002), Mansoor (2005), and Irfan (2013). The findings in all three studies linked strong support for teaching English as a medium of instruction in universities, and very little support was found for teaching/learning other indigenous languages at university level.

Mehboob (2002) conducted his study in the University of Karachi, which is one of the largest universities in Pakistan. The 315 respondents were enrolled on an English language course, and 215 voluntarily participated and filled in the questionnaire. The findings of the study revealed that the overwhelming majority of participants, 94.4%, recommended English as a medium of instruction in the universities of Pakistan.

Mansoor (2005) conducted one of the largest surveys, which included 2,136 students, 121 teachers, and 63 parents from different public- and private-sector universities of Pakistan.

This survey is considered to be one of the largest in the field of language education in Pakistan. The results of the survey are tabulated below in 2.3.

Table 2. 3 Medium of instruction preferences in Mansoor’s (2005) survey

	Students (n=2160)	Teachers (n=121)	Parents (n=63)
Regional Language	12.30%	17.40%	12.7%
Urdu	48.70%	41.30%	71.40%
English	90.80%	88.40%	96.80%

As can be seen in table 2.3, participants in the survey showed strongest support for English as a medium of instruction in the universities of Pakistan. The results clearly showed a strong link between all three categories of participants in their preference for English as a medium of instruction, which could suggest that students and their parents would prefer English as an academic language over all other languages.

More recently, Irfan (2013) conducted a research study in two of the public-sector universities of Lahore, which is one of the biggest cities in Pakistan. The participants in the study were 451 postgraduate students and 35 teachers from Master programmes in education. The postgraduate programmes used English as a medium of instruction, whereas the undergraduate programmes used Urdu as a medium of instruction. The findings of the study reported that some 92.5% of the research participants believed that English should be used as the medium of instruction because the use of English would benefit their academic as well as professional life.

The findings of all three studies above are consistent, and most of the university students perceive English as the preferred language for instruction at higher education level in Pakistan. However, the conditions under which English is taught or learnt as a language

seems to be far from satisfactory in Pakistan. The following section highlights the conditions of English language teaching in Pakistan.

### **2.7.2 English language teaching conditions in Pakistan**

Warsi (2004) argued that educators, linguists, second language researchers, and English language teachers must approach English, as a second language, from applied linguistics perspectives and must make substantial endeavours to better the conditions under which English is taught in Pakistan both in rural and urban settings. According to Warsi (2004), English language conditions are far from satisfactory in Pakistan because students are found to be unable to communicate in English with relative ease even after studying English for six to eight years. Most of the students, specifically in rural areas, seem to be lacking all four major linguistic skills – reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Problems such as little understanding of the academic curricula, inexperienced teachers, inappropriate textbooks, lack of teaching materials, and possibly many more have largely affected English language teaching across Pakistan.

Most of the teachers and users of English do not seem to have a proper understanding of the academic curricula. Academic courses are completely different for different schools and colleges, which further makes teaching English complex at higher education level. Some of the users of English seem to be more intelligent than their class fellows, largely due having to a better academic educational background. Students from big cities such as Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad have better skills in reading and writing English than those who have been educated in comparatively smaller cities or in rural areas. Most of the teachers in rural areas do not have access to basic resources of English language teaching. The English textbooks given to teachers are approved by the government, and no training is given to teachers about

the academic curriculum. Teachers in rural areas are seen to be unaware of the advancements in the field of English language teaching. Thus, it appears to be extremely difficult to expect teachers to teach English properly, and there seems to be little hope of improvement in that direction.

Warsi (2004) mentioned that publishers in the USA and the UK paid more attention to the content and form of the books in considering the varying levels of proficiency of the students. On the contrary, publishers in Pakistan are found to be clueless about the linguistic needs of users of English when producing books, and do not consider whether or not the learner is at the appropriate developmental level of acquiring the target language structures. The impact of inappropriate books has an extremely negative influence on the growth of users' skills of English, most importantly in the rural areas of the country, where there seems to be no solution to the declining state of affairs in the field of English language teaching. There appears to be a widening gap between what research indicates in second language teaching and what actually happens in English language classrooms in Pakistan (ibid.).

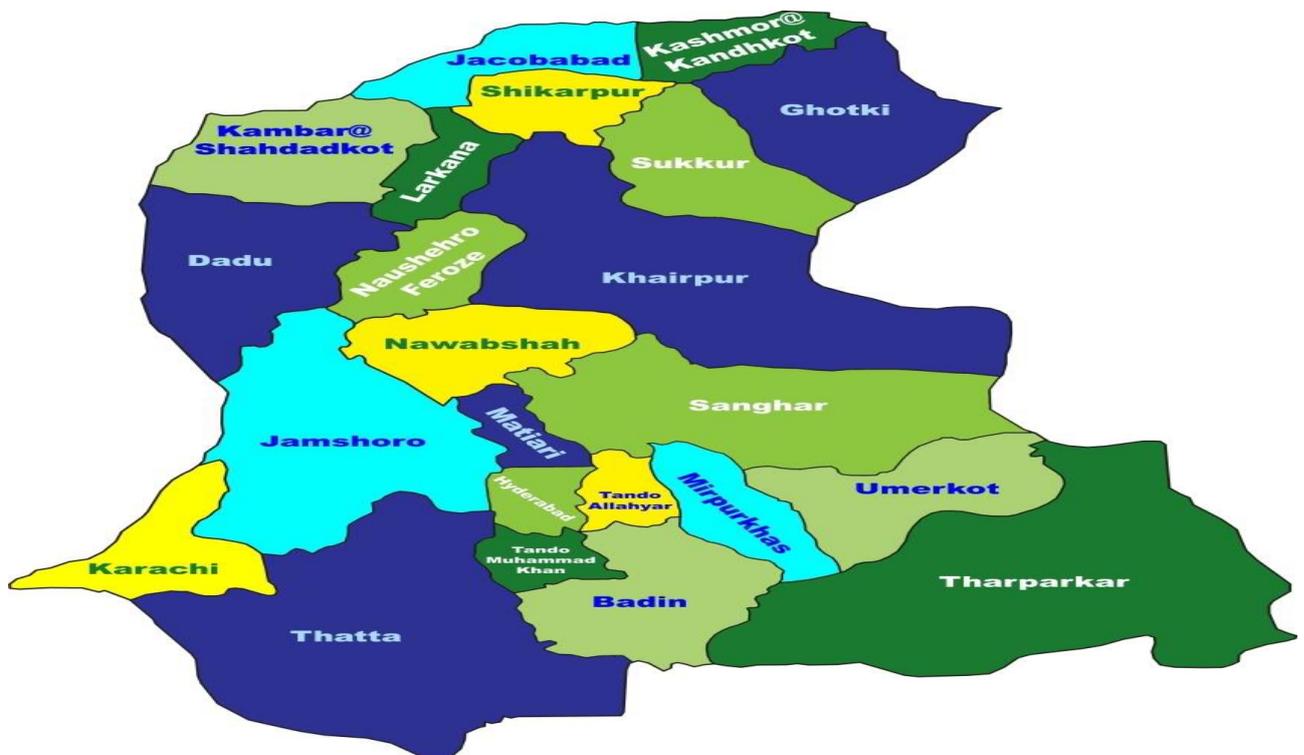
According to Mansur (2011:18), English language teaching is linked with teaching literature, and teachers learn to teach English through their hard work and experience. Unfortunately, over the years, the problem of English language teaching has continued to hover over the future of students due to the "huge demand of English in the empowerment market and relatively low level of proficiency of graduates", argued Shamim and Tribble (2005:82). The English-teaching industry has grown in Pakistan in more recent times both in public- and private-sector universities (Soomro et al., 2016). In order to enhance students' English language skills, universities offer various programmes in the field of English for Specific Purposes and English for Academic Purposes. These programmes aim to improve the English

language skills of the students so that they can get their university degree, which is obviously taught in English.

### 2.7.3 English language teaching at Shah Abdul Latif University (SALU)

Shah Abdul Latif University (SALU), Khairpur, was established in 1987 and is one of the relatively new universities established in Sindh. This university is situated in one of the less developed cities of Pakistan where the demand for learning the English language is extremely high and facilitates for teaching English are fewer. The university accommodates more than 8,000 students in 26 different teaching departments under six academic faculties: Arts and Languages, Natural Sciences, Physical Sciences, Social Sciences, Management Sciences, and Education.

Figure 1. 1 Map of Sindh, Pakistan



Source: [www.googlemap.co.uk](http://www.googlemap.co.uk) accessed on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2016

Since the university is located in the one of the less developed cities of the country, the number of the female students may not be more than 30%. There are six faculties which cover 26 departments and institutes. Surprisingly, English is taught in all departments of the university with extremely limited facilities and resources.

The Department of English was established in 1989 and is one of the oldest departments in the university. In 2015, it was upgraded to the Institute of English Language and Literature. It offers a BS (four-year) Programme in English Linguistics and Literature and an MA Programme of two years both in Linguistics and Literature. Recently, it has started offering an M. Phil program in the field of Linguistics and Literature. With an extremely limited teaching staff of 15, this institute covers the rest of the 25 departments and institutes of the university where English is taught as a compulsory subject to students so that they improve their English skills and are able to attain a university degree. English is taught as a compulsory subject for a period of two years, which covers four semesters, in each of the departments in the university.

## **2.8 Summary**

In this chapter, a detailed overview was given regarding the status of English language teaching in Pakistan. At the beginning of the chapter, the socio-linguistic profile of the English language was explained with regard to the overall standing of English in the midst of other regional languages. This chapter also highlighted the weakness of the Pakistani educational system, where more than two educational systems are running, including private English-medium schools and vernacular-medium schools funded by the state. Students who study in the private medium or elitist schools have a far better and progressive career in comparison to those who are educated in state-run schools where no facility is provided to

improve the overall English language teaching. The role of madrassas (religious schools) is also elaborated, where the poorer class of the country send their children to seek education freely.

An overview of the national educational plan was also presented, in which it was clearly revealed that various committees were set up to improve the overall educational standard of Pakistan. However, these committees were repeatedly formed in every five years, but no desired result was achieved. In addition to that, the English language policy was also elaborated including the commendable role of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan. The introduction of various projects with regard to training teachers from schools, colleges, and universities was a much-appreciated step. At the end, the conditions under which English is taught at Shah Abdul Latif University were described briefly.

## **Chapter 03**

### **Literature Review**

Willingness to communicate (WTC) in English as a second and foreign language became a specialised area of research in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) in the late 1990s. The publication of MacIntyre et al's (1998) heuristic model seems to have caused a shift in the goals of second language (L2) learning. Since then, WTC has continued to be the focus of a great deal of research in L2 education. To be more specific, WTC in an L2 has increasingly been one of the central explanatory variables in the domain of L2 education in the last decade and continues to be the centre of investigation for researchers across the globe.

Research into WTC has been conducted in various contexts, predominantly Western, and quite a few studies were carried out in Eastern contexts in which China and Japan are prominent. Such research should further be expanded into other south Asian countries in order to identify the issues L2 learners face during communication. By doing so, researchers and linguists could not only be able to recognise those issues related to learners' willingness to communicate, but it would also contribute to and enrich the existing pedagogical understanding of WTC in an L2 across the world. Unfortunately, research on WTC in a Pakistani context is still believed to be at its preliminary stages, or to be more specific, no major study has yet been reported except one conducted by Ali (2010) on a very small scale. There are still scant research studies reported, either theoretical or empirical, in existing literature which could bring to the surface the WTC of Pakistani university students. This

study is, therefore, an attempt on a larger scale to bridge both methodological as well as pedagogical research gaps specifically in a Pakistani context.

This chapter critically reviews the relevant existing literature specifically pertaining to the WTC, both theoretical and empirical, conducted in a variety of contexts across the world. The first section of the chapter discusses the historical perspective of WTC followed by its advancement from first language (L1) to L2. Then the theoretical conceptualisation of WTC in an L2 is also discussed, together with empirical studies conducted in various contexts i.e. both Western and Eastern, and how it (WTC) was reconceptualised in an East Asian context. Furthermore, an account of empirical studies conducted previously is also provided in order to know what has been researched and investigated in the field concerned, which is, of course, willingness to communicate in an L2. In the end, an attempt has been made to highlight research gaps and critique WTC research either in an ESL or EFL setting. The most immediate reason for developing this general overview on WTC is that it would, to great extent, lead us to the point of how the current study has pedagogically contributed to the scope of WTC in an L2 setting.

### **3.1 Historical Perspective and Conceptualisation of Willingness to Communicate**

In the literature on either L1 or L2 acquisition, it seems to have been though relatively difficult to define WTC perhaps due to its complex nature; nevertheless, attempts have been made to elicit the various facets of WTC with elaborate description. McCroskey (1997:77) defined that “the willingness to communicate (WTC) trait is an individual’s predisposition to initiate communication with others”. Since the origin of this operational definition of WTC, over the years, the most interesting aspect of this construct has appeared to have been its diversity and its dynamic state, which keeps changing from situation to situation (Kang,

2005:277). McCroskey (1997:76) points out that a series of studies, specifically elaborative empirical investigation in the domain of communication, began in the 1930s, to explore whether issues related to one's willingness to communicate are strongly rooted in one's personality or situationally dependent.

Since then, it has been generally believed that researchers' attention was focused into issues related to one's communication ability, particularly talking. This development in communication research with specific regard to a public speaking context may be seen as one of the foundation stones in the advancement of communication apprehension (CA). Communication apprehension is defined as an "individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated with another person or persons" (McCroskey, 1997:82). The recognition of CA perhaps energised researchers' attention towards addressing issues related to communication abilities, and this could be considered as one of the stepping stones towards developing the construct of willingness to communicate. In addition, Clevenger's (1959) and Phillips' (1968) studies were generally believed to have been seminal pieces of research and provided a potential foundation which, one way or the other, subsequently led to the advancement of the WTC construct (cited in McCroskey, 1997:76-77).

Interestingly, research in the realm of communication began to receive researchers' attention in the 1930s as reported above; no research measure was available till 1985 which could measure one's willingness to communicate. From the mid-1970s to mid-1980s, as research evolved in the field of communication, researchers seemed to have increased their interest towards investigating threads of communication in particular in relation to speaking or talking. Burgoon's (1976) construct of "Unwillingness to communicate", Mortensen et al's (1977) "Predisposition toward verbal behaviour" and McCroskey et al's (1982) construct of "Shyness" discussed various problems that one faces while choosing to speak or

communicate. Burgoon (1976:60) defined unwillingness to communicate as “a chronic tendency to avoid and/or devalue oral communication”, whereas McCroskey and Richmond (1982:460) defined “shyness---the tendency to be timid, reserved, and most specifically, talk less”.

With this evolution of research in the field of communication, McCroskey and Bear (1985) conceptualised and introduced their construct of “Willingness to communicate” (WTC). The origin of the WTC construct could not be seen in its entirety as a new one, but it was rather reworded, giving it a positive orientation. Furthermore, this origin could also be viewed through the perspectives of other related constructs, as reported above, which had overtly or covertly influenced the evolution the WTC construct through the academic literature. At first, the immediate assumption behind developing the WTC construct was the unavailability of any valid research instrument which could measure one’s degree of WTC when the individual has a free choice to initiate or avoid communication (McCroskey and Bear, 1985:01). The second assumption which led the way to an advancement of the WTC construct was the view that WTC is personality based, and involves personality traits and predisposition which is fairly consistent across a variety of communication contexts such as public speaking, talking in a small group, and talking in dyads (pairs) and with three types of audiences/interlocutors, i.e. friends, acquaintances and strangers.

The assumptions on which the WTC construct was developed may raise some serious questions to be addressed in detail. For example, the question of unavailability of any WTC construct in academic literature can be seen as one of the justified stances, but the argument that WTC is only specifically personality based and trait like predisposition does not seem to be as convincing as the first one. It may be generally viewed in the research, both theoretically and empirically, that verbal communication is one of the substantive facets of interpersonal communication. But the nature of verbal communication cannot necessarily be

assumed to be of personality-based orientation. McCroskey (1997:77) argues that the WTC construct is “in part situationally dependent”, which maintains that this construct cannot only be believed to be of personality-based orientation.

There are perhaps a host of situational constraints, which actually cement one’s preference to engage in communication, specifically talking. For instance, can communication, to be very specific, verbal communication, only be viewed as a personality trait, how the person feels on that day, what communication the person has had with others recently, who the other person is, what that person looks like, what might be lost and gained through communication with others, what other demands on the person’s time are present and possibly a myriad of other constraints not illustrated here (ibid). These situational constraints can have a substantial influence on one’s willingness to communicate and there is possibly a greater likelihood that these factors may determine one’s WTC.

However, while responding to these questions, McCroskey (1997:77) argued that individuals demonstrate some regular behavioural tendencies of willingness to communicate in various situations which determine their personality orientation. He further stated that it is the personality orientation which illustrates why one person is willing to communicate and another is not under similar or virtually identical situational constraints. But it has not been brought to the surface that what are those situational factors where WTC as a personality orientation could influence one’s willingness to communicate. The question which needs to be addressed here is that can situational constraints have altering impact on the regular behaviour tendencies of willingness to communicate. Because it is likely to be possible that an individual’s regular behavioural tendencies may hamper him/her in communicating in some situations. However, if he/she is forced to communicate in those situations, then will he/she be able to communicate? For example, some of the students feel hesitant to communicate in the classroom for multiple reasons, i.e. their subject knowledge may not be

good enough or they do not feel confident when asked to communicate in the classroom. Despite that, if they are forced to participate, then is it possible that their regular behavioural tendencies are challenged or altered due to the immediacy of the situation?

It is commonly believed that talking is one of the vital components in initiating verbal communication in any language of the world (McCroskey and Bear, 1985). However, it could be argued that the frequency and degree to which people tend to speak differs dramatically from person to person as well as culture to culture. Further, it is likely to be possible that people living in the same culture could vary in their frequency and the degree to which they tend to talk. It seems to be possible that in some cultures people choose to remain silent and may not be considered fluent in communication, although it does not mean that they will not be effective in communication.

Samovar and Porter (1985) argue that culture could shape human communicative behaviour and the amount of communication a person is likely to engage in may be dependent on their cultural orientation. By drawing on Samovar and Porter's argument, Klopff (in Press) made a distinction between Eurocentric communication and Asian centric styles. He argues that a Eurocentric communication style orients individuals to articulate their ideas precisely, explicitly and directly, whereas an Asian centric communication style devalues and discourages direct confrontation, and silence is valued, which suggests that willingness to communicate may not be viewed as important in Asia as it is in Europe (cited in Lu and Fang, 2008:76). Thus, avoiding direct confrontation in communication and valuing silence may not be viewed as an inability to communicate. It can be seen in a way that the Asian centric style prefers to remain silent and possibly avoids rigorous talk or discussion. It is likely to be possible that some people tend to talk when they are spoken to and sometimes not even then. Others prefer to talk more in some contexts and choose to remain silent in other contexts; still others tend to talk more to some receivers than they normally do to others, as

argued by McCroskey and Richmond (1990:20). This variability in the speaking tendency, according to McCroskey and Richmond (1987:129), is embedded in one's personality.

Believing that WTC is of personality-based orientation, which subsequently leads one to exhibit regular behavioural propensities, McCroskey and Richmond (1987:138) suggested six of the variables which they later referred to as antecedents of WTC. According to them, these variables could be the potential but not the direct cause of the difference in individuals' willingness to communicate and are likely to be of immense interest to scholars from the fields of psychology and communication for a variety of reasons, one of which is the possible relationship with WTC. They mention that "it is more likely that these variables may be involved in mutual causality with each other and even more likely that both the antecedents and willingness to communicate are produced in common by other causal elements" (p.138).

These antecedents are i) introversion and anomie, ii) alienation, iii) self-esteem, iv) cultural divergence, v) communication skills level and vi) communication apprehension. For the purpose of this study, these antecedents are defined as follows. Introverts are believed to be quiet, shy, timid and introspective and often seem to be driven away from communication without necessarily having any anxiety about communication (McCroskey and Richmond, 1990:25). Anomie is referred to as a state of feeling alone and isolated (Bloom, 1970: cited in McCroskey and Richmond 1987:139), whereas alienation is defined as an extreme manifestation of anomie and is referred to as a feeling of estrangement (McCroskey and Richmond 1987:139). According to McCroskey and Richmond (1990:26), self-esteem is a "person's evaluation of his/her own worth", and they further argued that a person with low self-esteem would presumably be less willing to communicate because they believe they have little to offer. Regarding cultural divergence and communication skills as antecedents of WTC, very little has been reported by McCroskey and Richmond when they specifically relate these variables to willingness to communicate in an L1. They (1987:140) argued that

culturally divergent individuals may have excellent communication abilities for their own culture, but the fear of being negatively evaluated in other cultures could cause them to withdraw from communication. For example, an individual is likely to be unaware of the cultural trends of engaging with people in any other than their own culture any they may have a fear of using inappropriate expressions or behaviour. By reflecting on communication skills, McCroskey and Richmond (1987) stated that the relationship between communication skills and willingness is a complex one and more evidence is needed to draw any conclusion. Communication apprehension (CA) has been viewed as the “single best predictor of his/her willingness to communicate...and CA is the most potent of the antecedents of willingness to communicate” (ibid). Last but not least, self-perceived communication competence (SPCC) is defined as “an individuals’ view of their own competence as a communicator” (McCroskey, 1997; cited in Burroughs et al, 2003:231).

In summary, this section broadly presents the historical perspective and emergence of the willingness to communicate construct in an L1. With the evolution of research in the field of communication in the 1930s, researchers began to realise the importance of verbal communication, which subsequently led to the conceptualisation of the various constructs. Burgoon’s (1976) construct of “Unwillingness to communicate”, Mortensen et al’s (1977) “Predisposition towards verbal behaviour” and McCroskey et al’s (1982) construct of “Shyness” built the foundation for future research in the domain of communication. Realising the need for further research, McCroskey and Bear (1985) conceptualised and reworded Burgoon’s (1976) construct, giving it a positive orientation, and titled it as “Willingness to communicate”. The next section presents the evidence of empirical research studies conducted to test and investigate the construct of willingness to communicate in an L1.

### **3.1.2 Empirical studies on WTC in first language (L1) communication**

After the theoretical conceptualisation of WTC together with the identification of its antecedents, researchers subsequently investigated the interrelationship of different variables and how those variables would empirically affect one's willingness to communicate in an L1. The emergence of the WTC construct in an L1 resultantly inspired a number of researchers to conduct their empirical studies across the world, i.e. in Australia (Burroughs, Christophel, and McCroskey, 1988), in Sweden (McCroskey, Burroughs, Daun, & Richmond, 1990) in Finland (Burroughs & Marie, 1990; Sallinen-Kuparinen, McCroskey & Richmond, 1991) conducted their respective studies, both cross cultural and monocultural, in different countries. The aim of their respective studies was to investigate the interrelationship among different communication variables. Besides that, McCroskey et al (1990) went a step ahead and conducted a comparative study between American and Swedish college students in Sweden focusing on examining the relationship among the communication variables such as WTC, CA and self-perceived communication competence (SPCC).

With 195 college students in Australia, Barraclough, Christopher and McCroskey (1988) conducted a study to find out the relationship between CA, WTC and SPCC. The findings of the study suggested that the correlation between CA and WTC was  $-.49$ , between WTC and SPCC it was  $.75$  and between CA and SPCC it was  $-.64$  (p.189). Results further indicated that willingness to communicate was associated with higher self-perceived communication competence and lower communication apprehension. In addition, they further found that there was statistically significant difference in mean scores for SPCC and WTC. Besides that, they argued that the findings could not be generalised mainly on the basis of this limited investigation, and further studies should be conducted in different cultures like that of the US in order to provide a database for generalization (p.191).

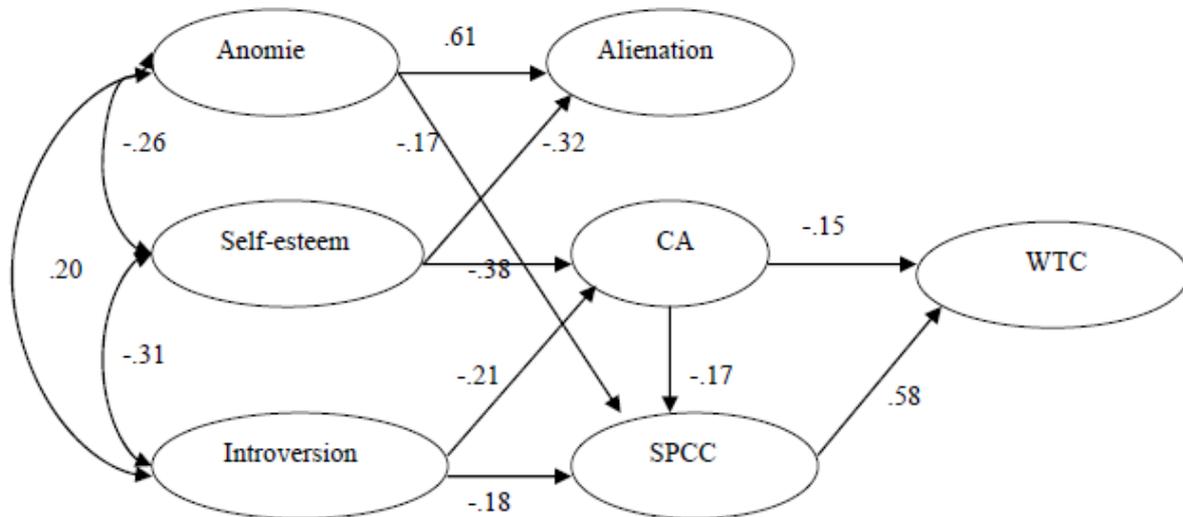
McCroskey et al (1990) carried out a comparative study between Swedish and American college students aiming to investigate the relationship between WTC, CA, SPCC. Participants in the study were 239 undergraduate college students from Stockholm University, Sweden, and data for the American sample were taken from earlier reports of US research (p.132). The findings of this investigation revealed that the correlations between CA and WTC, SPCC and WTC, and CA and SPCC were -.44, .44 and -.52 respectively. These results demonstrated that when communication anxiety increases, the willingness to communicate decreases. In the same way, findings maintained that when communication anxiety increases, students self-perceived communication competence reduces. It was further found that Swedish students were less willing to communicate and more introvert, whereas their American counterparts were more willing and less introvert (p. 133). The interesting part of the results, in the case of SPCC, was that Swedish students were not only more communicatively competent in the group and dyad contexts, but surprisingly they were found to be more talkative both to acquaintances and strangers (p. 134). It was further demonstrated that the findings of this study were culture-bound and non-generalizable from one culture to another (p. 135).

In the same vein, Sallinen-Kuparinen, McCroskey and Richmond (1991) conducted a study in Finland in which data was gathered and compared from previous studies. The findings of the study demonstrated that Finnish college students were comparatively less willing to communicate than their American, Swedish and Australian counterparts (p. 59). In contrast, in the case of SPCC, the Finnish college students were reported to be more communicatively competent except their Swedes fellows (p. 59). Sallinen-Kuparinen et al argued that more research is needed to investigate why Finnish college students are more communicatively competent because, in general, Finnish students appeared to be less willing than American, Swedish and Australian.

MacIntyre (1994:136) developed a structural model aiming to investigate and explain variance in WTC by using six of the determinants of the willingness to communicate: anomie, alienation, self-esteem, introversion, communication anxiety and perceived communication competence. The data that he used for developing a structural model was taken from studies carried out by McCroskey and his colleagues. While initiating his model, he argues that WTC can be seen as “a last step before overt behaviour” (p.137). By drawing upon the data gathered from studies conducted by McCroskey and his associates as well as using the variables as outlined above, MacIntyre found that the model “shows excellent fit to the data” ...with about 60% of variance in WTC being elucidated by the model (p.136).

He argues that the present model postulates that communication apprehension (CA) and perceived competence (PC) are two substantive causes of WTC. He further mentions that people are, to the extent, more willing to communicate when they are not apprehensive and perceive themselves capable of effective communication (p. 137-138). In addition, he states that perceived competence is caused by the combination of CA and introversion, whereas communication apprehension is seen to be caused by a combination of introversion and low self-esteem (p.138). Besides that, he suggested several implications of his model for understanding WTC and stipulated that CA and perceived competence (PC) could not only be accounted for determining one’s WTC, but changes in the CA may potentially be reflected in the WTC too (p. 138-139).

Figure 3. 1 MacIntyre (1994:137) hypothesised a causal model for predicting WTC using personality-based variables



While positing the limitation of his proposed model, MacIntyre (1994:139) contested the definition of willingness to communicate, given by McCroskey and Bear (1985). He argued that the issue of “free choice” in the conceptualisation of the WTC construct could be restricted under various conditions, such as the “strong convention of replying to another person’s question” (p.139). This seems to be one of the very substantive issues to be addressed both in L1 and EFL/ESL settings. He also pointed out that mainly using personality-based variables might be one of the potential limitations of this model; hence situational factors should be examined, which would provide a potential avenue for future research (p. 140).

In summary, this section presents a detailed description of the empirical studies investigating willingness to communicate and its relationship with different variables, i.e. communication anxiety and self-perceived communication competence. Empirical research studies were specifically conducted in parts of the Western world, such as Sweden, Finland and Australia.

A comparative study was also conducted between American and Swedish students. The most common variables examined in the aforementioned studies were willingness to communicate, communication anxiety and self-perceived communication competence. A causal model of WTC in an L1 was also designed by MacIntyre (1994) using personality-based variables, and it was recommended that future research should emphasise the situational factors. The next section of this chapter discusses the conceptualisation of willingness to communicate in an L2.

### **3.2 Conceptualisation and theorisation of willingness to communicate in an L2**

Second language learning (SLL) is generally assumed to be an enormously complex phenomenon, for it entails a myriad of diverse experiences of L2 learners (Mitchell & Myles, 2004:06). This complexity seems to have made it relatively difficult to determine and measure the L2 learners' experiences in the second language learning process. MacIntyre et al (2011:81) connote that acquiring the ability to communicate in a second language (L2) is a complex process. Almost 25 years ago, Ellis (1985:04) also argued that there is no uniformity in second language acquisition (SLA), which importantly seems to shed light on its unpredictable and diversifying phenomenon. "Different learners in different situations learn an L2 in different ways" (Ellis, 1985:04), which tends to sum up the complex nature of second language acquisition. Hence, it can be argued that no SLA theory or English language teaching (ELT) methodology or even any proposed model in SLL could define single-handedly what to teach, how to teach, how to use an L2 for communication purposes and more importantly how an L2 is learnt. The inclusion of multiple theories in SLA and ELT methodologies noticeably seems to uncover the complex phenomenon of SLL. Although

there are quite a few individual differences (IDs) variables, i.e. anxiety, motivation and personality, which have been researched to identify the complex nature of L2 learners' experiences, it appears that there is still a lot more research needed to understand and recognise the diverse and complex nature of L2 learners' experiences in learning an L2. In this connection, the emergence of the willingness to communicate construct in an L2 is believed to be one of the substantive constructs needed to investigate the learning experiences of L2 learners, specifically their use of an L2 for communication purposes.

Willingness to communicate (WTC), as reported in section 2.1, was originally advanced in an L1 communication by McCroskey and Bear (1985), with specific regard to talking or speech, and was generally regarded as one of the substantial constructs in explaining L1 communication. The growing emphasis on authentic communication as a necessary part of L2 learning (Kang, 2005:278) and the shift of L2 teaching and learning towards communication, both as an essential process and a goal of learning an L2 (Yashima, 2002:54), possibly led to the emergence of the WTC in L2 communication. With these shifts and overwhelming attention on communication as both a goal and a process of L2 learning, MacIntyre et al (1998) adapted and extended WTC into L2 communication by conceptualising a heuristic model which integrates/subsumes a range of linguistic, psychological and social variables as constitutive influences that may affect one's willingness to communicate and L2 use.

Dörnyei (2001:51) argues that the conceptualisation of this model in the context of an L2 is an attempt to draw together a number of learner variables that have been potentially established influences on the acquisition or use of an L2. It arguably seems difficult to define willingness to communicate because it is a relatively new construct in context of an L2 (Yashima, 2002:54). However, it can be conceptualised and defined as an individual's

intention or probability or readiness to initiate oral communication when he/she is free to do so in an L2 ((MacIntyre et al, 1998:547). Kang (2005:291) further argues that this intention or readiness to engage in communication “may vary according to the interlocutor (s), topic, and conversational context, among other potential situational variables”. Therefore, she (2005:291) proposed a new definition of WTC: “*Willingness to communicate (WTC) is an individual’s volitional inclination towards actively engaging in the act of communication in a specific situation*”. Kang’s proposed definition is used as an operational or working definition for the present study. Kang further suggested that WTC is a dynamic situational concept which is likely to change from moment to moment (p.277), which Ellis (2008:697) also believes because of the way that the pattern of variables exerting influences on WTC is not fixed but situation-dependent.

This accords with MacIntyre and Legatto (2010:01) when they argued subsequently that WTC could be conceptualised as changing from moment to moment, as opportunities for L2 communication may emerge. Drawing upon the nature of WTC being situation-dependent or dynamic in nature, MacIntyre and Legatto (2010:02) argued that most of the time L2 learners communicate in an L2 with a great degree of WTC, which is re-evaluated as an on-going process even at the time of language use. They further maintained that this change in an individual’s WTC could be seen as one of the potential causes of the dynamic nature of the willingness to communicate in ESL/EFL settings. In contrast, they also believed that currently it does not seem possible to study WTC from a dynamic perspective due to the lack of an adequate methodology (p.02).

Given WTC’s the potential place in L2 research, MacIntyre et al (1998:559) believed that the conceptual model of WTC was “a starting point” to inspire future studies “toward the ultimate goal of language learning: authentic communication between persons of different

language and cultural background”. They further argued that “the ultimate goal of the learning process should be to engender in language students the willingness to seek out communication opportunities and the willingness actually to communicate in them” (p. 547). Dörnyei (2001:51) maintained that “generating a willingness to communicate in a foreign language is arguably a central---if not *the* most central...objective of modern L2 pedagogy”. Ushioda (2001) also illustrated and argued that it would be reasonable to assume that L2 learners should act in a way that could aid them in meeting their future goals as follows: engineers learn how to design and build, surgeons are taught how to operate on their patients and chefs learn how to cook meals (cited in MacIntyre and Doucette, 2010:161).

In the field of second language learning, this is one of the increasingly rising concerns: that students study the language but opt to remain reluctant to use it. MacIntyre and Doucette (2010:162) very appropriately and carefully equated this concern with those in other fields as follows. Imagine if an engineer refuses to design a bridge, a surgeon is unwilling to enter the operation theatre, or a chef sits quietly in a corner of the kitchen; then to what degree are we perturbed by this unwillingness? By reflecting on this assumption, they actually believed that the basic purpose of L2 education should be to create WTC and that a programme which is unable to engender willingness in students, who could use and operate it for communication purposes, would simply be a failed programme. This assumption seems to be relatively difficult to implement across the world, where we have undeniably millions of multi-cultural and multinational L2 learners both in ESL/EFL settings whose educational set-ups may be entirely different from one another. To ensure that every L2 educational programme should aim to engender willingness in students across the world may not only appear to be difficult, but it could be empirically impossible, because of the difficulty in investigating each of them. However, efforts should be directed towards introducing such educational programmes with

the help of either national or international researchers, linguists and teachers, because students most of the time could perceive WTC as “a means and an end at the same time (Dörnyei, 2005:210).

Cao and Philp (2006:481) have also endorsed the aforesaid view and accentuated that current approaches to teaching English as a second language in the classroom should emphasise exposure to L2 input and provision of opportunities for learners to engage in meaningful communication. Similarly, Kang (2005:278) also argued that when we create or engender WTC in L2 learners, it is likely that we produce active language learners who can be expected to use an L2 in authentic communication and facilitate language learning. By doing so, they believed, L2 learners are likely to function as autonomous learners, making independent endeavours to learn the language through communication, extending their learning opportunities and more importantly getting involved in learning activities both inside as well as outside the classroom (p.278).

MacIntyre et al (1998:546) argued that “it is highly unlikely that WTC in the second language (L2) is a simple manifestation of WTC in the L1”. Reflecting on this view, they further stated that the difference between L1 and L2 WTC could be owing to the uncertainty inherited in L2 use which operates in rather a complex manner. For example, if an individual is found to be unwilling to communicate in his/her first language due to disinterestedness, communication anxiety, unfamiliarity with the audience, the formality of the situation, the degree of evaluation of the speaker, inadequate knowledge of any given topic, etc., then it is likely that the unwillingness in the case of the L2 could be magnified tenfold. MacIntyre et al (1998: 546) argue that the change in the language of communication produces a potential change in the communication setting. This suggests that L2 and L1 WTC are independent and it cannot be assumed that global L1 WTC could be generalised to L2 WTC (MacIntyre et al,

2003:593). Although there is very limited evidence or studies available which can be used for comparison of WTC between L1 and L2, the findings of those limited studies have showed consistent results. As Burroughs et al (2003:237) reported, WTC of the Micronesian students in an L1 was significantly higher than their L2 WTC. In addition to that, MacIntyre et al (2003) found a non-significant correlation between L1 and L2 WTC for both groups with or without immersion experience. In their study, results indicated “some degree of independence between WTC in L1 and WTC in L2” (p.600). Besides that, the difference between L1 and L2 WTC can be elucidated under the social, political and cultural implications, which to a greater degree exert their influence in the use of an L2, and are found to be irrelevant in the case of L1 use (MacIntyre et al, 1998:546).

### **3.2.1 Heuristic pyramid structure of WTC model**

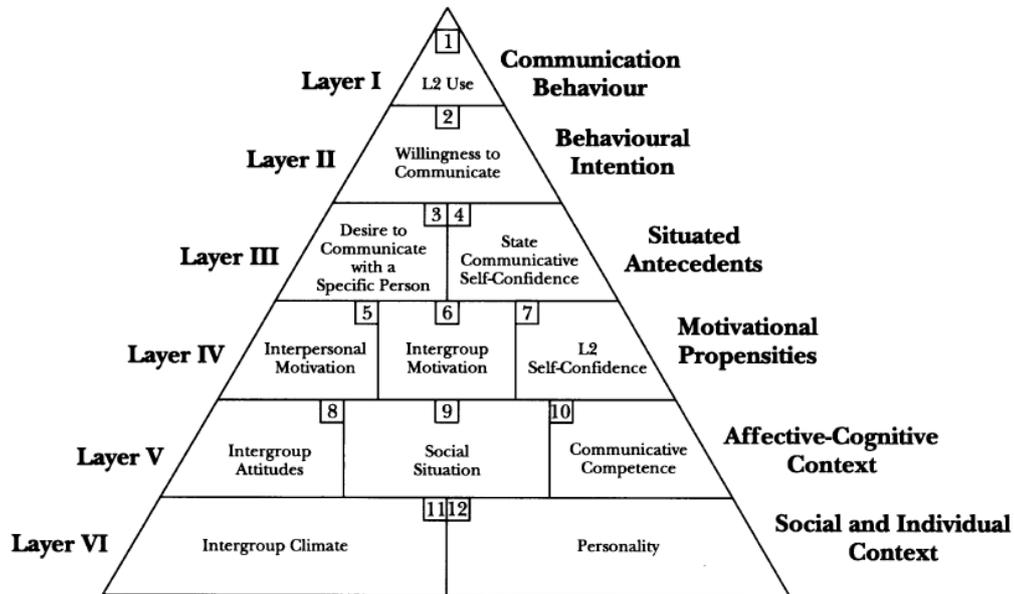
MacIntyre et al (1998) proposed a conceptual six-layered pyramid structured heuristic model, in which a range of linguistic, communicative and social psychological variables of the language were synthesised as potential precursors of willingness to communicate in an L2 (see figure 3.2). Although research regarding aforementioned variables has been characteristically carried out independently of one and another, the WTC construct provides a chance to integrate them (Clément et al, 2003:191). The importance of this model can be viewed from the fact that it is a “first attempt at a comprehensive treatment of WTC in the L2” as a situated-based variable, as argued by MacIntyre et al (1998:558). The pyramid-shaped model was structured into six layers, proceeding from the most distal to most proximal elements. For a better understanding of this model, its pioneers argued that a pyramid was chosen as a heuristic because it permits us to initiate our discussion at the eve of communication (p.546). The pyramid structure further unveils both the immediacy and relatively distal influences of variables. The six-layered heuristic pyramid model was divided

into two categories identified as immediate situational facets and enduring factors, which is different from what McCroskey proposed as a trait-like variable. The immediate situational dimensions were the first three layers (I, II and III) of the model (e.g. desire to communicate with a specific person and state of communicative self-confidence at a given time in a specific situation) and identified as more dependent on the particular situation at a specific time. The enduring influences (for instance, intergroup motivation, communicative competence, intergroup climate and learner personality) were placed as the last three layers (IV, V and VI) and were, in the views of the authors, comparatively distal as well as stable variables, designed to form the foundation of the pyramid (ibid, 1998:546-547).

This model aims to explore the interrelationship among various affective factors exerting influence on an L2 learners which could be stimuli to interpret and predict second language communication. The importance of this pyramid-structured model dwells in the fact that it is the “first attempt at a comprehensive treatment of WTC in the L2 use” as a situation-oriented variable (ibid). In the pyramid-structured model, WTC has been conceptualised as a state orientation rather than a trait level as developed by McCroskey and Richmond (1991) (MacIntyre, 2007:568). According to MacIntyre (2003), the major flaw in this WTC model is identified as the one-dimensional-like triangle of the pyramid structure (cited in Cao, 2009:14).

Figure 3. 2 Heuristic Model of Variables Influencing WTC (MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei and Noels, 1998: 547)

Heuristic Model of Variables Influencing WTC



It was hypothesised that the layers which were placed at the top had more immediate influences on an individual’s WTC, whereas the layers at the bottom had distant influences on the WTC (MacIntyre et al, 1998). With the advancement of the WTC model in an L2 context, a considerable amount of research has been conducted in an effort to validate the various dimensions of this complex pyramid model. However, the research studies which focused on validating some of the complex parts of this model were principally carried out in Western contexts, and very scant research has been reported in Eastern contexts in which China and Japan are prominent. The detailed description of those research studies will be presented in the next section under the subheading of ‘Empirical studies conducted on WTC in the domain of L2 communication’.

Setting the tone for willingness to communicate in an L2, in the views of the pioneers of the model, communicative behaviour is the first layer, which is a result of the complex system of interrelated factors established in the lower layers. MacIntyre et al (1998:547) argue that they have broadly dealt with communication behaviour, which has been viewed as activity that includes speaking up in the classroom, reading L2 newspapers, watching L2 television or utilising L2 in the workplace. They further illustrated that language teachers have, most of the time, been unable to generate this array of opportunities for L2 communication. On this basis, they argued that actually the ultimate goal of the L2 learning process should be to create willingness among L2 students to seek out communication opportunities, and any educational programme which fails to cultivate willingness among L2 students would simply be a failed programme.

In the conceptual pyramid model, WTC is placed as a second layer and has been viewed as the final psychological step before initiating communication in an L2 (MacIntyre, 2007:568). Willingness to communicate, as a second layer in the proposed pyramid model, was viewed “as a readiness to enter into discourse at particular time with a specific person or persons using a L2” (MacIntyre et al, 1998:547). Subsequently, the issue of time has come to play vital role here as to whether an individual is willing to initiate communication or choosing to remain silent. This is also vital point in that original WTC construct offered by McCroskey and Baer (1985) has been extended and regarded as situation or state orientated. WTC is regarded as a state of readiness which provides right moment to communicate (MacIntyre, 2007:568). The pioneers of the model argued that WTC strongly implies a behavioural intention. As a result, the conviction they were inclined to postulate and establish was the intention, which seemed to be the most immediate cause of communication behaviour if an individual has control over his/her actions.

The third layer of situated antecedents of initiating communication are (i) desire to communicate with a specific person and (ii) self-confidence. Both situational variables are regarded as two of the substantial and immediate determinants of WTC (p: 549). The desire to communicate with a specific person seems to stem from the combination of the affiliation and control motives (MacIntyre, 2007:371). Research in social psychology postulates that affiliation may refer to fostering a relationship with interlocutors which may further be established through frequent encounters. The control motive stands not only for the power of speech influence but also for the delivery of an explicit message, worded with precision and targeted to a specific recipient, which may have strong influence over the determinants of control motives. For instance, affiliation may be the immediate reason for initiating communication in an informal situation with attractive L2 interlocutors (MacIntyre et al, 1998: 549).

Although a very limited amount of empirical research exists on the variations of L2 confidence, it is likely that some situations may inspire more confidence than others, which is primarily dependent on the previous L2 experiences. Contrary to Clément's trait of self-confidence, the self-confidence mentioned in layer III is believed to be a momentary feeling of confidence which is assumed to be transient within a given situation. It seems perhaps that the confidence of an individual may vary not only when it comes to communication in an L2, but there is also the possibility that this variation in confidence extends to different L1 communication situations/contexts and settings. This transient feeling of confidence may be hugely dependent on previous L2 experiences, which might be both pleasant and unpleasant. In this case, the prior experiences actually seem to determine not only the transient confidence of the person; they also tend to define in which situation the individual is more or less confident. Perceived competence refers to the point where one has the capacity to

communicate effectively at certain moments, and this feeling could only be on the surface when an individual has previously encountered it. The novel situations may pose a potential threat to a speaker's WTC because the speaker seems to be unsure of their ability to meet the communicative demands required at that moment (MacIntyre et al, 1998). Like transient feelings of confidence, anxiety may increase due to a host of factors such as unpleasant previous experiences, intergroup tension, large numbers of people listening or the novelty of the situation, which may possibly affect one's WTC to a great extent.

When we move to layers IV and V of the pyramid, a transition is witnessed from situational influences to enduring ones which function as independent variables in investigating WTC in an L2. These layers potentially deal with stable individual differentiating factors which may be applied in broader communication situations. The decision to initiate communication is often a well-calculated and motivated action which may be controlled by the enduring and situational variables. Either of these influences may affect one's decision to initiate communication. The motivational propensities in layer IV have three variables:

- a) inter-individual motivation
- b) intergroup motivation
- c) L2 confidence

Control and affiliation are still viewed as two of the substantial causal components which are present in layer III. Control and affiliation instigate communication behaviour among interlocutors who use the same or another language. This communication behaviour, which is rooted in societal stratifications, may tend to establish a powerful rapport between people or groups of people who have a considerable influence on language communication behaviour in broader situations and contexts.

Though control and affiliation are different in nature, both provide enough chances for individuals to express themselves in a variety of situations. L2 self-confidence is somewhat different from and seems to be a bit broader than the situation-specific confidence discussed earlier, because L2 self-confidence “corresponds to the overall belief in being able to communicate in the L2 in an adaptive and efficient manner” (MacIntyre et al, 1998, p. 551).

Layer V addresses the issues based on the affective and cognitive contexts, which appear to be somewhat remote and further from the specific language learning and communication context. The variables manifested in this layer appear to be more pertinent to individuals and their attitudes as well as to motives gathered from past experiences. Intergroup attitudes are fairly described by the integrativeness, fear of assimilation and motivation to learn an L2. Integrativeness and fear of assimilation are used to display two of the many attitudes towards a different language and cultural group. Integrativeness is linked to adaption to an L2 group which may subsequently be shown by the increased frequency and quality of contact within an L2 community. Fear of assimilation, on the other hand, is the factor which accrues a feeling of losing self-identity through acquiring an L2, thus articulating and predicting less contact with the L2 community or group.

Integrativeness and fear of assimilation are different and opposing forces seen within the individual, which may lead us therefore to the conclusion that individuals have both influences at the time of acquiring an L2. These influences or propensities may either facilitate one to initiate communication in an L2 or may cause a feeling of wanting to avoid it. In addition to the variables outlined above, motivation to learn an L2 is one of the affective variables which encourages L2 learners to apply a more intense and thorough effort to the learning process. MacIntyre et al (1998) state that this attitude ultimately develops positive results for L2 learners both in the language classroom and in a variety of other contexts where

there is an opportunity to learn and use the L2. Therefore, it can be understood that both positive and negative propensities not only bear different results but also may lead to an altogether different intensity in language learning and communication.

The social situation is yet another composite variable represented in layer V describing a social encounter in a specific communication setting. The social situation has several classification schemes which may not all be explainable; however, the most immediate and relevant schemes that broadly influence L2 communication are the participants, the setting, the purpose, the topic and the channel of communication. MacIntyre et al (1998) state that the immediate participants' variables are age, gender and social class, whereas the setting refers to the place and time of communication and purpose influences situational variances which refer to goals or the intention of the discourse.

It is believed that the topic of communication substantially affects the ease of language use, because familiarity with a topic may result in boosting one's linguistic self-confidence, which may eventually lead to more willingness to communicate in an L2. In the same way, Zuengler (1993) argues that superior content knowledge may result in a person being more confident and likely to override all implicit or explicit limitations present in their oral proficiency (cited in MacIntyre et al, 1998:554). Finally, the channel of communication is generally assumed to be significant because it determines whether or not an individual initiates communication when they have the freedom to do so. Speaking and writing are two of the basic modes of communication, but within these exist other categories which might cause considerable variation. Social situations significantly influence one's WTC due to a host of factors discussed above. For instance, it is highly likely that the setting, purpose, topic and channel of communication substantively affect a person's WTC in an L2 inside or outside the classroom.

Communication competence is the last variable represented in layer V. What is meant by communication competence requires much elaboration, so the limitation of the study means that it is restricted to explaining this term briefly. It is generally viewed that an individual's L2 proficiency will have a substantial influence on their WTC because it most probably determines one's capacity to initiate communication when an opportunity is given. McCroskey and Richmond (1987) state that WTC is most likely influenced and shaped by how a person perceives their communicative competence instead of by what they actually possess.

The societal and individual context is the last layer, which is specifically classified into two substantive factors, intergroup climate and personality. These two variables are particularly relevant to communication because they broadly entail the characteristics of engaging interlocutors in different modes of communication. MacIntyre et al (1998) relate the intergroup climate of a community to ethnolinguistic vitality and personal communication networks which are to be further determined by the groups' relative representation of the L1 and L2 communities. They further argue that the demographic representation of the two communities, the power of their socioeconomic relationship represented in social institutions such as government, legislation and the church, will have a cumulative impact on an individual's communication behaviour in an L2 contexts.

Personality is the last variable and has been placed at the bottom of the pyramid model. In fact, personality does not have a direct influence on one's willingness to communicate in MacIntyre et al's (1998) model, but it still has an indirect role to play in shaping a person's communicative features within the broader social climate. It is therefore generally viewed that personality could potentially set the stage for L2 communication. It is also vital to see how the positive and negative features of personality may facilitate or hinder communication in an L2

respectively. MacIntyre and Charos (1996) conducted a study in which they suggested that the influence of personality on WTC functioned and was channelled through two very specific variables, L2 confidence and intergroup attitude. As a result, intergroup climate and personality are placed at the bottom of the pyramid because they have an indirect role in determining one's WTC.

While summarising this subsection, it is worthwhile to notice that the comprehensive illustration of the heuristic model made it quite explicit that no single variable can solely exert influence on the L2 learners' communication in the ESL/EFL setting. It seems appropriate to suggest that researchers and linguists should understand the interrelationship of those variables, instituted in the pyramid-structured model, in collectively influencing L2 learners' communication behaviour while explaining individual differences in second language learning. The variables manifested MacIntyre et al's (1989) model seem very complex; however, the interpretation of each layer or variable is presented in a way that shows that all of those aforementioned variables in one or other way exert potential influences on L2 learners. But it is difficult to say whether it is the only model which subsumes or integrates all linguistic, social and psychological variables which affect an individual's learning outcome. The next section will highlight the empirical studies conducted to investigate WTC in foreign or second language communication in Western contexts.

### **3.3 Empirical research on WTC in second and foreign language communication**

As described in subsection 3.2, very little was known about WTC in ESL/EFL settings before the publication of MacIntyre et al's (1998) model. The publication of this model substantively opened the new perspectives into WTC research particularly in L2 settings across a variety of contexts. Ellis (2008:698) states that the WTC construct seems to have

been promising in several ways, since it integrates various linguistic and social strands. The novelty of this construct, in the realm of L2 communication, lies in the fact that MacIntyre et al (1998:545) made a comprehensive attempt to design a model which could provide “an account of the linguistic, communicative, and social psychological variables that might affect one’s willingness to communicate”. Since then linguists and researchers have devoted a considerable amount of attention to describing and testing various facets of this model in both Western and Eastern contexts. However, the amount of research with regard to an L2 context can still be seen as limited, considering the WTC construct’s theoretical development and empirical scope. Thus, researchers in the discipline of language and communication are making vital contributions to literature and continue to inspire further research in the area.

Dörnyei and Kormos (2000) reported a study in which they explored the effects of a number of affective (primarily motivational) and socio-dynamic factors (i.e. L2 proficiency, WTC, group cohesiveness), and their relationships with interlocutors on L2 learners’ involvement in oral tasks (p. 281). The participants of the study were 46 Hungarian students (aged 16-17) studying English at an intermediate level in five classes and in two Budapest secondary schools (p. 282). On the basis of data collected from oral tasks, questionnaires and oral proficiency tests, the findings of the study indicated that informants’ WTC, in the L2 classroom, was influenced by their attitudes towards the task (p. 292). It was also revealed that in the case of learners with low or unfavourable task attitude towards the L2, there was no correlation between WTC and the amount of L2 participants of the study engaged to produce. Results further suggested that WTC, need for achievement and social status emerged as significant positive determinants of the students’ behaviour in their attitude towards task (p. 295).

MacIntyre and his associates conducted several empirical studies specifically in Canadian immersion contexts, with prime emphasis on the recognition of any correlation of WTC with a host of factors presented in the model. Baker and MacIntyre (2000) conducted a study in Canada where they investigated the role of gender and immersion in L2 communication. It involved 71 immersion and 124 non-immersion students whose first language was English and who studied French as their L2 in a Canadian high school (p. 320). The purpose of the study was to test both male and female, immersion and non-immersion students' WTC, attitudes towards learning French, orientation for learning, communication anxiety, perceived communicative competence and self-reported frequency of communication both in English and French. Based on the analysis of data collected both from questionnaires and interviews, it was revealed that communication anxiety and perceived competence were significant predictors of WTC and frequency of communication. The results of the study further suggested that immersion students, when compared to non-immersion students, were more willing to communicate and had lower anxiety as well as greater perceived competence, which led them to communicate in French more frequently. It was also found that immersion students' WTC in French was significantly correlated with anxiety related to French, frequency of communication in French and WTC in English (p.323).

MacIntyre, Baker, Clément and Conrad (2001) conducted a study in a relatively monolingual environment involving 79 respondents from the 9<sup>th</sup> grade from a junior high school located in eastern Canada (p. 374-375). They investigated the WTC of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade French immersion students. They examined the WTC of the respondents in four major skills of L2 pedagogy, speaking, writing, reading and comprehension, inside or outside the classroom, as well as looking at the social support they receive from friends, parents and teachers. The possible rationale behind employing this design could be addressing two of the vital situational cues

(inside vs outside the classroom) for the language learners where use of the language is generally taking place. Given that, if WTC is found to be consistent across a variety of situational cues, then its nature of being a personality trait would stay potentially grounded as conceptualised by McCroskey and Bear (1985). WTC would be viewed as situational variable as suggested by MacIntyre et al (1998), which has been further illustrated as “more closely tied to the type of situation in which one might communicate” (MacIntyre et al, 2001:376).

Gardner (1985) stated that orientation was the key component of motivation for language learning (cited in MacIntyre et al, 2001:373). MacIntyre et al (ibid) therefore included five of the substantial language learning orientations (job related, travel, friendship, increased knowledge of the target language group and school achievement) in their study, which was based on the previous study conducted by Clément and Kruidenier (1983). The findings revealed positive and consistent correlations between students’ five orientations of language learning (i.e. travel, job related, friendship, increased knowledge and school achievements) and their WTC in French as a second language. Interestingly, findings suggested that the consistent and strong correlation among WTC measures in different skills as well as contexts (inside vs outside the classroom) lend support to WTC as a trait-like (p.376-77). Contrary to expectations, participants of the study were more willing to communicate outside the classroom than inside, and overall, they found 14 significant correlations of the orientations with WTC inside the classroom, whereas there were 18 significant correlations with WTC outside the classroom (p. 377). In addition, results suggested that social support for language learning (particularly parents and teachers) proved to be high for language-learning orientation (p. 378). Respondents found friends, as an audience, to be more attractive interlocutors because their anxiety level was likely to be the lowest and self-confidence highest when they conversed with them in French (p. 382).

In 2002, MacIntyre et al conducted a study in which they measured the effects of the language, sex and grade on the WTC, anxiety, perceived competence, frequency of communication in French, motivation and attitude. The participants were 268 students from the 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades at a small junior high school in a late French immersion programme (p. 544). The results demonstrated that girls were more willing to communicate than boys and students of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades not only were more willing but also communicated more frequently than their juniors in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Furthermore, it was found that students' WTC was higher in English, their mother tongue, and lower in French, as it was their L2. It was further found that the WTC, language anxiety, communication frequency and perceived competence were positively correlated, which demonstrated that those students who were motivated tended to be more willing to communicate and had both higher perceived competence and lower anxiety (p. 554-55).

Baker and MacIntyre (2003) carried out yet another study in Canada investigating WTC, communication apprehension, perceived competence, frequency of communication in an L2, motivation, and attitudes and orientations. The informants of the study were 71 immersion and 124 non-immersion students from grades 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> (p. 75). All respondents' first language (L1) was English, and each was studying French as their L2. The findings of the study showed willingness to communicate in French was significantly correlated with communication anxiety in French for both groups, as was frequency of communication in French and willingness to communicate in English (p. 78). Interestingly, perceived competence in French was not significantly correlated with willingness to communicate in French for the immersion group but was very strong ( $r = .72$ ) for immersion students.

MacIntyre, Baker, Clément and Donovan (2003b) conducted a similar study among university-level students to measure differences between 59 French immersion and non-immersion students' level of WTC, communication anxiety, perceived competence,

integrative motivation and frequency of communication. Based on the analysis of questionnaire survey data, findings suggested that WTC significantly correlated with motivation in the immersion group, but not in the case of non-immersion group (p. 601). In the case of the immersion group, WTC was predicted by communication anxiety, but was not found to be predicted by perceived competence, whereas this was found to be reversed in the case of the non-immersion group, in which WTC was predicted by perceived competence but not by communication anxiety (p. 603). In addition, the authors concluded that findings of this study lent strong support to the structure of the pyramid model and showed that communication anxiety, perceived competence and motivation have a direct relationship with WTC. The findings of the study further demonstrated that the relationship between L1 and L2 WTC was non-significant. Given this result, it was argued that there was “some degree of the independence between WTC in L1 and WTC in L2...WTC does not simply transfer from one language to another” (p. 600-02).

Apart from individual and affective factors, research has also revealed how WTC could be affected by the social contextual variables as in the findings of such a study conducted by MacIntyre et al (2001), which has already been reported above. Apart from that, in 2003 Clément, Baker and MacIntyre carried out a study in which they showed that opportunities for L2 contact in terms of frequency and quality had an impact on the L2 WTC. They conducted their study in a Canadian context in which two groups of tertiary students, 130 anglophone and 248 francophone students, participated. The purpose of their study was to merge the WTC model and the social context model (a model that emphasised the importance of contact, L2 confidence and identity in acquiring an L2) into one model. The second goal of the study was to measure the differences in L2 contact, normative pressure, L2 confidence, WTC, identity and the frequency of the L2 between the two groups (p. 195-96). Based on the analysis of questionnaire data and path analysis, the findings of the study demonstrated that

contextual, individual and social factors all are vital determinants of L2 use. Results of the study further pointed to the role of opportunities for L2 communication, suggesting that WTC might be irrelevant to L2 use where the participants are not provided with the opportunity to communicate in the L2. This suggests that context in the case of L2 communication is likely to play a very vital role and could highlight the importance of support in enhancing L2 learners' WTC.

As illustrated above, the pioneers of the heuristic model have demonstrated that the ultimate goal of language learning or instruction should be to engender WTC in the language learning process (MacIntyre et al, 1998:547). Therefore, there has been a good body of research conducted on WTC in an L2 classroom, investigating a number of aspects both in ESL and ESL settings, providing new insight to help understand L2 learners' perception about their WTC in a classroom and aiming to extend the horizon of WTC research in the process of second/foreign language learning. In this connection, House (2004:05) examined the learners' perception of variables aiding WTC in an L2 among ESL learners. The data was collected through the means of diaries, and interviews were also taken to make sure that required data may be drawn. Six participants of the study were given a five-week period to enunciate their experiences and how perception of these experiences exerted influence on their WTC inside the classroom (p. 43). The findings of the study revealed that ESL learners' WTC in their L2 was influenced when learners intended to take up opportunities that they considered suitable for actually engaging in L2 communication. Results further showed that variables such as perceived politeness, the role of physical locality, the presence of the opposite sex, mood and the topic of discussion had a minor impact on learners WTC in an L2 classroom.

Kang (2005:277) attempted to investigate how situational willingness to communicate in an L2 could dynamically emerge and fluctuate during a conversation. Based on the inductive

data analysis, interviews, videotaped conversations and stimulated recalls were collected from four non-native Korean male students (p. 280). The results of the study demonstrated that situational WTC in an L2 emerged from the constituent effect of the three psychological conditions of excitement, responsibility, and security, and each of which fluctuated according to interlocutor, topic, and conversational context (p. 282). On the basis of the findings of the study, Kang (2005:288, 291) proposed the multi-layered construct of situational WTC and a new definition of WTC in an L2 in which WTC could dynamically fluctuate from moment to moment.

*“Willingness to communicate (WTC) is an individual’s volitional inclination towards actively engaging in the act of communication in a specific situation, which can vary according to interlocutor(s), topic, and conversational context, among other potential situational variables”.* (p. 291)

The findings drawn from Kang’s study (2005) were further substantiated by Dörnyei (2005), who argued that the influences of the time and temporal fluctuation on WTC may not be overlooked when we investigate this construct (WTC) in a situated manner. This view seems to have been previously endorsed by various researchers when they explored WTC as a situational variable. For instance, MacIntyre et al’s (2002:556) study suggested that it was encouraging from a pedagogical perspective that WTC, perceived competence and frequency of communication in the L2 vitally increased from grades 7 to 8. While investigating the influences of the WTC and its underlying variables on French immersion and non-immersion students, Baker and MacIntyre (2000:338) concluded that the effects of the underlying variables on WTC could possibly be changed over time as students might gain greater experience in an L2. Thus, it seems to be likely that WTC as a situational variable could fluctuate and change over time as learners get greater experience in an L2.

By using the techniques of classroom observation, interviewing and administering self-report questionnaires, Cao and Philp (2006) examined eight ESL learners' consistency between their self-report WTC and their actual behaviour in three interactional classroom settings: whole class, group and dyads. Besides that, they also investigated how learners' behaviour differed in each interactional context and what could be the most immediate factors aiding learners' perception to create WTC in the three classroom contexts (p. 482). The findings of the study indicated that learners' self-reports of WTC were not importantly predictive of their actual classroom behaviour as MacIntyre et al (2001:377) argued: "thinking about communicating in the L2 is different from actually doing it" (cited in Cao and Philp, 2006:488). Based on the interview data, results also suggested that learners' perception of factors which could commonly and notably affect their WTC in the classroom was influenced by following situational variables: group size, self-confidence, familiarity with interlocutor and interlocutor participation, and interest in the topic of discussion (p. 486-489). The findings of this study lend support to the view that triangulation as a technique could help us better understand the undertaken issue in the classroom.

While examining learners' perception about their speaking abilities and of their contribution, their attitudes towards oral class activities (whole class and small classroom discussion) and to what degree such perceptions and attitudes could affect the learners' willingness to communicate in the L2, de Saint Léger and Storch (2009) conducted a study among 32 French learners. Although data was collected using a range of the research instruments, the main source of data gathering was self-assessment questionnaires and focused group interviews over 12 weeks (p. 272). The findings of the study demonstrated that at the outset of the semesters, students reported anxiety, vocabulary and fluency as being the most difficult dimensions of oral interaction, and confidence seemed to be yet another tough barrier in

whole classroom discussions (p. 280) It was further revealed that learners' felt 'exposed' in whole classroom discussion and considered the classroom environment as competitive and threatening. It was also shown that over the time learners reported improvement in fluency, vocabulary and self-confidence, which eventually encouraged them to be more willing to contribute in the whole class discussion. Ushioda (2003) argues that this major shift in the learners' perception of themselves and the environment indicates that self-perception seems to be fluctuating in nature, which is not only a socially situated variable but also closely related to the learners' perception of the learning environment (cited in de Saint Léger and Storch, 2009:280). On the basis of the findings, it was argued that both cognitive and affective variables appeared to be socially grounded and could not be separated from the social setting in which learning took place (p. 280). From both the methodological and pedagogical perspectives, this study seems to be very important because it has highlighted one of the effective ways of administering self-assessment questionnaires at key points of the study, which substantively led students to monitor their learning abilities at crucial stages.

The research undertaken by MacIntyre and Doucette (2009) attempted to introduce Julius Kuhl's theory of action control (ACT) as an expanded conceptual framework for investigating the links of three action control variables (preoccupation, volatility and hesitation) with perceived competence, language anxiety and WTC inside and outside the classroom. This theory was published in 1994 to account for the process of initiating action. The participants of the study were (n =238) high school students from grades 10, 11 and 12. By using the technique of the path analysis, the findings of the study revealed three non-significant paths: from volatility to WTC outside the classroom, from anxiety to WTC outside the classroom and from preoccupation to anxiety (p. 166-67). It was also found that WTC and perceived L2 competence consistently correlated with both hesitation and volatility, whereas anxiety was correlated with hesitation only. Results further demonstrated that preoccupation

did not significantly correlate with any of the communication variables (p. 168). Contrary to expectations, results suggested that preoccupation is the predictor of higher perceived competence in French, which was of course the second language of the informants in the classroom context (p. 169). This suggests that past experiences or encounters, be they negative or positive, could be the source of motivation. As Baker and MacIntyre (2000:332) also argue, focusing on past negative or unpleasant encounters may likely to be an event to learn.

Considering that willingness to communicate is a dynamic construct which changes from moment to moment, MacIntyre and Legatto (2010:05) conducted a research study among six female Canadian university students using system dynamic theory as a framework. Using an idiodynamic methodology, data was collected in a variety of ways, such as recording, presenting tasks in an L2, administering self-rating questionnaires and asking a research assistant to rate the respondents' reaction to different tasks (p.06-07). The findings of the study demonstrated that WTC displayed the properties of a dynamic system because changes were seen over the time, wherein each state was partially dependent on the previous state. Results of the study also suggested that integration of the linguistic, social, cognitive and emotional systems could produce WTC (p. 21). The researchers further demonstrated that when systems operated together, communication was rather easier and WTC was likely to be increasing, but when systems interfered with each other (i.e. when vocabulary items were absent or a threat to one's self-esteem was detected), communication seemed to have been abandoned. According to them, this set of findings highlighted the difference between *initiating* or *continuing* communication in an L2 (p. 21). However, these findings cannot be generalised because the method used in this study is still in its early stages and future studies may be directed to use this methodology quantitatively as it was used qualitatively in this study. It could be argued here that if future studies are to be undertaken employing this

methodology, then extreme care should be taken in the data collection procedure as it is likely that communication changes more rapidly and smoothly when it occurs in natural settings.

Using a focused essay technique, MacIntyre et al (2011: 85) conducted an investigation among 100 French immersion junior high school students (12-14 years of age). Recognising that immersion language learning features exert a great amount of influence on L2 learners to communicate, this empirical study aimed to investigate ambivalence regarding communication in a variety of situations. Students were asked to report the situations in which they were most willing and least willing to communicate respectively. There were 241 entries received on situations in which informants of the study were most willing to communicate (p. 86), whereas there were 179 entries about situations in which the participants were actually least or unwilling to communicate (p.87). Surprisingly, the actual intent was to use the pyramid model (MacIntyre et al, 1998) in order to organise and interpret the themes written by the participants of the study. However, the richness of the collected data as well as comparison of the entries received showed that this approach was not suited to the data at hand, and subsequently the self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) was used to comprehend the psychological understanding the diary entries (p. 86). The findings of the study demonstrated that students were both willing and unwilling to communicate with friends, family, teachers and learners. Hence, informants revealed that they were both willing and unwilling to speak with students whose French skills were either less developed or more advanced (p. 86). MacIntyre et al (2011:86) argued that responses received from participants unveiled potential evidence of ambivalence as a group. The results of the study also indicated that the situations in which students likely felt to be more willing to communicate in French was in the immersion classroom setting for a number of reasons. As one of the students reported, *'I was most willing to talk to French to my friends and teachers in class ...'* (p. 87). In case of unwillingness to communicate, one of the informants of the study reported, *'I hate*

*very unwilling to use French when I am doing a presentation in front of the class...I felt embarrassed to because I do not like talking in front of lots of people'* (p. 90). MacIntyre et al (2011: 93) argued that key implications drawn from the study indicated that encounters in which students felt more willing or unwilling to communicate were not fundamentally different from one another. Thus, it could be helpful to approach L2 learners from the perspective of ambivalence. As MacIntyre et al (2009a: 17) argued: "ambivalence of the learner's psychological experience stems from several processes running simultaneously, often without learners' explicit awareness" (cited in MacIntyre et al, 2011:93).

By using multiple case study techniques, Cao (2014) investigated the dynamic and situated nature of WTC in L2 classrooms. Based on the frame of socio-cognitive perspective of learning an L2, this study specifically looked at WTC of six learners of the English as a second language, enrolled in English for academic purposes programme in New Zealand for five months. The findings of the study revealed that classroom WTC construct was the best described as a dynamic and situational variable rather than trait like disposition. This empirical research study further suggested that WTC in classroom results from interdependence among individual characteristics, classroom environmental conditions and linguistic factors. Cao (2014) further argued that all these three strands could either facilitate WTC or inhibit L2 learners' ability to communicate in the classroom. The environmental dimensions were referred to external factors like task type, topic, interlocutor, teacher and classroom interactional pattern (p. 798). The individual dimensions were described as internal affective factors including self-confidence, personality, emotion and perceived opportunity to communicate. The individual dimensions were referred to competence factors such as language proficiency and reliance on L1. The findings of the study indicated that variability in the learners' behaviour was formed by joint effect of all these three dimensions

as stated above. Thus, results suggested that the collective effect of all these factors differed individually and appears to be too complex to be predicted.

Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Pawlak (2014) attempted to examine the WTC as a constantly evolving factor having influences from the situational variables performed by the users of English as a foreign language. This research study was conducted among second- and third-year Polish university students majoring in English. The findings of the study indicated that students' preferred type of task was monologue, which could be immediate intent of not being dependent on another person's decisions and choices for communication. By engaging in monologue, participants were more likely to avoid embarrassing situations and surprising questions, or arguments posited by somebody else (ibid: 254). In other words, we could infer that this type of task (monologue) may possibly give learners greater ability to control a task, which is likely to lower the level of anxiety and thus might lead to a higher level of willingness to communicate.

Bernales (2016) argued that oral participation in a foreign language classroom was generally assumed to be a desired, expected and required activity in order to learn a foreign language. Moreover, he further demonstrated that users' decision to initiate speech or remain silent in English was largely influenced by contextual, social and individual variables (p.01). By using a mixed-methods research design, he recruited 16 participants from a third-semester German class at Midwestern research university in USA. The findings of the study reported that some of the participants showed frustration at their inability to express their thoughts in some cases in an L2 due to insufficient perceived knowledge of the L2 which, as a result, stopped them from communicating in an L2. Moreover, their inability to communicate was

not completely voluntary but forced, in part, as most of them reported that their silence was not indication of their unwillingness to communicate in an L2 (p.09).

Yashima, Macintyre and Ikeda (2016) conducted a research study in Japanese context in which 21 Japanese students were recruited. This study set out to investigate the effect of both trait-like and state characteristics of WTC in classroom context in order to have a fuller understanding that why L2 users choose to or avoid communication at given moments. The results of the study demonstrated that the participants of the study experienced many thoughts and emotions as a result of the emergence of the contextual factors. Results revealed that one of the participants in the study showed a high level of trait anxiety and low trait WTC and could be sensitive to contextual factors. On the contrary, most of his class fellows were found to be overwhelmingly fluent and active (p. 17). The findings of the study demonstrated that participants momentary psychological reactions to contextual factors were appeared to leave facilitated and constrained effect on their participation in using L2 for group discussion.

The aforementioned empirical findings of the studies, conducted in a variety of contexts, seem to indicate that WTC has increasingly become one of the well-established fields of research in SLA across the Western world. The common variables tested in the empirical research studies, as stated above, were age, gender, communication anxiety, perceived communication competence, motivation, and attitudes. The research studies were conducted in the developed countries where L2 learners seem to have exposure to L2 environments, access to modern-day facilities (i.e. language learning libraries, updated books and journals, and use of the internet) for learning an L2, and easy access to well-trained teachers serving in some of the best schools, colleges and universities in the world. There have been a handful of studies conducted in Eastern contexts, and the results of those empirical studies will be discussed in our next section below.

### **3.4 Advancement of WTC in an L2 in Asian Contexts**

The ability to communicate with people of different cultures and language backgrounds is seemingly increasingly becoming an essential skill that we need to foster while being global citizens in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as argued by Wallis and Steptoe (2006, cited in Lu and Fang, 2008:75). In this milieu, willingness to communicate with people of varied cultural backgrounds is regarded as one of the vital components of effective intercultural communication (ibid). These could have been the direct and clear assumptions that inspired Wen and Clément (2003) to advance an East Asian model of WTC generally and a Chinese concept of a WTC model in an EFL context specifically. The most obvious reason which served as an impetus to come up with a modified or partially new model of WTC in an Asian context was, according to Wen and Clément, that MacIntyre et al's (1998) heuristic model of WTC was principally based upon research conducted in the Western world (2003:18). Secondly, the advancement of WTC into an East Asian EFL context was also prompted by the fact that research into WTC particularly in an Asian context has been very scant and very close reflection was needed to assess the situations found in the English language Chinese classroom (ibid). China and Japan are two countries where a considerable amount of research has been conducted, whereas research into WTC in a South Asian context seems to be almost non-existent except for one recent addition contributed by Ali (2010), though on a very small scale, in a Pakistani EFL context.

According to Wen and Clément (2003:18), the Chinese conceptualisation of WTC was principally based upon the heuristic WTC model advanced by MacIntyre et al (1998). They made an attempt to extend the heuristic model in two ways: first by altering some structural relationship between constructs, and secondly, they tried to reinterpret some of the variables specifically from a Chinese perspective. Their investigation began with one of the vital

assessments of the Chinese L2 learners that they are very good at grammar-based written examinations, whereas they have been found to be very poor speakers, often labelled as ‘reticent learners’ who largely lack the willingness to communicate (p.18). With this increasingly growing image, they suggested that the core issue for L2 researchers in China and for those at the helm of its educational set-up should, therefore, be to focus on how to create willingness to communicate among students in ESL classroom settings with an effort to improve their oral proficiency (p.18).

When it comes to communication, Asian students are generally found to be less willing than their western counterpart or they often do not take initiatives to engage into argument. This is what Klopff (in Press) has also highlighted, that Asians often value silence instead of engaging in direct argument, and he called it an Asiancentric style of communication (cited in Lu & Fang, 2008:76). Thus, the problem of being reticent or avoiding direct communication could not only be restricted to a Chinese ESL/EFL context, and it was the only reason due to which the Wen and Clément (2003) model was initially designated as an East Asian conceptualisation of WTC in a Chinese context particularly and Asian ESL/EFL contexts generally. However, some serious questions can be raised against this argument that all Asian students often avoid direct communication because making generalisations is not often easy in any empirical study.

Matsuoka and Evans (2005:09) said that Wen and Clément’s (2003) adapted model could also be applied in the Japanese context. The implications of this model could also be found in Pakistan when Ali (2010:10) argued that many Pakistani students are preoccupied with the assumption that learning many of the grammatical rules, memorising a wide range of vocabulary, remembering idiomatic expressions and translating sentences from L1 to L2 will make them a competent learner. It is believed that proficiency can be achieved as a result of

working on grammar, which largely impedes their speaking ability, and it can also be compared with Klopff's argument that an Asiancentric style may be the root cause of the avoidance of communication. In addition to that, learners have little exposure to communication in English, and English is taught as a subject rather than a language (Ali, 2010:10), which may, to a great extent, be one of the most important causes of their impediment to communication in an L2. Wen and Clément (2003:19) also believed that lack of exposure to communication in class, and perhaps outside the class, is one of the potential reasons why Chinese students are more proficient in writing and grammatical structures than in spoken communication.

To Chinese students, "every phenomenon in language must come to grammar for its final judgement. A great satisfaction is felt in sentences than can be logically explained and justified by grammar" (Ting, 1987:54). According to Wen and Clément (2003:23), students in China start by investing a major portion of their time in learning and mastering grammatical rules, learn them by rote and finally match those rules with sentences that they often encounter. This interpretation of Chinese ESL/EFL students cannot be limited to their context only; even in Pakistan although the situation is not altogether same, students still seem to be overwhelmed when trying to master grammatical structures. The rule-ridden approach is seen to be dominant, which to a great extent impedes the oral fluency of the students. Because when it comes to communicating in an L2, they are found to be unnecessarily concerned with the correctness of the grammar, so they either hesitate or withdraw from communication. It has also been pointed by Ali (2010:10) that English has been and probably will still be a mandatory subject in colleges and universities in Pakistan. Opportunities to communicate orally are likely to be very scarce. Warsi (2004:01) argued that, even after studying English in schools and colleges for six to eight years, students in

Pakistan are still unable to communicate with relative ease and success. It could be inferred that countries where there is lack of exposure to opportunities to develop oral proficiency in these countries may be one of the impediments to L2 learners' communication.

While tracing the root causes of the Chinese students' unwillingness to communicate in English, Wen and Clément (2003:23) argued that cultural values are seen to be essential variables influencing students' perception and ways of learning. Taking cultural values as an inspiring point, they further stated that as cultural values vary, so does individual communicative behaviour as well as conceptualisation of willingness to communicate. Given that, they highlighted that MacIntyre et al's (1998) pyramid-shaped model of willingness to communicate is essentially based on the research principally conducted in the Western world. Willingness to communicate appears to be a far more complex notion in the Chinese context, in which English can be seen the language of an out-group, often perceived as something different, which students approach at the risk of losing face if they are unable to speak it properly (p:24). As shown in figure 3.4, their structural modification of the model to the Chinese ESL context was based on the two variables from the top three layers in the original model, named, the desire to communicate (layer III) and WTC (layer II).

*A Chinese Conceptualisation of Willingness to Communicate in ESL*

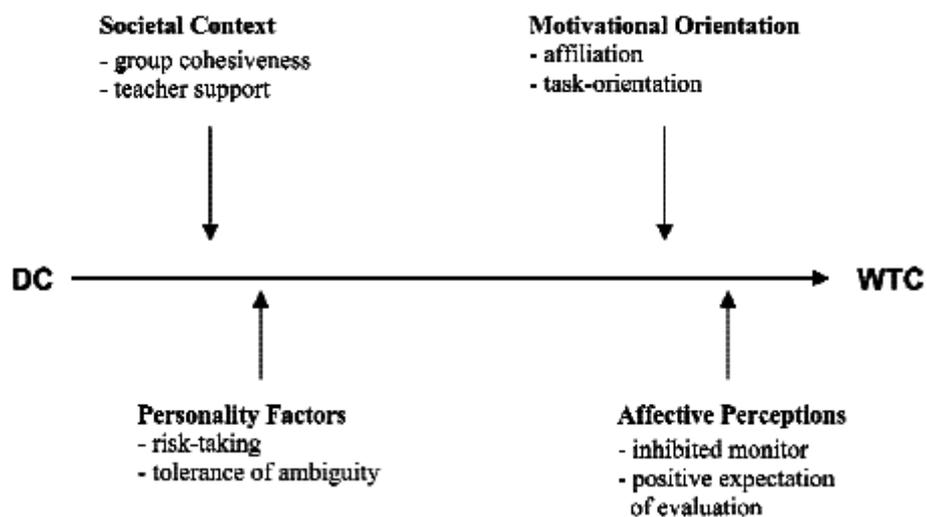


Figure 3.4 Variables moderating the relation between DC and WTC in the Chinese EFL classroom (Wen and Clément, 2003:25).

Wen and Clément (2003:25) made a distinction between desire to communicate and willingness to communicate. Desire to communicate refers to deliberate choice or preference, whereas WTC is defined as the readiness to act. According to them, having the desire to communicate did not necessarily imply a willingness to communicate. For instance, if a student intends to ask a question in the classroom, he/she may withdraw due to anxiety or the tense environment; this refers to the fact that the student may have the desire to communicate, but feels him/herself unprepared, which results in an unwillingness to communicate. Similarly, they contend that Chinese students are not born communication-inhibited or they may not have the internal desire to interact with others. Nevertheless, it was argued that between desire and readiness to enter into a discourse, one could undergo a complex process with cognitive and affective variables interacting with each other (p.25). They also suggested that a host of variables placed distally in MacIntyre et al's (1998) model would intervene between the links of these two factors. These factors are, as shown in figure 2.2, societal context, personality factors, motivational orientations and affective perceptions. All of these would be positively related and culturally knitted together to help cultivate a positive communication atmosphere (p.25-26). The revised theoretical framework developed by Wen and Clément (2003) embarked upon a new way to localise the WTC model in different ESL/EFL contexts where factors influencing WTC can be investigated both from cultural and societal contexts.

### **3. 5 Empirical research on WTC in Asian EFL/ESL contexts**

To gain more insight into WTC research specifically in the Asian EFL/ESL contexts, it is important to provide comprehensive review of the empirical investigations of WTC in Eastern contexts. The adaptation of MacIntyre et al's (1998) model by Wen and Clément

(2003) in an Asian EFL/ESL context triggered a series of research studies to test the effects of various variables on WTC as proposed both by MacIntyre et al (1998) and Wen and Clément (2003) in their respective models. Nevertheless, previous to the Wen and Clément (2003) adaption of the WTC model in Asian contexts, quite a few studies were conducted in Japan focusing specifically upon willingness to communicate and its predictive variables.

Hashimoto (2002) attempted to explore with 56 Japanese ESL students the effects of WTC and motivation on the use of an L2 in the classroom. This research study combined both the socio-educational model and the WTC model as the foundation for the conceptual basis to investigate relationship among communication variables and L2 learning. His findings suggested that WTC and motivation could predict the frequency of communication in the classroom (p. 56). Hashimoto found, as had the previous studies cited above, that language anxiety and perceived competence were potentially associated to WTC (p. 57). Results further revealed that WTC was significantly associated with motivational properties, which indicated that perceived competence would lead to increased motivation, which, as a result, could influence the frequency of L2 use in the classroom (p. 57).

Yashima (2002) conducted a further study in Japan among 297 Japanese informants measuring the relationship between L2 learning and L2 communication variables in an EFL context. Yashima attempted to test a structural model using the WTC model and socio-educational model (the relationships among attitudes, motivation and achievement) as a framework (p. 58). In this research study, it was hypothesised that L2 proficiency, international posture (i.e. attitude towards the international community), confidence in L2 communication and motivation could influence WTC in an L2. Based on the self-report surveys, Yashima's findings suggested that the variables directly affecting a person's WTC in an L2 were L2 communication confidence and international posture. Yashima further

suggested that international posture and confidence in L2 use could be a key to understanding and promoting L2 learning and communication within a Japanese EFL context (p. 63). Yashima then concluded that the anxiety of students could not be reduced, but their confidence in L2 communication could be increased if their EFL lessons were designed to develop their interest in different cultures and international affairs as well as activities (p. 63). This was one of the suggestions Yashima came up with having conducted research in a Japanese EFL context, but it cannot be ruled out that students do sometimes have a positive propensity for foreign culture and affairs.

Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide and Shimizu (2004) conducted a comparative study with an attempt to examine the possible relationships among factors affecting WTC in an L2. In this study, Yashima et al involved two cohorts of 160 Japanese adolescent learners of English in a Japanese high school and 60 in the American ESL context. In addition, factors that were investigated in the previous study conducted by Yashima (2002) were included, and the construct of *frequency of communication*, which was not included in Yashima (2002) study, was added in this investigation. It was hypothesised that both frequency of communication and international posture could be predicted by WTC. Using structural equation modelling, results of the study in both contexts suggested that WTC was caused by more frequent communication in the L2. It was also revealed that international national posture predicted WTC and L2 communication behaviour.

A follow-up study to Yashima et al (2004) was conducted by Yashima and Zenuk-Nishide (2008) to investigate the effects of learning context on L2 WTC, frequency of communication, proficiency development and changes in international posture. They compared two cohorts of 165 students: study-abroad and study-at-home groups. In addition, they also compared two EFL programmes with substantively different exposure to an L2: different class hours and emphasis in education (p. 566). Statistical analysis demonstrated

that study-abroad group proficiency gain was larger than those participants who study at home. Results also indicated that the international posture of the study-abroad group was higher than those who study at home. The ability to initiate communication both inside and outside the classroom of the study-abroad group was also more frequent and stronger than participants in the study-at-home group (p. 580). Overall, the study-abroad group was clearly ahead over the stay-home group. To say the least, Yashima and Zenuk-Nishide acknowledged that future studies should focus on mixed or combined methods in order to have a holistic understanding of learner development (p. 581).

Concerning the relationships among WTC variables structured in MacIntyre et al's (1998) model, Centinka (2005) investigated whether or not the MacIntyre et al model illustrated the relationships among social-psychological, linguistic and communication variables in a Turkish EFL context. There were 356 participants at tertiary level in this study, which was conducted under a hybrid design combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection procedures. Centinka's study examined the interrelations among the Turkish students' WTC in an L2, their motivation, communication anxiety, perceived communication competence, attitude towards the international community and personality. The findings of the study suggested that there was a consistent relationship between participants' WTC in an L2 and their attitudes along with perceived linguistic self-confidence. Results further indicated that respondents' motivation to learn English and their degree of introversion/extroversion were indirectly related to their WTC through linguistic self-confidence.

By adopting a triangulation technique, Liu (2005) conducted a study among 27 Chinese tertiary students. Liu investigated the WTC of the informants along with their reticence in an oral English language classroom. By using questionnaires, classroom

observation and a reflective journal, the study demonstrated in its findings that variables causing reticence or unwillingness to communicate among Chinese students were, specifically, low English proficiency, lack of practice in the L2, traditional cultural beliefs, habits, difficulty of tasks, personality, lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes and fear of losing face (p. 09). Findings of the study further revealed that previous educational experience, lack of practice or exposure to L2 contact with foreigners, poor pronunciation and vocabulary were potential threats to students' WTC in the language-learning classroom (p. 11-13). Hence some of the students also suggested reticence-coping strategies such as creating a friendly, supportive and non-threatening learning environment, and preparing interesting topics for discussion, engendering more chances to speak, write and listen with more curiosity. Most of the students considered that such reticence-coping strategies would make informants of the study willing and active to communicate in the target language in the classroom (p. 13).

In a Korean context, Kim (2005) carried out a study which aimed to examine the reliability of MacIntyre et al's (1998) model and its application among Korean L2 learners. The participants of the study were (n = 191) form Korean university students. Using structural equation modelling, the results of the study suggested that WTC was more trait like than situational and MacIntyre et al's (1998) model was found to be reliable in a Korean context.

In a study among 180 Japanese students, Matsuoka (2006, cited in Cao, 2009: 19) examined how specific individual differences (IDs) variables, comprising *Integrativeness*, *Communication Apprehension*, *Perceived Competence*, *Introversion*, *Motivational Intensity*, *Attitudes* and *Other-directedness*, affected Japanese university students' WTC in English as well as their English proficiency. Data was collected using three sources: questionnaire, WTC test and the CASEC (Computerized Assessment System for English Communication) test. Results of multiple regression analyses revealed that communication apprehension, perceived

competence, introversion, motivational intensity and integrativeness were significant predictors of WTC in an L2, whereas perceived competence and L2 WTC were statistically significant predictors of L2 proficiency.

Lu and Fang (2008) conducted a comparative study between two groups of American (n = 47) and Chinese (n = 54) college students in China, and (n = 51) American and (n = 42) Chinese college students in America. Their study investigated the differences in willingness to communicate and the variables influencing WTC between these two groups. Based on the questionnaire data, their findings suggested that Americans were more willing to communicate with Chinese people than Chinese people with Americans (p. 85). The authors maintained that cultural differences may be one of the vital reasons for this finding. Americans, having a Eurocentric communication style, preferred direct verbal interaction, whereas Chinese people, with their Asiancentric communication style, valued silence over explicit and direct verbal expression (p. 85). It was also revealed that immersion experiences in different cultures had a positive effect on one's WTC, as Americans in China were found to be more willing to communicate with Chinese people than were Americans in America; while Chinese people in the US appeared to be more willing to communicate with Americans in China than were Chinese people in China (p. 85). Results of the study further suggested that SPCC in both groups was the most significant variable affecting WTC among all other variables. In addition to that, it was shown that people who were apprehensive about speaking with members of a different culture seemed to be less willing to communicate cross-culturally (p. 85).

Barjesteh et al (2012:47) aimed to investigate the perception of Iranian EFL students when they were asked to communicate across four types of context and three types of audience. The findings of the study concluded that participants were highly willing to communicate in English across two types of contexts (group discussion and meetings) and

one type of receiver (friend). On the contrary, the participants of the study were found to be unwilling to communicate in English in other contexts and audiences. The cause of the Iranian participants' unwillingness to communicate in English in other contexts appeared to be unfamiliar situations and audiences. Barjesteh et al (2012:51) concluded that Iranian EFL participants preferred to speak in English situations which were familiar to them.

Peng (2013) conducted a research study in a Chinese context where English was taught as a foreign language. He recruited 1,013 Chinese undergraduate students from six different universities. There were (n = 641) male and (n = 341) female students' participants, and all of them were specialising in various academic subjects ranging from business to history. The findings of the study indicated that the majority of the participants expressed their willingness to give a talk in the classroom, which showed their acceptance for oral presentation in the classroom (p. 287). Results further revealed that participants were found to be more willing to communicate in the classroom than outside, expressing themselves in outside situations. Peng (2013:287) argued that passing examinations was still the priority of the participants in their English learning, which largely confined communication in English to the classroom setting. Verbal performance in English, in class, was motivated by the intent to secure better grades. On the contrary, there were no immediate educational constraints to communicating in English, so the participants' communication in English, in real situations outside the classroom, was unlikely to be frequent, which showed that without self-induced motivation they were unlikely to speak in English.

Zarrinabadi (2014) conducted a qualitative study which aimed to investigate the effect of teachers' attitude, support and teaching style on the WTC of 55 Iranian EFL undergraduate students. Teachers' wait time, error correction method, teachers' support and teachers' decision on the topic of discussion were reported to be the main effect factors influencing EFL learners' WTC in an Iranian context (ibid:291-292). Furthermore, her study concluded

that situations in which Iranian EFL users felt a higher level of WTC was when students were given a choice in the selection of the topic, and when there was a focus on the student's knowledge, and awareness and adaption of error correction, as well as allotment of time for allowing students before answering questions and the creation of a supportive learning environment through verbal and non-verbal communication on the part of the teacher (ibid:294).

Zoghi et al (2014) aimed to investigate the relationship between willingness to communicate and learning styles of 78 Iranian EFL users of English. The findings of the study revealed that there was significant relationship between the willingness to communicate and learning styles of the users of English in Iran. It was further reported that users of English were more willing to communicate in English if they had awareness of more learning styles (ibid: 135).

By using a two-way ANOVA, Taheryan and Ghonsooly (2014) attempted to investigate the effects of context and gender on the willingness to communicate in English among 300 students in a private institute. The findings indicated that male informants were more willing to communicate in English than their female informants. Results further revealed that informants studying in a single-sex context were more willing to communicate both inside and outside of the class. Inside the classroom in the mixed-sex context, both male and female students reported being under continuous peer pressure due to the fear of negative feedback from the opposite sex, which resulted in the lower level of willingness for both male and female (ibid:09). Female students reported having a higher level of willingness outside the classroom when they had a chance to choose the person of their choice as an interlocutor. On the contrary, in the classroom context, the interlocutor was chosen by the supervisor of the institute (ibid:09).

Eddy-U (2015) conducted a study among 25 Chinese students (18 female, 7 male), whose ages ranged from 18 to 20, all studying English as their mandatory first-year course in Macau tertiary institutions. Her research study aimed to investigate what motivated and demotivated participants in taking part in group tasks. Her findings reported that attractiveness and easiness of topic in role plays and group discussions was an important factor in motivating participants to communicate in English (p. 49). Moreover, it was also found that a good classroom atmosphere had a pull-and-push effect on participants' WTC by reducing their self-consciousness and increasing their desire to speak in English (p.51). The effect of being marked was considered to be an important factor for participants' motivation to communicate in English. Most of the participants reported that short-term goals were more important factors in fostering WTC than long-term goals.

The empirical evidence, as stated above, gained from research conducted both in Western and Eastern contexts, demonstrates that various affective and individual variables can exert a potential impact on WTC in an L2 in different settings. The variables which were regularly tested in most of the studies were linguistic self-confidence, communication anxiety, motivation, international posture and frequency of communication. In addition to that, the impact of social and learning contexts on WTC in an L2 are highlighted in these studies, which largely provide empirical evidence for the applicability of both MacIntyre et al's (1998) and Wen and Clément's (2003) models. The combination of both models demonstrates that the relationship between WTC and its various predictors in an L2 context is vitally different when it comes to being investigated under cultural perspectives. The research methods widely used in those studies are quantitative techniques such as structural equation modelling, path analysis and correlation. The main source of the data collection in most of the studies was self-report questionnaires. These empirical studies provide considerable

insight into how to conduct future studies using mixed-methods techniques so that better understanding about WTC and its underlying variables in an L2 context may also be contributed to the existing literature.

In summary, the empirical studies, mentioned above, conducted both in Western and Asian contexts, exhibit that a number of the individual as well as affective factors could influence L2 learners' WTC. Indeed, the most common variables investigated in most of the studies were linguistic self-confidence, communication anxiety, personality, motivation, international posture, gender and age. The impact of the social and learning contexts was also highlighted in these empirical studies but not dominantly. Apart from that, the major source of data collection in most of the studies was self-administered questionnaires. The analytical research techniques widely employed in these studies were structural equation modelling, path analysis and correlation in order to identify relationships between WTC in an L2 and its underlying factors.

The findings of these empirical studies, investigated in both Western and non-Western contexts, lent support in line with some evidence for the applicability of MacIntyre et al's (1998) model across a variety of contexts. From the cultural perspectives, when MacIntyre et al's., (1998) and Wen and Clément's (2003) models are combined, these studies revealed that the relationship between the L2 and its predictors were different by virtue of cultural differences. The next section follows the identification of the research gaps and highlights some of the areas which should be focused upon in future studies.

### **3.6 Research gaps in WTC**

From the review of the literature, it could be argued that willingness to communicate has increasingly become one the concentrated areas of interest for researchers in the recent days. It was revealed from most of the studies that willingness to orally communicate still needs to

be investigated from different perspectives, contexts and cultural and social backgrounds, and it may even be interesting to find out how willingness to communicate dynamically changes within the same contexts. Further, some evidence has also been revealed to suggest that there are still methodological issues which should be addressed in future research. In addition, it has also been found that research has been focused particularly on the willingness to communicate of L2 students in developed countries of the world, and for a number of reasons, further investigation is needed in line with issues faced by L2 students in developing countries.

First, it has been seen while reviewing the literature that researchers have particularly been limited to using quantitative methods, collecting data while administering self-report questionnaires and then subjecting the data to both descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. Thus, the results drawn from most of the previous studies on WTC, as indicated in the previous sections, were based on quantitative methods which subsequently surfaced mixed findings by virtue of employing questionnaires in different contexts. The overemphasis on using quantitative methods in examining willingness to communicate in an L2 setting was perhaps due to the complex nature of the WTC construct and the unavailability of established methodology which could have been employed to investigate willingness to communicate. Moreover, the research questionnaires applied in the previous studies were either adapted from McCroskey and Richmond (1991) or MacIntyre et al (2001). The questionnaire designed by McCroskey and Richmond (1991) aimed to identify to what extent one is willing to communicate orally. Their structured research measure entailed four communication contexts, which were public speaking, talking at meetings, talking in small groups and talking in dyads. These communication contexts were designed to initiate communication with three different types of audiences, i.e. strangers, acquaintances and friends. MacIntyre et al (2001)

developed the second research measure aiming to investigate willingness to communicate in the four commonly known skills of learning an L2, which are listening, speaking, reading and writing.

The research measures, as indicated above, were designed to investigate willingness to communicate both inside and outside the classroom, and quite a few studies were conducted, in the recent past, by employing these research instruments. However, Cao and Philip (2006:490) question the usefulness and applicability of using a generic questionnaire for WTC in an instructional context. They further emphasize that there is a greater need to focus future research on developing a separate L2 WTC classroom research questionnaire. They also recommend that Weaver's (2005) innovative WTC survey could be taken as a possible model because it covers a wide range of speaking and writing situations with specific relation to an EFL classroom setting. The reservation raised by Cao and Philip (2006) over McCroskey and Bear's model as a research measure to examine WTC can be considered relevant because research on WTC has changed a lot since the development of this construct in 1985. As indicated in the literature review section, the construct of WTC has dynamically changed a great deal, and research still seems to uncover different dimensions of WTC and how it evolves in different contexts. In this regard, MacIntyre et al (2001:372) argue that although the self-report questionnaire was developed to explore trait WTC, defined as "*behavioural intention that remains stable across context*", it is unlikely that situational WTC could be investigated appropriately because situational WTC changes across different contexts. Given that, Ellis (2008) maintains that there is an urgent need to develop a well-established questionnaire to explore willingness to communicate in an L2.

Secondly, it has also been found that previous research on willingness to communicate was mostly conducted quantitatively, which subsequently left a dearth of in-

depth qualitative research examining the WTC of L2 learners. However, it seems reasonable that the majority of the previous studies have been focused on quantitative research because there is likely to be greater advantages in taking a quantitative dominant approach to human investigation (although it has specifically been noticed in the research that any approach, be it quantitative or qualitative or even mixed, could never be completely unbiased) (Mackenzie, 2010:69). For instance, while doing quantitative study, researchers often collect data from a great many human informants, which makes them able to generalise the results. Denzin and Lincoln (2005a, cited in Dörnyei, 2007:35) argue that “qualitative research is difficult to define clearly”. The same has been maintained by one of the proponents of qualitative research, Silverman (1997:09), who drew the same conclusion and said, “there is no agreed doctrine underlying all qualitative social research (cited in Dörnyei, 2007:35). However, Ellis (2008:646) argues that because of the overemphasis on the quantitative dominant approach, there has been a lack of research that examines WTC across various contexts using qualitative methods of investigation. Further, MacIntyre et al (2001:377) also maintain that future research on investigating willingness to communicate should concentrate on some of the qualitative techniques, i.e. observation, because it would give researchers a better understanding of students’ willingness to communicate in different situations. Moreover, Ellis (2008:646) maintains that this technique (observation) could be used as an effective approach of collecting data qualitatively. However, Ellis (2008:646) also casts doubt over the efficacy of this technique and argues that it may not be as effective as it intends to be while collecting data because sometimes learners do not cover their psychological states or the strategies they often use to learn a language.

Thirdly, it has been seen while reviewing the relevant research in the field of willingness to communicate that there is a relatively small yet growing body of research

adopting a mixed-methods approach in the investigation of the WTC and its potential predictors. Dörnyei (2007:45) argues that the immediate reason to use both qualitative and quantitative approaches has been inspired by the fact that researchers can bring the best of the two paradigms. This implies that if both quantitative and qualitative research techniques are appropriately designed, keeping in view the research design, it is likely that researchers may surface the better understanding of the issue undertaken in the study. Spolsky (2000, cited in the Ellis, 2008:648) maintains that the combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques is likely to be better approach in examining IDs research because such research would allow researcher to employ triangulation (the use of diverse kinds of data as a means of achieving more accurate and reliable results). MacIntyre et al (2001) and Yashima et al (2004) also seem to have maintained the same view by saying that using self-report questionnaires should be verified by interviews, journal entries and classroom observation. This further implies that by using both research paradigms (qualitative and quantitative), there lies the probability of avoiding the subjective interpretation of the data in the hands of the researcher and results can be still be verified and generalisable due to the quantitative research techniques. Hence, it is suggested that future research on WTC and its potential predictors should be conducted by employing the mixed-methods approach, because it is likely to shed light even on the complex relationships which dwell among IDs factors (Ellis, 2008:648).

Fourthly, it is generally viewed that context is one of the huge factors which should be considered when investigating second or foreign language learning. Collentine (2009:218) suggests, “one of the most important variables that affects the nature and extent to which learners acquire a second language (L2) is the context of learning...”. Further, Dell Hymes (1972, cited in Collentine et al, 2004:153) observes that “the key to understanding language in context is to start not with language but with context”. This implies that the language

learning context can be one of the important facets in conducting research in the field of second or foreign language learning. Given that, it has been noticed during reviewing relevant willingness to communicate research that very few studies have been conducted on investigating the willingness of Pakistani students to communicate in English as a foreign or second language. The only notable study, though on a relatively smaller scale, has recently been contributed to the existing literature by Ali (2010). However, there is serious and greater need to conduct further empirical research studies on WTC in a Pakistani context in order to find out that how much Pakistani university students are willing to communicate in English as a foreign language.

Substantive changes seem to have taken place in viewing willingness to communicate construct (see literature review section) specifically from contextual perspectives, which could subsequently reflect the situated nature of WTC. It can be seen that there is a shift towards a contextualised process-oriented approach to the study of WTC. This approach aims at reporting how a particular learning context could influence this construct and how the ongoing changes over time can be documented within this context. Thus, Yashima et al (2004:144) suggested that contextual factors that determine a person's willingness to communicate or whether one is less willing or more willing to communicate both inside as well as outside the classroom should be explored in future research. In this regard, the current study aims to target one of the less urbanised cities of Pakistan where L2 learners have hardly any access or exposure to L2 resources. The findings of this study would be a valuable contribution to the existing literature regarding willingness to communicate in a Pakistani context.

Fifthly, the dynamic nature of the WTC construct triggered a good number of studies that addressed the impact of time on willingness to communicate (Cao & Philp, 2006; de Saint

Leger & Storch, 2009; Kang, 2005). The findings of these empirical studies are mixed because most of the research on WTC has been cross-sectional instead of longitudinal. Therefore, it is felt that future research on WTC should be longitudinal in order to identify or document a systematic fluctuation or change in the dynamic nature of WTC. In an attempt to investigate the dynamic nature of WTC from a variety of perspectives, MacIntyre (2007:572) insisted upon designing a methodology which could emphasise the dynamic process of choosing to begin or avoid communication when opportunity emerges. Given that, there is a need to design a methodology for capturing the dynamic nature of WTC. Cao and Philp (2006:489) maintain that such a methodology would likely show how WTC may be strengthened or weakened by virtue of factors associated with situation. Although we do not have currently an appropriate method to study WTC from a dynamic perspective (MacIntyre & Legatto, 2010:01-02), the idiodynamic method applied by MacIntyre and Legatto (2010) and MacIntyre et al (2011) to investigate the dynamic nature of WTC seem to be a promising start in this direction. It would certainly be interesting to know in future studies whether the idiodynamic approach as proposed by MacIntyre and Legatto (2010) would be able to show the dynamics of the moment-to-moment process of WTC in L2 learners that lead or impede them (learners) in their willingness to communicate.

In this section, we attempted to present research gaps identified in the previous section on the willingness to communicate in English as a second or foreign language. The analysis made above highlighted both theoretical and methodological concerns of conducting further in-depth research on willingness to communicate in a Pakistani context particularly and in the world generally. From arguing over the non-availability of a well-established questionnaire in measuring the WTC in an L2 to methodological concerns in terms of conducting future research, we conclude that there is a need for a well-designed research measure for exploring

the WTC in an L2 setting. It was also highlighted that it is important that future research focus on mixed methodology in order to gain better insight into the actual willingness of students both inside as well outside of the class. Furthermore, we emphasised that there is an extreme need to conduct future research on WTC in a Pakistani context. We also discussed the potential need to conduct further research in order to explore the willingness of students from dynamic perspectives and how WTC could vary in relation to interlocutors, and conversational contexts, as proposed by Kang (2005:291). By doing so, it would enhance our understanding of second language learning and communication from multidimensional perspectives. Based on the review of literature and identified research gaps, the following research questions were developed to investigate in this study.

- Q1. What is the overall level of willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language of Pakistani university students who are residents of the Lower Sindh province area?
- Q2. Are there any significant differences between Pakistani university students' level of willingness to communicate in English in the following background variables?
- (i) Provenance
  - (ii) Types of education
  - (iii) Self-perceived level of English
  - (iv) Exposure to English
- Q3. Are there any significant differences between Pakistani university students' level of willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language with the following interlocutors?

- (i) Friends
- (ii) Acquaintances
- (iii) Strangers

Q4. Are there any significant differences between Pakistani university students' level of willingness to communicate in the following conversational contexts?

- (i) One-to-one situation
- (ii) Small meeting
- (ii) Large meeting

### **3.7 Summary**

At the outset of the chapter, we highlighted the historical perspective and conceptualisation of WTC in which it was revealed that research in the realm of communication, particularly, elaborative empirical investigation, began in the 1930s. As research on communication evolved, Burgoon (1976) developed the construct of “Unwillingness to communicate” which McCroskey and Bear (1985) later reworded, giving it a positive orientation, as “Willingness to communicate”. The theoretical construct of willingness to communicate was then empirically tested alongside the variables (i.e. CA and SPCC) by a number of researchers, across the Western world dominantly, such as Burroughs, Christophel and McCroskey (1988) in Australia; McCroskey, Burroughs, Daun and Richmond (1990) in Sweden; and Burroughs and Marie (1990) and Sallinen-Kuparinen, McCroskey and Richmond (1991) in Finland. All these studies were conducted in relation to learners' willingness in an L2. Apart from that, MacIntyre (1994) developed a structural model (see figure 2.1) aiming to investigate and explain variance in WTC by employing six of the importantly substantive determinants of willingness to communicate, which are anomie, alienation, self-esteem, introversion,

communication anxiety and perceived communication competence. Resultantly, the impact of the studies, as outlined above, widened the scope of willingness to communicate, and it was eventually adapted and extended from L1 to L2 by MacIntyre et al (1998) by conceptualising a heuristic model which integrated a range of linguistic, psychological and social variables. The publication of MacIntyre et al's (1998) model triggered a series of empirical studies conducted in both Western and non-Western contexts which eventually led Wen and Clément (2003) to adapt and conceptualise a Chinese construct of willingness to communicate. The common variables tested in most of the studies are linguistic self-confidence, communication anxiety, personality, motivation, attitude, international posture, gender and age. The major source of the data collection is self-report administered questionnaires and the research methods used in analysing data are structural equation modelling, path analysis and correlation.

The studies further suggest that there is unavailability of a well-established questionnaire measuring willingness to communicate in an L2. It has also been emphasised that future research on WTC should be conducted by designing mixed methodology because it would help us gain a better understanding regarding willingness to communicate both inside as well as outside the classroom. Furthermore, it has also been recommended that future research on WTC should be carried out to explore willingness of students from dynamic perspectives because it would be interesting to uncover how willingness to communicate varies in relation to interlocutors, topic and conversational contexts.

## **Chapter 04**

### **Methodology**

This chapter presents a detailed description of the research design and methodology employed in the present study, which aimed to investigate Pakistani university students' willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language. This study was designed to be quantitatively driven mixed-methods research in which a research questionnaire was predominantly the main source of data collection, and the qualitative component was included to the core project with the intention of strengthening this study. But good care has also been taken to provide an adequate and appropriate space for the qualitative section of the study through conducting in-depth semi-structured interviews. This chapter begins with the research aims and research questions, and goes on to cover the research design of the study, the research site and informants, the research instruments, ethical considerations, the pilot study, data collection and its procedure, data analysis and issues of reliability and validity

#### **4.1 Aims of the study**

As indicated in the literature review section, research into willingness to communicate in an L2 context was first established in the United States, and very little was initially known to academia in other contexts (Asker, 1998:162). It has been argued in the literature review chapter that the origin of the willingness to communicate construct in an L1 subsequently inspired researchers across the world to theoretically conceptualise this construct into an L2. MacIntyre et al (1998) broadened MacIntyre and Charos' model into the complex pyramid-shaped model, which was illustrated as a six-layered complex model. The introduction of MacIntyre et al's complex model was then empirically tested and investigated by various scholars and researchers across the globe, i.e. in Japan (Yashima, 2002; Yashima, Zenk-Nishide & Shimizu, 2004; Hashimoto, 2002) in Korea (Kang, 2005; Kim, 2004) in Canada (Baker and MacIntyre, 2000), and in Pakistan, though on much smaller scale (Ali, 2010). However, research in a Pakistani context still seems to be in its early stages and much more is required, both theoretically and empirically, to bridge the gap in the existing literature.

The scope and use of English language learning is widening day by day in Pakistan (Khattak et al, 2011:1635); however, it can be argued that students in Pakistan are often found to be unable to communicate in English even after studying it for about 6 to 8 years (Warsi, 2004:01). Thus, there is need to identify and determine the issues related to students' willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language. Further, identifying the extent to which Pakistani students are willingness to communicate with different types of interlocutors in various conversational contexts would enhance our understanding about the WTC construct in different learning contexts. As Yashima et al (2004:144) suggested, contextual factors may determine a persons' willingness to communicate or whether one is less willing or more willing to communicate. As described in the previous chapter, the review of literature identified research gaps, due to the widening scope of the English language and

the dearth of existing literature both theoretical and empirical, in particular in Pakistani contexts, and this has led to the development of the following research questions.

## 4.2 Research Questions

Q1. What is the overall level of willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language of Pakistani university students who are residents of the Lower Sindh province area?

Q2. Are there any significant differences between Pakistani university students' level of willingness to communicate in English in the following background variables?

- (i) Provenance
- (ii) Types of education
- (iii) Self-perceived level of English
- (iv) Exposure to English

Q3. Are there any significant differences between Pakistani university students' level of willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language with the following interlocutors?

- (i) Friends
- (ii) Acquaintances
- (iii) Strangers

Q4. Are there any significant differences between Pakistani university students' level of willingness to communicate in the following conversational contexts?

(i) One-to-one situation

(ii) Small meeting

(iii) Large meeting

### **4.3 Research Design:**

#### **4.3.1 Why mixed method**

The aims of the undertaken study were to determine and identify the extent to which Pakistani university students were willing to communicate in English as a foreign language with different interlocutors in various conversational contexts. Before developing a research design for the purpose of this study, it was very important for the researcher to have a thorough understanding of the setting/context in which it was intended to conduct the research. Pakistan is a multilingual and multicultural country (Ali, 2010:05), where investigating such issues would not be straightforward and so this requires a robust as well as appropriate research design. In line with these perspectives, a mixed-methods design was chosen to conduct the present study because both kinds of data (quantitative and qualitative) could provide a better understanding of the issue under investigation in the present research. Creswell and Ivankova (2009:145) argued that mixed methods is increasingly becoming of the most popular research techniques in field of social sciences, including applied linguistics.

Mixed methods is defined as the procedure of collecting quantitative and qualitative data and then making it subject of analysis as well as mixing it in a single study in order to gain a better understanding of the research problem or phenomenon (Creswell and Clark, 2007:6-11).The numeric information (taken from quantitative data) and text from face-to-

face interviews (taken from qualitative data) could help the researcher to answer the research questions in a better way (Creswell and Ivankova, 2009:137). It was further demonstrated that the strength of integrating both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis within one study was that it offers opportunity to further research and explore the growing but complex nature of the knowledge already gained (ibid. 155). The purpose of the qualitative core in the current study was to explore the views, experiences and influences of the participants with regard to their WTC in English. By doing so, the research could become little more flexible and be able to investigate and answer research questions in a better way, having insightful information about the phenomena undertaken for the study. Similarly, qualitative data, in the current study, enabled me to understand the real situations of the participants and their perspectives concerning their level of willingness to communicate in English. Those complex realities and assumptions of the participants, in the current study, could be understood by adding a qualitative core. Strauss and Cobin (1990) and Creswell and Ivankova (2009) claimed that a qualitative component in the research study could make research in a better position to understand phenomena which are little known or researched.

Over the last decade, the practice of collecting and analysing quantitative and qualitative data within one study has become popular in applied linguistics because combining both techniques can provide an accurate and multidimensional view of the process of second language acquisition (Rocco, Bliss, and Dwyer et al., 2003, cited in Creswell and Ivankova, 2009:136; MacIntyre et al, 2001; Yashima et al, 2004). In the case of the current study, where the context of participants was one of the economically marginalised and comparatively small towns of the Lower Sindh, Pakistan, collecting quantitative and qualitative data helped the researcher to have a properly comprehend the complex phenomenon under investigation. Patten (2002, cited in Creswell and Ivankova, 2009:145)

argued that research studies using one type of method could be more vulnerable to errors than studies that may use multiple methods because different types of data could validate each other. Considering the location of the research site and rural background of the participants, it was decided that a mixed-methods design would more likely be better for collecting data. Interestingly, the participants in the current study reported, though verbally, that such an inquiry was completely new to them and would help them assess their self-perceived level of WTC. Consequently, a mixed-methods design was preferred because it was more flexible and could allow the researcher to choose the best strategies to address the research questions (ibid.137).

The rationale behind using a mixed-methods design was that willingness to communicate is a very complex construct and plenty of quantitative research has already been conducted to examine it across both Western and Eastern contexts (for details, see the literature review section). Secondly, the participants in the study were from the rural background of the country where they had hardly any access or exposure to communication in L2, which created substantially greater vacuum for research. In such a setting, a mixed-methods design seemed to have been a better choice because the qualitative segment was used to compensate for any inadequacy in meaning or even details that may occur with a quantitative core (Morse and Linda, 2009:122). Moreover, it was also intended that a qualitative core or description would not only help the researcher to have a better picture of the contextual details, but it might also provide a richer interpretation of the setting and conditions in which the study was to be conducted. By exploring the dynamic and complex nature of the willingness to communicate construct in a Pakistani context, it seemed essential to individually talk to participants about their experiences and opinions regarding speaking in English in an EFL or ESL setting.

The mixed-methods design was more likely to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research phenomenon because qualitative techniques such as unstructured or semi-structured interviews within context could provide readers with a clear description or picture to understand exactly what the limitations that particular study had in a given context. Besides, a mixed-method design was used because the researcher in the present study intended to have different explanations and outcomes for the same phenomenon. It was assumed that the research informants' rural background may sometimes not help them answer everything in one set of data collection, either qualitative or quantitative. Therefore, Ivankova et al (2006:03) argued that mixing both kinds of data within one study is advantageous because neither qualitative nor quantitative methods are sufficient to examine the trends and details of the issue being investigated.

Combining both forms of data (qualitative and quantitative) could allow and lead research to perform robust analysis by taking advantages of the strength of each method involved in the study (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998, cited in Ivankova et al, 2006:03). Furthermore, Creswell and Clark (2007:13) argued that a combination of both kinds of data could give maximum probability of the complete analysis of the problem. Apart from that, it was also viewed that a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection could allow the researcher to offset the weaknesses of both. For example, it is often argued that quantitative research is likely to be quite weak in understanding the context or setting in which people talk (Creswell and Clark, 2007:09) and it could be more difficult in settings where research informants are multilingual and multicultural and English is their second or third language. In such settings, it was suggested that the qualitative portion of the research would make up for these weaknesses. Similarly, Creswell and Clark (2007:09) argued that problems such as the personal interpretation of the researcher and the difficulty in

generalising findings to a larger group due to a very limited number of informants could be seen as deficient and may not provide full length information about the phenomenon. Reams and Twale (2008:133) argued that a mixed-methods design could be “necessary to uncover information and perspective, increase corroboration of the data and render less biased and more accurate conclusions”.

Besides these reasons highlighted above about using a mixed-methods design in the present study, it was also viewed that examining willingness to communicate in an L2 with different audiences under various conversational contexts requires better measurement. Gorard and Taylor (2004:44-46) argued that combination of the two perspectives (qualitative and quantitative) could likely to lead researcher to a more accurate measurement. They further maintained that combining both may possibly allow the researcher to compare results in a complementary way, which could bring about interesting findings. Further, Newby (2010:128) argued that a mixed-methods research design is also considered to be a cost-effective way of dealing with complex issues and WTC, which has already been viewed as complex construct, could further be complicated if investigated in a given context/setting. Hence, these were some of the strong reasons for employing a quantitatively- driven mixed method design in the present study.

#### **4.4 Research Instruments**

The primary research aim of the present study was to investigate Pakistani university students’ willingness to communicate in English, with different types of interlocutors in different conversational contexts. For this purpose, the present study employed quantitative research methods using a questionnaire. Dörnyei (2003:09) argued that a questionnaire is less time-consuming and is an effort and resource efficient structured source when compared with other instruments of research and that a uniquely large amount of data can be collected

possibly in less time. Rasinger (2010:61) maintained that a questionnaire could generate a large amount of data which may be simple to process. Thus, questionnaires were used to achieve the intended purposes of the present study.

Considering the research informants' learning context (for details, see the literature review section) at Shah Abdul Latif University Khairpur, Pakistan, the following research measures were adapted in order to investigate participants' willingness to communicate in English with different types of audiences in various conversational contexts. Moreover, the research questionnaires applied in the previous studies were either adapted from McCroskey and Richmond (1991) or MacIntyre et al (2001). This scale was used in the number of the studies (Peng, 2007, 2008). Ellis (2008) demonstrated that the reason most of the studies used these scales because there is lack of uniformed well-established questionnaire for WTC in an L2. Hence, the following research instruments were employed to investigate Pakistani university students' willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language. The most immediate reason behind using these questionnaires was that quite a few studies have already been conducted in the recent past employing the aforementioned research instruments, and it was also learnt while reviewing literature that there was not any other established research measure investigating willingness to communicate in English as a second or foreign language. Cao and Philip (2006:490) emphasised that there is a greater need to focus future research on developing a separate L2 WTC classroom research questionnaire. Hence, the following research instruments were employed to investigate Pakistani university students' willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language. The following research questionnaires were used to investigate Pakistani university students' willingness to communicate with different audiences in various conversational contexts in English as a foreign language.

### **01) Willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language:**

In order to investigate the willingness of Pakistani university students to communicate in English a foreign language, MacIntyre et al's (2001) 1- to 5-point scale was adopted. Students were asked to indicate on a given scale from 1 to 5 how willing they would be to communicate in class in English (1 = strongly unwilling to communicate, 2 = unwilling to communicate, 3 = neither willing nor unwilling, 4 = willing to communicate, and 5 = strongly willing to communicate). The 12 items (see appendix A) were adopted in order to investigate to what extent Pakistani university students were willing to communicate in English as a foreign language.

### **02) Willingness to communicate in English with different interlocutors:**

Twelve items (see appendix A) were adopted from McCroskey and Richmond (1991) in order to investigate to what extent Pakistani university students were willing to communicate in English with different kinds of interlocutors, i.e. strangers, acquaintances and friends. Students will be asked to indicate on a given scale from 1 to 5 their willingness or unwillingness to communicate with each interlocutor in English. For example, 1 = strongly unwilling to communicate, 2 = unwilling to communicate, 3 = neither willing nor unwilling, 4 = willing to communicate and 5 = strongly willing to communicate. The recipients of the information, on this scale, were similar to the context of the WTC scale.

### **03) Willingness to communicate in English in different conversational contexts:**

Twelve items were (see appendix A) were adopted from McCroskey and Richmond (1991) in order to investigate to what extent Pakistani university students were willing to communicate in English in different kinds of conversational contexts, i.e. a one-to-one situation, a small meeting and a large meeting. Students were asked to indicate on a given

scale from 1 to 5 their willingness or unwillingness to communicate with each interlocutor in English. For example, 1 = strongly unwilling to communicate, 2 = unwilling to communicate, 3 = neither willing nor unwilling, 4 = willing to communicate and 5 = strongly willing to communicate. The context and recipient of communication were the same as had already been used in the previous research questionnaires

#### **4.4.1 Semi-structured interviews**

The qualitative portion of the data was collected by conducting semi-structured interviews. Kahan and Best (1986) argued that interviews can be in a way an oral questionnaire and, through an interview, the researcher is more likely to get needed information orally and face to face or one to one (Dörnyei, 2007:134). Cohen et al (2011:409) argued that an interview is believed to be a flexible tool for data collection, enabling the researcher to gain not only complete answers but also responses for concerning deep and complex issues. More interestingly, Kvale (1996:14) remarked, “an *inter-view*, an interchange of the views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest, sees the centrality of the human interaction for the knowledge production, and emphasizes the social situatedness of research data” (cited in Cohen et al, 2011:409). By collecting data from interviews, Smith (2005) argued that the interviewer is more likely to establish friendly and cordial relationships with interviewees which could enable him/her (the researcher) to gain certain types of confidential information. There are different kinds of interviews, such as structured, unstructured and semi-structured, and in this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted.

Dörnyei (2007:136) believed that most of the recorded interviews, in applied linguistics, have been semi-structured, which is most likely to be “compromise between two extremes.” Obviously, there are well-prepared and guided prompts to begin with, but the format is often supposed to be open-ended and the respondent is asked to answer the question in detail. Newby (2010:340) argued that semi-structured interviews could fit in between the questionnaire and the evolving interview, which has known goals without any expected end points. Dörnyei (2007:136) further argued that a semi-structured interview is likely to be very productive and useful when the researcher has a good overview of the phenomenon or domain in question and is able to develop a wide range of questions regarding the topic prior to conducting the interview. The most common questions investigated during the interview were: (1) Why are students (un)willing to communicate in English? (2) Does the nature of the audience make any difference to the willingness or unwillingness of students to communicate in English? (3) Do conversational contexts hinder or facilitate the willingness of students to communicate in English?

It was difficult to conduct semi-structured interviews in an EFL setting because most of the participants were initially unaware and then unformattable about the idea of audio-recording. The majority of the participants had never experienced this before and were found to be little anxious as audio-recording, in their opinion, could highlight their mistakes while being interviewed. However, after talking to the participants and making them feel comfortable and aware of what the research was about, all of them finally consented to be part of an audio-recorded conversation.

The most difficult aspect of interviewing was asking female participants to give an interview in a one-to-one situation. Unfortunately, in Pakistani culture, it is not considered appropriate and acceptable for man and woman to be alone in a private if they are not related, i.e. not

members of same family. The only course of action was to assure female participants about the nature of the research, making them feel comfortable and leaving the door wide open while conducting the interview. However, disturbance seems to have been unavoidable as a large number of students of the university gathered outside the room where I was conducting the interviews. Interviews were, therefore, stopped and resumed several times, which negatively affected the process of interviewing.

#### **4.5 Research setting and informants**

The research site was Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, Sindh, Pakistan. Khairpur is located in the north of the Sindh province and is one of the less developed cities of the country. Since the university is located in one of the rural areas of the country, it is unrealistic to expect that students would be fluent in English and have good language skills because they have meagre opportunities for learning English as a foreign language. Secondly, many if not all of the students come from a very poor educational background; they were educated in the village schools where they have hardly any access to any source of learning the English language. Even most of the schools and colleges do not seem to take an interest in holding classes. These were some of the reasons to opt for the aforementioned research setting, for it would probably come up with very interesting findings for this study.

Although the university is quite near to town and locals have easy access to it, most of the students from the town prefer to seek their education in the developed cities (i.e. Hyderabad and Karachi) of the province. Resultantly, not all but most of the students who join the university are from very backward areas of the city.

The Department of English was established in the university in 1988. In the beginning, the department offered compulsory English courses to students of other departments in the university. Due to the acute scarcity of accommodation, department initially ran its courses in the evening and offered a master's degree (MA) in English literature. Recently, the Department of English has offered courses in the morning at undergraduate and postgraduate levels both in literature and language, which has been greatly appreciated by the local people of Khairpur city. The language section is relatively new, and the department has not yet appointed teachers who have the proper qualifications in TEFL/TESOL. Nevertheless, students are enrolled at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels in the language section. The rationale behind this decision was the motivation of the students that is increasing every day to pursue their education in English. The courses that department offers are:

- Introduction to Linguistics
- Issues in Applied Linguistics
- Psycholinguistics
- Sociolinguistics
- Lexical Studies
- Pedagogical Grammar.

Although the courses introduced by the department are on a par with national standards, the students of the department and university could not meet their expectations due to the scarcity of trained and qualified teachers. However, the continuous efforts of the university administration will surely make a huge difference to the overall performance of the department as quite a few new faculty members have been appointed, and they are encouraged to avail themselves of foreign scholarships from the Higher Education

Commission (HEC), Pakistan. The reason for providing a detailed picture of the research setting is that it will greatly help us understand the participants' educational background.

#### **4.5.1 Informants and sampling**

Three hundred and fifty (350) students decided to participate in the present study, and all were from undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Dörnyei (2007:99) argued that there may not be any hard and fast rule regarding the optimal sample size, because too large may become unwieldy and too small might be unrepresentative (Cohen et al, 2011:145). However, the sample should be as large enough to reach statistical significance. Cohen et al (2011:145) also maintained that a larger sample could increase the chances of it (the sample) being representative of the total population. It was further argued that larger sampling could be suggested if the researcher intends to use inferential statistics which could likely give better reliability and enable the researcher to use sophisticated statistics. Cohen et al (2011:143) maintained that appropriateness of the good research is often reflected not only by a robust methodology and instrumentation but also by suitability of sampling strategy. By drawing upon the arguments discussed above, the sample size was decided for both the quantitative and qualitative portions of the undertaken study.

For the semi-structured interviews, 15 participants were randomly chosen and recruited for final interview sessions. Patton (2002:244) claimed that there are no strict rules for qualitative study. However, a sample size of 15 to 30 participants' individual interviews is common and generally considered to be acceptable because it enables the researcher to identify themes and patterns in the data (Gough and Conner, 2006, cited in Braun and Clark, 2013:55). Drawing upon that, 15 participants were recruited randomly for interviews. Random sampling was

chosen because it is generally considered to be a straightforward strategy where each individual has an equal chance of being recruited.

For this study, the informants were from Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, Pakistan and all them were non-native speakers and studying English as a foreign language. The reason for choosing university students was that all informants were majoring in either English literature or language or studying English as a compulsory subject. They represented a population in the town which currently received the maximum amount of higher education in English, particularly in Khairpur. Dörnyei (2007:96) maintained that good sampling should feature both general characteristics, i.e. age, gender and educational background, and more specific features, which should be related to learning background and type of L2 education received. Following that, it was anticipated that selecting university students as participants of this research study would, to a greater extent, provide better insight into and understanding of students' WTC in different conversational contexts with different types of audiences compared to those who have never been in university education. For example, students at university level may have many reasons to communicate in English, i.e. securing a good job, getting good results in the examination, wishing to be appreciated by the teacher and fellow students in the classroom, etc.

The medium of instruction in the university is English. When asked the background information of the informants, the respondents of the study indicated their age, gender and how long they had studied English as a major or minor subject. The age of the students ranged from 18 to 22 years. Many if not all of the students were from the very underdeveloped areas of the region where they may have had hardly any opportunity to speak or write in English. Despite having such a difficult situation, the Department of English chooses the best students out of the total number who have applied for admission. There is a

strict procedure to give an unconditional offer to those students who pass the written test for admission.

#### **4.6 Piloting the Questionnaires**

Nothing could likely be worse than handing a questionnaire to respondents when it is realised later that it is flawed, argued Rasinger (2008). Cohen et al (2011:402) maintained that pre-testing a questionnaire is of paramount importance and crucial to its success at the time of data collection. Piloting a questionnaire has multiple functions which the researcher must take care of before collecting the main data because it is likely to increase the reliability, validity and practicability of the questionnaire, argued Oppenheim (1992) and Morrison (1993, cited in *ibid*, 2011:402). They further argued that piloting a questionnaire enables the researcher to check the clarity of the questionnaire items, instructions and layout, to avoid ambiguities or difficulties in wording, to gain feedback on the type of questions' format and its format, to check the time taken to complete the questionnaire and to check whether the questionnaire is too long or too short, too easy or too difficult. Keeping all this in mind, I piloted the research instrument among 40 students at the Department of English, Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, Pakistan.

The pilot study was conducted after gaining the approval of the ethics committee of Northumbria University and principal supervisor. I personally went to Pakistan in February 2012 in order to conduct the pilot study. Before formally initiating my data collection, I visited my research site, which was Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, and met my senior colleagues, i.e. the chairman of the department and respected vice chancellor. After meeting them formally, I requested the head of the Department of English, Prof. Dr Ziauddin Khand, to allow me to conduct the pilot study. After briefing him (Professor Ziauddin) about

the nature of the study, permission was granted to me to conduct my research. I requested the head of department to help me arrange a classroom where all informants would be invited to participate in my research. After all necessary arrangements had been made to conduct the pilot study, I went to every single class to brief students about the nature of the pilot study and then invited them to participate. After 10 days of briefing in the department, 40 students finally consented willingly to participate in my pilot study. When these students arrived to take part, I apprised them of their right to confidentiality and anonymity, and the questionnaire was administered. Apart from that, the informants were requested to extend their support by verbally reflecting on the layout, their understanding of questions or any other problem which might hamper them in answering any of the research items provided in the questionnaire. Guided by Oppenheim (1992) and Morrison (1993, cited in *ibid*, 2011:402), the following questions were asked.

- i. Do you think that the questionnaire is clear, and the instructions are easy to understand?
- ii. Do you think that these questions are easy to answer? Do you have any problem in understanding the wording, language or content of any of these questions?
- iii. What is your opinion of the layout, appearance, sectionalising and numbering of the questionnaire?
- iv. Do you think there is any question which you would not like to answer?
- v. What is your feedback on the allocated time for completion of the questionnaire?
- vi. Do you feel motivated or unmotivated to answer these questions?

Based on the feedback, the following changes were made in the final questionnaire:

#### A. Instructions and clarity

Respondents of the study asked that instructions should either be given in their native language or that the researcher should read them aloud in the class after distributing the questionnaire. They believed that this could help them understand and answer each item properly and honestly. Accordingly, it was done at the time of the main data collection.

#### B. Layout and appearance of the questionnaire

Regarding the layout and appearance of the questionnaire, most of the respondents suggested that the boxes in which answers had to be ticked were not properly designed, so the rating scale was then added in almost all questions (willing to communicate in English to strongly unwilling to communicate in English). Each questionnaire was limited to one page instead of being two pages.

#### C. Wording and language of the questionnaire

Translation of the words *interlocutors and acquaintances* was written in each of the questionnaires wherever it was mentioned.

#### D. In willingness to communicate questionnaire in the pilot study, the following question (no 8) was missing:

I love to speak about my favourite game in English. This item was mistakenly missed in the pilot study.

#### E. Regarding allocated time

Most of the participants suggested that there should no time limit for filling in the questionnaire and there should be no time limit in filling it up. Therefore, when undertaking the main data collection, all students were free to take as much time as they wished.

### **4.7 Ethical considerations**

Ethical considerations, both in social and educational research or in any other form of research, often seem to have played a very important role, particularly at the time of data collection (Dörnyei, 2007:63). Since the present study was conducted using a mixed-methods design with both quantitative and qualitative research tools, careful attention was given to ethical considerations before the data collection procedure. It is generally viewed that ethical issues that arise are different according to whether we conduct qualitative or quantitative research, and they (ethical issues) are 'situated', so researchers have to interpret them in specific local situations (Simons and Usher, 2000: cited in Cohen et al, 2011:76). In the case of the present study, the researcher was more conscious when it came to ethical questions due

to the nature of the study which was, of course, of a mixed-methods design. Punch (2005, cited in Dörnyei, 2007:63-64) argued that ethical issues are likely to be more acute in qualitative rather than quantitative research, and Miles and Huberman (1994:288) went on to say that “any qualitative researcher who is not asleep ponders moral and ethical questions” (cited in Dörnyei, 2007:63). Given that, ethical issues such as informed consent, privacy, anonymity and confidentiality were given very serious consideration during the entire process of the research.

Informed consent and right to privacy are generally thought to be two of the most substantial ethical concerns that the researcher must bring under consideration while preparing to conduct social or educational research, or even any other kind of research. Cohen et al (2011:77) argued that obtaining research participants’ or subjects’ consent and that of significant others in the institution where the research is to be conducted is of great importance in social research and could even be of equal substance in any other form of research. Howe and Moses (1999) considered informed consent as a “cornerstone of ethical behaviour”, and Cohen et al (2011:77) argued that informed consent constitutes subjects’ right to freedom and self-determination. Apart from that, the right to privacy was considered as a “basic human need” (Caplan, 1982:320, cited in Cohen et al, 2011:90). By right to privacy, we mean that every person has the right not to participate in the research, not to answer the questions at any time or during any part of the research, not to show willingness to be interviewed and even not to answer telephone calls and emails. It is considered to be *‘freedom from as well as freedom for’* (Cohen et al, 2011:91). Given that, the participants of the present study were, at the outset of the study, completely briefed about the aims of this research so that they would not feel any fear or compulsion before taking part. Informants were assured that they had complete freedom not to answer any question in this research or

they could even withdraw and not participate further at any stage of the data collection. They were also assured that their privacy would be maintained and the information they shared would only be used for the present study.

The participants of the study were also assured that their right to anonymity and confidentiality would be upheld. The information given by the respondents should in no way disclose their identity is generally presumed to be the essence of the anonymity. In case of the face-to-face interview, anonymity is likely to be difficult to maintain; however, respondents could be, at most, guaranteed confidentiality. Confidentiality can be assured by a promise made by the researcher. Researchers often promise that they will not discuss or disclose any information provided by the participants, regardless of how sensitive and personal the information may or may not be. The essence of confidentiality is the trust investigator or researcher maintain with the informants of the study (Cohen et al, 2011:91-92). As with informed consent and right to privacy, the informants of the present study were assured that anonymity and confidentiality would be strictly upheld in terms of the information they (respondents) shared with the investigator. With this full assurance, the respondents of the present study participated in the study and showed the researcher that they were completely satisfied that no information or identity would be disclosed at any stage of the research.

#### **4.8 Data Collection Procedure**

At the outset of the data collection procedure, the researcher first formally requested the head of the Department of English at Shah Abdul Latif University to officially allow him to begin collecting the data procedure. After being officially permitted to initiate the procedure, the researcher personally went to every single class in the department seeking students who were willing to participate, briefing them about the nature and context of the

research, and explaining its aims. It was made very clear to the students in the department that participating in this research would be their complete and free choice and there was no obligation imposed on them to do so.

One week after the official announcement of the data collection procedure, 350 students from different classes of the Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, voluntarily agreed to participate in this study. When the required number of research informants was reached, the researcher distributed consent forms among all informants containing a detailed description of the ethical considerations. All the respondents of the study were assured that their right to confidentiality, anonymity and privacy would be completely maintained and no information would be disclosed. Then, a questionnaire was distributed among all participants for the quantitative portion of the data collection. Even before the distribution of the questionnaire, the researcher met with all the faculty members of the department in order to inquire about participants' competence in written language and spoken language. Given that, the instructions in the research questionnaire were very simple and easy to understand so that no respondent would have any problems in filling it in. During the data collection procedure, the researcher was, in person, present and addressed every question respondents had when filling in the questionnaire. The purpose of doing all this was that the investigator wanted to make sure, at least from his side, that every informant was able to understand every research item in the questionnaire and answer it honestly.

For the qualitative portion of the data, fifteen (15) students were randomly selected out of 350 for the semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interviews were conducted during class time and the teachers in the respective classes were requested to allow participants to go for the interview. Before starting each interview, the researcher briefly informed participants about the purpose of the interview and the use of the audio recorder.

The intention behind briefing every respondent was that they would feel confident and completely willing to participate in the interview. To gain further honest replies from informants, the researcher gave a pseudonym to every participant and assured them that their identities would be kept completely secret. It was intended that, by doing so, the researcher could expect to have more candid and honest replies from the participants. I started the interview with greetings in the native languages, which were Sindh and Urdu: '*Cha haal aa, khush ahein*' or '*Aap kesy hein*', which means '*How are you doing*' and '*Welcome*'. In addition to that, I said '*Asalam Alekum*', which is an Islamic greeting and considered to be very common practice in Pakistan. The respondents were also told that interviews would be recorded and recordings could be made available to them if they wanted.

Each interview was conducted in one of the classrooms of the Department of English. As a sympathetic and attentive listener, I frequently made very motivating and encouraging gestures to the informants such as a nod, 'uh-huh' noise and 'yeah'. Further, I also ensured that I gave "sympathetic smile, attentive lean and eyebrow flash" to participants as suggested by Miller and Crabtree (1999, in Dörnyei, 2007: 142). In addition, during interviews, I tried to give encouraging and very positive feedback by showing and confirming that the interviewee's answers were worth recording. However, at times, I had to give polite negative reinforcement to participants in interviews to get him/her back on the right track as suggested by Robson (2002: 274, in Dörnyei, 2007: 142): "let me stop you here for a moment and go back to what you said earlier to make sure that I understood you well". During interviews, I also attempted to encourage elaborations; I gave participants 'silent probes' by becoming quiet and gave 'echo prompts' by repeating the last word spoken by the informant (ibid, 2007:142). I also tried to investigate multiple reasons why interviewees were willing or unwilling to communicate in English. I preferred to use attention-focusing devices in order to

rekindle and refocus the participant's interest as well as responses prior to beginning a new conversation, such as "Can I ask you now about an issue that is very important but not easy to talk about?" (ibid, 2007: 143).

When the interview was approaching its end, I used a debriefing technique by signalling pre-closing moves so that the interviewee had a good chance to raise any question, add any additional point or correct anything that he/she might have said earlier. Before concluding the interview, I asked the informant "Is there anything else you want to say about your willingness to communicate in English with different types of audiences in various conversational contexts that we talked about earlier?" Thus, the interview ended with gratitude and respect, and took approximately 30 minutes to be completed.

#### **4.9 Data Analysis**

For the data analysis of the undertaken study, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22 was first used to conduct the descriptive analysis of the questionnaire. The descriptive analysis was done in order to describe and present the frequency, mean, mode, median, standard deviation and ranges of the data, which could further enable the researcher to analyse what these descriptions mean (Cohen et al, 2011:606-622). The Pearson correlation coefficient was conducted to show the relationship among different variables. For the second, third and fourth research questions, ANOVA was used to analyse and see any differences in the relationship between different independent variables with willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language. A two-way ANOVA is a statistical method which is used to "look at the individual and joint effect of independent variables on the dependent variable" (Pallant, 2010:274). By using a two-way ANOVA, we could test both

the main effect for each of independent variables as well as the possibility of an interaction effect (ibid. 2010:274).

For the qualitative portion of the study, data was analysed using the technique of content analysis. Krippendrop (2004:18) defined content analysis as a “research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from text (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use” (cited in Cohen et al, 2011:563). The intention behind using the content analysis technique was that it could enable the researcher to achieve a process by which data gathered from semi-structured interviews, consisting of many words and sentences, could be classified into much fewer categories or codes (Weber, 1990:15). Before analysing the qualitative data, it was first transcribed, and codes were assigned to responses of the informants. After eliminating digressions from the data and assigning different codes, the lengthy and seemingly complex structure of the interview was reduced to a concise formulation in order to generate the emergent themes. The intention behind coding the data was that it could enable the researcher to generate themes. By reading and comparing the responses of the respondents, the researcher tried to ensure that there was evidentiary warrant for the emergent themes generated from the data. The process of generating emergent themes was done with extreme care, and the researcher reviewed the transcripts multiple times in order to establish the confirmation of the themes.

#### **4.10 Issues of validity and reliability**

Validity and reliability are generally considered to be two of the vital pre-requisites for conducting successful and effective research. Cohen et al (2011:179-180) argued that validity is generally a touchstone of all types of effective educational research. Validity is commonly related to the accuracy of the research findings or refers to the ability of the

research instrument to measure what it aims to investigate (Cohen et al, 2005:105). Reliability refers to the consistency of the construct when it is required to replicate the findings, given the same circumstances. In other words, reliability provides consistency, replicability and dependability of results if the same research topic is assessed and reassessed under the same environment with the same subjects (ibid:179).

The concepts of validity and reliability occupy a great deal of importance when it comes to the use of a mixed-methods research study. The techniques of collecting data through different procedures (questionnaires, interviews and classroom observation) could largely heighten the dependability of the data, argued Zohrabi (2013:254). The concepts of validity and reliability are considered to be essential in the mixed-methods design as research often seeks to get more of the research phenomena (topic of research), that largely enhances the validity of the research study (Hesse-Biber, 2010:89). It is also argued that mixed-methods empirical studies could help the researcher develop more accurate findings and mixed-methods often regarded as an essential in improving the reliability of the study (Yin, 1994:92).

In the case of the current study, the reliability of the research instrument was found to be satisfactorily as recommended in the field of applied linguistics. Dörnyei (2003:110) suggested that standardised questionnaires need to undergo a rigorous validation and reliability procedure. He further explained that if there was no procedure for the validation of the questionnaire, there should be well documented in one or other aspect. In this case, it (questionnaire) could only be tested and checked to see if it has an '*internal consistency*'. Internal consistency is referred to the homogeneity of the research items making up a questionnaire; if your research instrument contains it, you are safe (ibid.2003:110-111).

Internal consistency is measured and checked by the Cronbach's Alpha which ranges between 0 and 1. In the field of applied linguistics, the Cronbach's Alpha value should not be less than 0.70, and if for any reason the Cronbach's Alpha value is less than 0.60, which means that your scale has extremely low reliability (ibid.2003:112). In the case of the current study, the Cronbach's Alpha value is more than 0.7, and this can be seen below in table 4.1.

Table 4. 1Cronbach's Alpha Value of Questionnaire 01

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardised Items	N of Items
.753	.752	38

#### **4.10.1 Trustworthiness of qualitative data**

The issues of subjectivity have often appeared to surround researchers when qualitative data is collected. Some researchers observe that the meaning of validity and reliability largely varies from one discipline to another (Winter, 2000). Some others argue that terms such as validity and reliability are taken from the quantitative tradition and therefore have no or little value in a qualitative inquiry and could be replaced with other terms (Corbin and Strauss 2008; Golafshani, 2003). Drawing upon that, one of the alternative terms proposed and commonly used is trustworthiness (Winter, 2000).

In order to address the issues of subjectivity and to maintain the trustworthiness of the data, a good researcher should rely on the subsequent three principles as recommended by Holliday (2010:100-102). These three recommended principles are transparency of method, submission and making appropriate claims. According to him, transparency of method refers to the description of how research was conducted. Submission is defined as a researcher

should submit him/herself to the collected data and if required could change the direction of the research. Making appropriate claims refers to a particular research location where certain things seem to be the case at a particular time (ibid.2010:101). By doing so, it indicates that the purpose of the qualitative core of the research data do not prove or disapprove something; rather it is aimed at generating new ideas which are more likely to make us think again about the research phenomena being investigated.

During the qualitative data collection procedure, I fully and meticulously ensured that the research participants in the current study had a complete knowledge of the research I was conducting. Every participant was briefed, and extended time was spent with those who needed to comprehend what was in the research. In order to make sure that participants did not feel unaware of or misled regarding the scope and nature of the study, I had a detailed discussion with every one of them about my research so that their trust and interest could be built.

Secondly, the submission of the researcher to the data was facilitated and maintained that, during data collection, I never tried to impose myself on the research participants. In other words, I tried to make myself a stranger to them so that they (the participants) could fully say whatever first came in their mind. Holliday (2010:101) also argued that researcher should take on the role of a stranger because this would allow him/her to approach the situation as an outsider. I ensured that research participants did not consider me as one of the teachers in university but as an outsider who had come to collect a data. I did this by collecting data from participants who had not known or met me before. I told them that collecting such data was as new and novel an experience for me as it was for them to be participants.

Thirdly, the location of the research site was one of the universities in Pakistan where access to the methods and materials of language learning and teaching was limited. During the data

collection procedure, I never had any established set of beliefs or ideas about the participants. It was never in my mind to approve or disapprove of anything during the data collection procedure or during the qualitative data analysis phase. The third principle of making appropriate claims was maintained throughout the qualitative data analysis because the analysis was fully based and done using the techniques of thematic analysis as suggested by several researchers (see Holliday, 2010; and Krippendorp, 2004:18).

#### **4.11 Summary**

This chapter presented an overview of the methodology used in the present study. It began with the aims and objects of the study which were to identify and determine the extent to which students at Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, were willing to communicate in English. Another aim was to determine that to what extent university students were willing to communicate with different audiences (i.e. friends, strangers and acquaintances) in three conversational contexts: a one-to-one situation, a large meeting and a small group. This was followed by the research design which was, after careful consideration, chosen to be quantitatively driven mixed methodology in order to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon or issue. The intent and reason behind using mixed methods was that it allowed the researcher to have a robust analysis by taking advantage of the strength of each method involved in the study (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998, cited in Ivankova et al, 2006:03). After developing the research aims and research design, the research questions were developed, followed by the research setting, informants and instrumentation. This led to ethical considerations, followed by pilot study. The findings of the pilot study suggested some necessary and timely changes in the layout, appearance, wording and clarity and instructions in the questionnaire, which were incorporated during the main data collection procedure.

After collecting the main data, Statistical Package for social sciences version 22 (SPSS) was used to conduct both a descriptive and an inferential analysis of the questionnaire. For the qualitative portion of the study, the technique of content analysis was used to bring to surface and analyse the emergent themes.

## **Chapter 05**

### **Quantitative Findings and Preliminary Discussion**

In chapter 04, a detailed description of the research approaches and methods employed in this study was provided including a justification for using them. This research study investigated Pakistani University students' level of willingness to communicate in English and what specifically affected their willingness in a context where English was learnt, taught and used as a foreign language. The questionnaires utilised in this project attempted to examine the level of willingness of Pakistani University EFL learners' responses recorded in the following 07 willingness factors:

- i. Willingness to communicate with friends
- ii. Willingness to communicate with acquaintances
- iii. Willingness to communicate with strangers
- iv. Willingness to communicate in a one-to-one situation
- v. Willingness to communicate in a small meeting
- vi. Willingness to communicate in a large meeting
- vii. Willingness to communicate

This chapter reported the quantitative results drawn from the 350 Pakistani EFL learners majoring in English at Shah Abdul Latif University, (SALU) Khairpur, Pakistan. Before presenting results, the first section of this chapter provided the background information on the informants who participated in this study followed by the overview of the statistical techniques employed in the data analysis. In the later sections, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22 was used to report the statistical findings in alignment with each research question being investigated in the undertaken project. For the analysis of each stage of data, some initial and possibly relevant comments were offered, considering the previous research mentioned in the literature review section. The following research questions, as detailed previously (see section 2.6), were analysed.

- Q1. What is the overall level of willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language of Pakistani university students who are residents of the Lower Sindh province area?
- Q2. Are there any significant differences between Pakistani university students' level of willingness to communicate in English in the following background variables?
- (i) Provenance
  - (ii) Types of education
  - (iii) Self-perceived level of English
  - (iv) Exposure to English

Q3. Are there any significant differences between Pakistani university students' level of willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language with the following interlocutors?

(i) Friends

(ii) Acquaintances

(iii) Strangers

Q4. Are there any significant differences between Pakistani university students' level of willingness to communicate in the following conversational contexts?

(i) One-to-one situation

(ii) Small meeting

(iii) Large meeting

## **5.1 Demographic/background information on the participants**

Prior to providing the analysis of the data, table 5.1 provides the background information on the informants who voluntarily participated in this research. Although a full briefing was given to all students of the department who were invited to take part into this research, 350 informants took part, and all of them were studying at Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, Pakistan. Further, the great majority were undergraduate students of the department, but there was also a reasonably good number of postgraduate students. Luckily, there were no missing/incomplete responses in the completed questionnaires, and the sample appeared to be composed solely of Pakistani university students, who spoke Sindhi or Urdu as their first language. All the participants in the study were born in and, at the time of data collection, lived and studied in Pakistan.

Table 5. 1 Background information on the N=350 informants

Demographic characteristics	Classification	Frequency	Percentages %
Gender	Male	265	75.7
	Female	85	24.3
Native languages spoken	Sindhi	271	77.4
	Urdu	41	11.7
	Balochi	23	6.6
	Seraiki	14	4.0
	Punjabi	01	.03
Types of education	Public sector	218	62.3
	Private sector	132	37.7
Provenance	Rural	267	76.3
	Urban	83	23.7
Self-perceived proficiency in English	Lower level	209	59.7
	Higher level	141	40.3

Previous exposure to English	Never been abroad	281	80.3
	Less or more than 3 months abroad	69	19.7

Table 5.1 further shows that 75.7% male informants participated while only 24.3% female respondents took part into this research study. It could be largely because Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, is situated in one of the less urbanised or developed localities of the country and the number of female students is approximately half of their opposite gender. There seems to be a greater amount of concentration and awareness required on the part of government to educate local people about the growing need for and importance of female education. Secondly, female students are often found to be shy and less willing to interact or communicate with male students as well as teachers specifically in rural areas largely owing to the fact that interaction with the opposite gender is not likely to be taken as positive or healthy practice.

Demographic data also revealed, as can be seen in table 5.1, that most of the informants were Sindhi speaking (77.4%), followed by Urdu (11.7%), Balouchi (6.6%), Seraiki (4%) and Punjabi (0.3%) respectively. The linguistic map of Pakistan appears to be quite complex because each of the four provinces has either one or more dominant languages including a number of minority languages (Shamim, 2011:04). Similarly, the demographic data revealed a broadly similar picture in which Sindhi was the dominant language of the informants including some other minor languages (see table 4.1). Sindhi informants dominated the sample since the targeted university is situated in Sindh, so the dominance of the Sindhi participants is understandable. Ethnically in Pakistan, those who are Sindhis speak Sindhi as their L1, and those who are Mahajirs (migrants from India after the creation of Pakistan) speak Urdu as their L1. Interestingly, 218 participants (which is 62.3%) of the total sample

reported that they received their education from public-sector or government-run schools and colleges. The remaining 132 informants of the study (which is 37.7%) were educated in the private-sector institutes which indicated that the majority of the participants did not come from a sound financial background. It is likely that parents of the informants could not afford to get their children educated in the privately-run institutes largely due to the fact that fees in such institutes may be too high.

When asked if informants had had a chance to go abroad, only 19.7% of them reported “Yes”. In contrast, 80.3% of informants reported that they had no exposure to an environment where they could interact or communicate with any native speaker of English. It is possible that participants belong to one of the rural areas of the country where the chances of meeting a native speaker seem to be more unlikely. Furthermore, when 76.3% informants of the study reported that they lived in villages or rural areas where the opportunity to interact or communicate with native speakers of English almost is unlikely due to the fact that native speakers of English hardly ever visit these rural areas of the country. Although 23.7% of participants were from the urbanised areas of Khairpur city, even these could not be compared to the likes of Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad where institutes are highly developed and maintained with international standards. Background data further revealed that no participant had ever been abroad in any English-speaking country, which suggested that informants did not come from a sound financial background.

The background data demonstrated that poor financial standing, a sub-standard living set-up in the rural areas, the poor standard of the public-sector institutes and lack of sufficient financial resources to travel across the world to specifically English-speaking countries were potential reasons why participants had not had access to appropriate environments for communicating with native speakers of English. Thus, the chances to communicate in

English were likely to be alarmingly below the expectations of the participants of the study specifically.

## **5.2 Overview of the statistical techniques used in the data analysis**

Before analysing the research questions with the use of SPSS (version 22), it was first ensured that data was coded, entered and checked correctly for errors. McKenzie (2010:69) argues that it is strictly very difficult to ascertain whether any research, be it directed by quantitative or qualitative techniques, could be completely unbiased. In fact, there seem to be questions of bias stemming from any research; however, the appropriate/right selection of statistical techniques can allow the research to be as objective as possible during data interpretation. Although the present study is quantitatively driven mixed method design, in which data has been collected by using questionnaires (the main sources of data collection) and semi-structured interviews (a qualitative component to complement the quantitative core), this chapter specifically reports the findings drawn from quantitative data. The quest for generalisability has long been the prerogative of most quantitative studies, which enables researchers to be able to produce reliable and replicable findings that are generalisable in some way or another to other contexts (Dörnyei, 2007:34). In the case of the present study, the recruitment of the 350 informants could be considered sufficiently large sample for generalising the findings to represent to the wider population of the English language users specifically living in the vicinity of Khairpur, Pakistan. Moreover, the present research contains the appropriate research methods of analysis which could help the researcher to generalise results to a relatively larger number of the English language learners in the city of Khairpur, Pakistan. This can further allow the researcher to make inferences about the wider population of English language learners specifically in Khairpur and generally in less developed cities of Pakistan.

It is generally considered to be one of the most difficult and potentially fear-inducing parts of the research process when the researcher has to choose the specific statistical research techniques for data analysis (Pallant, 2010:102). The requirement to choose an appropriate statistical technique comes after the extensive process of considering a number of factors such as type of research questions and the nature of the data the present study has. This can enable the researcher to have a robust analysis which is likely to maximise the objectivity of the findings. In the case of the present study, the following statistical research techniques were chosen in alignment with each research question.

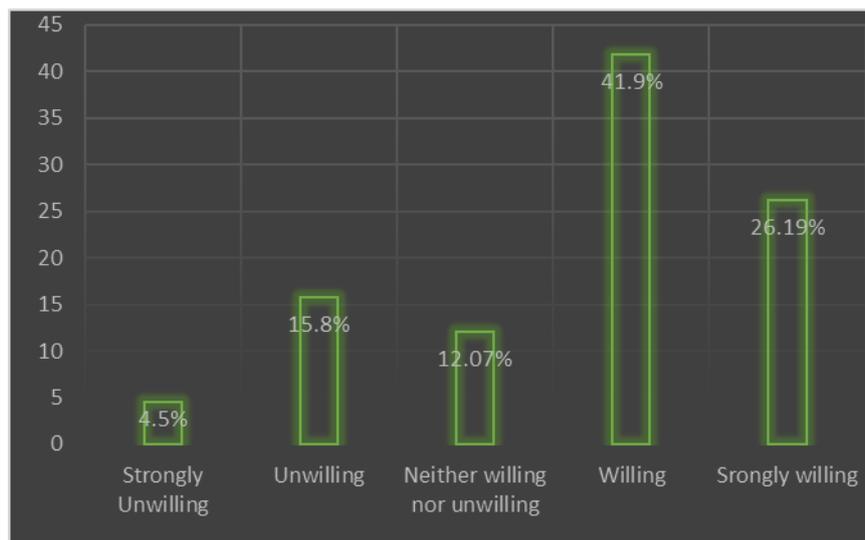
- The *t*-test
- Analysis of variance (ANOVA)

### **5.3 Results of the informants' willingness to communicate in English**

This section of chapter 05 illustrates the findings drawn from a questionnaire about Pakistani university students' overall willingness to communicate in English. The WTC research instrument, which was employed as a one-dimensional scale in this study, as has been previously practised by MacIntyre et al (2001) and McCroskey (1992), achieved Cronbach's  $\alpha = .78$ . As previously detailed (see section 3.3.1), the willingness of the students was to be investigated using a one-dimensional scale adopted from MacIntyre et al (2001). The major reason behind adapting this research instrument in the present study was due to the fact there happened to be no established scale besides these two, as previously stated (see section 2.6), available in the existing literature to investigate willingness to communicate in different contexts. In order to measure informants' overall willingness to communicate in English, a fourteen (12) item scale was used and adapted from MacIntyre et al (2001).

The first stage of the analysis of the quantitative collected data was to calculate the descriptive statistics of each item utilised to investigate informants' willingness to communicate in English. A five (5) point Likert scale was chosen to evaluate informants' willingness to communicate, in which 1 denoted 'strongly disagree' and 5 'strongly agree'. The results shown in figure 5.1 suggested that Pakistani university students were, to a reasonable degree, willing to communicate in English. Their willingness was neither high nor low; as can be seen in the following figure, only 68.09% of informants were willing to communicate when we combined the score of *willing* and *strongly willing* to communicate. McCroskey (1992:22-23) suggested the values for high and low WTC spectrums. According to him, the values 82 and 52 were taken as the two cut-points for high and low WTC spectrums.

Figure 5.1 Pakistani university students' (350) overall level of willingness to communicate in English



The combined scores, which is 68.09%, indicated that users of English were willing to communicate to a reasonable degree, as suggested by McCroskey (1992:22-23). Results further demonstrated that only 20.35% informants were either unwilling or strongly unwilling to communicate. In addition to that, some 12.07% appeared to be unsure whether or not they

were willing to communicate in English. The overall results of users' willingness to communicate revealed stereotypical willingness to communicate in English. In addition to that, there seemed to be no large difference reported between Pakistani male and female informants' willingness to communicate in English.

Table 5. 2 Mean evaluation and standard deviation of male and female informants

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
WTC Male	3.71	.033	265
WTC Female	3.36	.066	85

As can be seen in table 5.2, there was not much difference found between Pakistani male and female informants' willingness to communicate in English. This marginal mean difference, which is  $M=0.35$ , strongly indicated that both male and female informants had categorically showed their willingness to communicate in English. This is largely linked to the fact that English has been an integral part of Pakistani official, economic and educational sectors including social life (in certain ways) since its creation in 1947 (Mahboob, 2009:178). Until recently, English was immensely considered to be one of the pivotal pre-requisites of a bright and successful career in Pakistan due to its global enterprise appeal and acceptability (Ali, 2010:05).

### 5.3.1 Informants' evaluations on all WTC factors

Statistical Package for Social Sciences, SPSS (version 22) was used to conduct a one-way repeated measure ANOVA in order to compare the overall mean evaluation of Pakistani informants' willingness with three types of audiences within three conversational contexts. Before conducting a one-way repeated measure ANOVA, a histogram of each of the variables was checked. With skewness statistic, less than absolute value 2, all of the variables demonstrated a normal distribution, and no indication of nonlinear relationship was found when linear relationship was checked by inspecting a scatter plot for each of the variables. The mean and standard deviations of each factor of Pakistani informants are given below in table 5.3. Results further demonstrated that there was a significant overall effect for all eight factors on Pakistani informants' willingness to communicate in English: Mauchly's Test = 0.833, consequently the assumption of sphericity assumption was met;  $F(7, 2443) = 107.15$ ,  $p < 0.005$ ; multivariate eta squared = 0.653, which suggested large effect size using the guidelines proposed by Cohen (1988).

Table 5.3 Mean evaluations and standard deviations for informants' willingness (N=350)

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
WTC	3.6937	.56100	350
WTC_F	4.0186	.79959	350
WTC_A	3.2521	.79226	350
WTC_S	3.1957	.78915	350
WTC_G	3.3105	.83240	350
WTC_S	3.7257	.84165	350
WTC_L	2.9971	.91869	350
WTC_O	4.0276	.79247	350

*Note: WTC= willingness to communicate in English; WTC\_F= willingness to communicate with friends; WTC\_A= willingness to communicate with acquaintances; WTC\_S= willingness to communicate with strangers; WTC\_G= willingness to communicate in a group; WTC\_S= willingness to communicate in a small meeting; WTC\_L= willingness to communicate in a large meeting; WTC\_O= willingness to communicate in a one-to-one situation*

Table 5.4 Analysis of variance summaries for informants' willingness on all factors

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F. Ratio
Informants' willingness	375.35	7	53.62	107.15*
Residual error	1222.49	2443	0.500	

\*p<0.005

Table 5.3 demonstrates that Pakistani university informants could discern the differences when they were asked to communicate in English with the aforementioned different types of audiences and conversational contexts. Their judgment was solely based upon the research instrument presented to them for the investigation, and they were able to make an evaluation regarding their willingness to communicate in English with each of the audiences and conversational contexts, considering their personal characteristics and language abilities. Hence, the results of table 5.3 suggested that Pakistani informants could differentiate their perceived willingness to communicate in English with different audiences and conversational contexts.

A pairwise comparison analysis was conducted in order to analyse the mean ratings for the eight WTC factors. However, conducting multiple *t*-tests increases the probability of the *type I error*, and it (*type I error*) occurs when we choose to reject null hypothesis which is although true. A *type I error* occurs when the researcher believes that there is actually some genuine effect in our population, which, in reality, does not exist (Field, 2013:67). In order to combat the build-up of this error rate, we adjusted a significance level at 0.05 by using the Bonferroni method.

The table 5.5 below shows the pairwise comparison for all eight repeated measure variables, and all comparisons were made by adjusting using the Bonferroni method.

Table 5.5 Post hoc test: pairwise comparison of WTC across different audiences and conversational contexts

(I) WTC	(J) WTC	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. <sup>(a)</sup>	95% Confidence Interval for Difference <sup>(a)</sup>	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
WTCF	WTCA	.766*	.050	.000	.612	.921
	WTCS	.823*	.052	.000	.665	.981
	WTCO	-.009	.053	1.000	-.171	.153
	WTCSM	.293*	.052	.000	.134	.452
	WTCG	.708*	.052	.000	.549	.867
	WTCLM	1.021*	.058	.000	.844	1.199
WTCA	WTCF	-.766*	.050	.000	-.921	-.612
	WTCS	.056	.050	1.000	-.097	.210
	WTCO	-.775*	.049	.000	-.926	-.625

	WTCSM	-.474*	.053	.000	-.636	-.312
	WTCG	-.058	.051	1.000	-.215	.098
	WTCLM	.255*	.054	.000	.091	.419
WTCS	WTCF	-.823*	.052	.000	-.981	-.665
	WTCA	-.056	.050	1.000	-.210	.097
	WTCO	-.832*	.051	.000	-.989	-.675
	WTCSM	-.530*	.052	.000	-.688	-.372
	WTCG	-.115	.053	.626	-.276	.046
	WTCLM	.199*	.057	.012	.023	.374
WTCO	WTCF	.009	.053	1.000	-.153	.171
	WTCA	.775*	.049	.000	.625	.926
	WTCS	.832*	.051	.000	.675	.989
	WTCSM	.302*	.052	.000	.143	.461
	WTCG	.717*	.055	.000	.549	.885
	WTCLM	1.030*	.060	.000	.848	1.213
WTCSM	WTCF	-.293*	.052	.000	-.452	-.134
	WTCA	.474*	.053	.000	.312	.636
	WTCS	.530*	.052	.000	.372	.688
	WTCO	-.302*	.052	.000	-.461	-.143
	WTCG	.415*	.054	.000	.248	.582
	WTCLM	.729*	.063	.000	.537	.920
WTCG	WTCF	-.708*	.052	.000	-.867	-.549
	WTCA	.058	.051	1.000	-.098	.215
	WTCS	.115	.053	.626	-.046	.276
	WTCO	-.717*	.055	.000	-.885	-.549
	WTCSM	-.415*	.054	.000	-.582	-.248
	WTCLM	.313*	.050	.000	.160	.467

WTCLM	WTCF	-1.021*	.058	.000	-1.199	-.844
	WTCA	-.255*	.054	.000	-.419	-.091
	WTCS	-.199*	.057	.012	-.374	-.023
	WTCO	-1.030*	.060	.000	-1.213	-.848
	WTCSM	-.729*	.063	.000	-.920	-.537
	WTCG	-.313*	.050	.000	-.467	-.160

Based on estimated marginal means

\*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

a. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

As shown in table 5.5 above, while analysing the results for the contrasts between the mean of Pakistani university students' willingness to communicate for all eight variables, it was potentially suggested that there were a number of differences between the eight WTC variables. By looking at the analysed results, the differences between the eight WTC variables reached statistical significance level and even allowing Bonferroni alpha level.

The Pakistani university students' evaluations were then made the subject of analysis for their dimension of willingness to communicate in English across a variety of conversational contexts and interlocutors, using a one way-repeated measure analysis of variance (ANOVA) and follow-up pairwise comparison analysis with Bonferroni adjustment. The ranking order of all WTC variables is summarised below in descending order of evaluation. The underlining shows that there was significant difference between informants' willingness to communicate across different audiences and conversational contexts.

- ✚ Willingness to Communicate with Friends
- ✚ Willingness to Communicate in a One-to-One Situation
- ✚ Willingness to Communicate in a Small Meeting
- ✚ Willingness to Communicate in a Group of People

- ✚ Willingness to Communicate with Acquaintances
- ✚ Willingness to Communicate with Strangers

The rating order shown above clearly demonstrated, in terms of willingness to communicate in English, that Pakistani university students preferred and rated friends as the most favourable audience to communicate with. As argued in the previous studies (Cao & Philp, 2006; House, 2004; Kang, 2005; Liu, 2005, Peng, 2007), the interlocutor or audience was reported to be the most important factor in influencing learners' willingness to communicate in a second or foreign language. Similarly, a clear pattern emerges when evaluation of all these WTC variables are grouped together. In terms of communication in English with audiences, Pakistani informants' willingness was potentially higher with friends than acquaintances and strangers. This clear pattern, as demonstrated in the results, significantly suggested friends as being the most favourable and the preferred audience to communicate with, followed by acquaintances and strangers.

This tripartite hierarchy of ratings is consistent with results from a limited number of studies conducted (see Ali, 2010 & Peng, 2008) which have specifically emphasised friends as being the most favourable and preferred audience to communicate with, in contrast with acquaintances as well as strangers being preferred least. In this connection, Cao and Philp (2006) and Liu (2005) found similar findings when learners appeared to be more talkative and communicative with interlocutors they were familiar with. On the basis of results drawn from the current study and previous studies, we could safely argue that people reasonably tend to be favourable towards friends rather than acquaintances or strangers because they often feel that friends are those they are very close to, which may not create hindrance to communication even in the English language. The students generally make friends both inside and outside the classroom through socialising. MacIntyre and Baker (2001:378) found

that social support was reported to be an important factor in L2 users' willingness to communicate. The socialisation could develop into friendship, which in turn made users of English more comfortable and willing to communicate with their friends.

In terms of conversational contexts in the present study, Pakistan learners' willingness to communicate was significantly higher in one-to-one situations followed by small meetings, and large meetings. The ranking order of conversational contexts, as found in the results, demonstrate that Pakistani learners prefer to initiate communication in English in a one-to-one situation and this may be due to the potential risk of being negatively judged by their peers. Learners' avoidance of communicating in a large meeting and may also be due to the unfamiliarity of these situations because Pakistani university learners often seem to be more interested in one-to-one situations and small meetings and friendly chat instead of having the experience of addressing a large number of people. Barjesteh et al (2012:47) report that learners do not feel confident or encouraged to communicate in unfamiliar situations, which also lends support to our findings, which show that learners are not willing to communicate in large meetings and groups of people.

It is evident from the results demonstrated above that a clear pattern emerges amongst Pakistani university students' rankings of willingness to communicate in English. They (the informants) found friend as the most favourable interlocutor and stranger as the least preferred audience type to communicate with. In terms of conversational contexts, learners were more willing to communicate in a one-to-one situation, although the difference is not statistically significant. In addition, in the present study Pakistani learners judged communication more positively with friends and in one-to-one situations than with groups of people, acquaintances and strangers as well as in large meetings. The overall preference of Pakistani learners' willingness to communicate supported the findings presented by Cao and

Philp (2006:489), when they found that learners preferred communication with a familiar interlocutor, pair work and small-meeting activities rather than larger interactional contexts. Hence, it is interesting that the results of the present study are consistent with findings demonstrated in a limited number of empirical studies conducted in the previous empirical studies.

#### **5.4 Background variables and level of willingness to communicate in English in Pakistan**

This section of chapter 05 presents the analysis drawn from the background research instrument where the participants voluntarily provided information regarding their gender, rural/urban provenance, type of education, self-perceived level of English and level of English. As demonstrated above (see section 5.1), the participants provided personal information at the request of the researcher so that he could investigate to what extent variations in the participants' background may account for the differences in their communication (in English) with types of audiences and conversational contexts selected for evaluation. This was an attempt to further clarify results by analysing and investigating the potential influence (if any) of social background variables on the willingness of the informants to use English with selected audiences and in conversational contexts.

To have a proper understanding and robust evaluation of the results, analysis was done in two main stages. At the first stage, a *t*-test was separately run to find out whether or not there were any significant differences between the informants' willingness to communicate in English responses for all background variables. The reason behind doing the *t*-test was that all independent variables, which were four in research question 02, had fewer than three levels.

In the later part of the analysis, for the remaining research questions analysis was done individually on the social background variables to determine the significant main effects on the informants' responses about their willingness to communicate in English including with selected audiences and in conversational contexts. The *main effect* is the effect which takes place when independent variable has an overall effect on the dependent variable irrespective of any other variables. This subsequently followed the analysis of the main effects of the independent variables collectively to identify any interaction effects. An interaction effect refers to combined effects on the dependent variable of the independent variables which occurs when the effect of one independent variable is not the same with other independent variables at all levels.

#### **5.4.1 Provenance and willingness to communicate in English**

In this part of chapter 05, a *t*-test was conducted to find out if there were any significant differences in the level of informants' willingness to communicate in English that were linked to their provenance. The dependent variable was users' responses on their level of willingness to communicate in English. The independent variable was provenance composed of two levels: rural and urban class of the informants. The main reason for including provenance as an independent variable was that Pakistani society is largely divided into two sections: rural and urban class. The rural class hails from the outskirts of cities, villages and less developed areas of the country whereas the urban class lives in the centre of the main cities of the country.

As can be seen in table 5.6, informants of the current study abundantly belong to the rural areas of the country where the educational resources are generally reported to be extremely low. Lack of trained teachers, outdated course and teaching material and the poor

physical infrastructures of the schools and colleges seemingly indicate the pervading condition of the rural areas' educational institutes in Pakistan. Parents of the informants were reported to be financially weak and unable to settle in the main city of the area.

The rural group (N=267) was associated with willingness to communicate in English with M= 3.6 (SD=.57). By comparison, the urban group (N=83) was associated with M=3.7 (SD=.51). To test that rural and urban groups are statistically significant with willingness to communicate in English, an independent *t*-test was conducted. As can be seen in table 5.6, the distributions of rural and urban were normal for the purpose of conducting a *t*-test. The assumption of the homogeneity was also tested and satisfied via Levene's *F* test,  $F(348) = 1.06, p = .30$ . There was statistically significant difference,  $t(348) = 1.95, p < 0.01$ . Thus, the rural and urban population was statistically significant with willingness to communicate in English, suggesting small effect size of 0.20. Learners of English from urban areas have higher level of willingness to communicate than those learners who were from rural areas of the country.

Table 5. 6 Provenance distributions of participants of the research

Value label	No	Mean	SD
Rural	267	3.66	.03
Urban	83	3.79	.05

#### 5.4.2 Types of education and willingness to communicate in English

Types of education also comprise two levels: public sector and private sector. Pakistan does not have a uniform education system. Like many other developing countries, the educational system in Pakistan is in decline due to widespread disparities between region, argued Memon (2007:47). Besides that, lack of equal opportunities has further divided the already discouraging education system of the country (Zia, 1999:119). Parents who are financially weak may not have equal opportunity to get their children a better education since access to better education is expensive. Considering that, this independent variable was added to see whether or not there was statistically significant difference between public and private sector informants' level of willingness to communicate in English. The data for the analysis of the types of education were taken from the main background research instrument.

The public sector (N=218) was associated with willingness to communicate in English with M= 3.6 (SD=.54). By comparison, the private sector (N=132) was associated with M=3.6 (SD=.59). To test that public sector and private sector are statistically significant with willingness to communicate in English, an independent *t*-test was conducted. As can be seen in table 5.7, the distributions of private and public sector were normal for the purpose of conducting a *t*-test. The assumption of the homogeneity was also tested and satisfied via Levene's *F* test,  $F(348) = 1.91, p = .167$ . There was statistically no significant difference,  $t(348) = .083, p > 0.01$ . Thus, the public and private sectors were not statistically significant with willingness to communicate in English. It could be largely possible due to the fact that Khairpur is not generally as big as other cities in Pakistan, such as Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad, where access to better education is easier.

Table 5. 7 Descriptive statistics associated with types of education

Value label	N	Mean	SD

Public sector	218	3.69	.54
Private sector	132	3.69	.59

In table 5.7, though the number of the students who were educated in the private sector is comparatively better than those informants who lived in rural areas. Most of the informants from the rural areas reduced their living expenses by having three to four of them living in a large room in order to afford their fees for the private-sector institutes, though quality of education may still not be ideal there. In short, the primary and secondary educational standard seems to be in decline in Pakistan due to the extremely low public investment of the Pakistani government (Memon, 2007:48).

### **5.4.3 Self-perceived level of English and willingness to communicate in English**

The self-perceived level of proficiency is composed of two levels: low level of proficiency and high level of proficiency. The self-perceived level or competence is defined as “an individual view of their own competence as a communicator...and willingness to communicate” (Burroughs et al, 2003:231). Like the previous two independent variables (provenance and types of education), self-perceived level of informants’ proficiency was extremely important considering the context of the present study where communicating in English was generally associated with and seen as the language of empowerment (Rehman, 2001) and a bright future (Ali, 2010:06). The relevance of the self-perceived level of proficiency was linked to be so important because most of the informants of the current study were from rural areas of the country and were educated in the public-sector institutes. It was

interesting and important how informants of the study view their self-perceived level of proficiency in English.

In table 5.8, informants who viewed their self-perceived level of proficiency as low were N=209 and those who viewed their level as high were N=141. To test whether informants' low levels and high levels of self-perceived proficiency have statistically significant difference with willingness to communicate in English, an independent *t*-test was conducted. As can be seen in table 4.8, the distributions of low level and high level were normal for conducting a *t*-test. The assumption of the homogeneity was also tested and satisfied via Levene's *F* test. There was statistically significant difference in informants' willingness to communicate in English for low level ( $M=3.59$ ,  $SD = .57$ ) and high level ( $M = 3.83$ ,  $SD = .51$ ;  $t(348) = -4.09$ ,  $p < 0.01$  (two-tailed) suggesting large effect size of 0.4. The results indicated that learners with higher level of self-perceived communication competence were more willing to communicate than those who had low level of self-perceived communication competence.

Table 5. 8. Descriptive statistics associated with self-perceived level of proficiency

Value label	N	Mean	SD
Low level	209	3.59	.57
High level	141	3.83	.51

#### **5.4.4 Exposure to English and willingness to communicate in English**

Exposure to English is comprised of two levels: never been abroad and have been abroad.

English is only taught as a subject in most of the schools, colleges and universities of

Pakistan, argued Ali (2010) and Rehman (2007). The challenge to communicate in English appears to be far greater specifically in contexts where access to better education may not be possible for locals (people of Khairpur area). By abroad, informants were meant to say whether they have been to different countries, not necessarily English-speaking countries.

Table 5.9 Descriptive statistics associated with exposure to English

Value label	N	Mean	SD
Never been abroad	281	3.68	.56
Have been abroad	69	3.73	.54

In table 5.9, informants who have never been abroad were  $N = 281$  and those who have been abroad were  $N = 69$ . To test whether exposure to English has any statistically significant difference in informants' willingness to communicate in English, an independent  $t$ -test was conducted. As can be seen in table 5.9, the distributions of informants who have never been abroad and those who have been abroad were normal for conducting a  $t$ -test. The assumption of the homogeneity was also tested and satisfied via Levene's  $F$  test. There was statistically no significant difference in informants' willingness to communicate in English between those

who have never been abroad ( $M=3.68$ ,  $SD = .56$ ) and those who have been abroad ( $M = 3.73$ ,  $SD = .54$ ;  $t(348) = .716$ ,  $p > 0.01$ ). Thus, there was no statistically significant difference between the responses of informants who have never been abroad and those who have been abroad, which could most likely be due to not going to English speaking countries.

In this section of the findings, an independent  $t$ -test was separately conducted for each background independent variable to find out if there was any statistically significant difference between informants' willingness to communicate in English. We had four background independent variables (provenance, types of education, self-perceived level of proficiency and exposure to English). Results reported that there were statistically significant differences in two of the background variables: provenance and self-perceived level of proficiency in English. There was statistically no difference reported for types of education and exposure to English.

#### **5.4.5 The effect of gender on the willingness of the users of English**

In this section of chapter 05, the results of the effects of gender on the willingness of the users of English in Pakistan are provided. The information regarding the gender of the informants was taken from the main section of the research instrument. The summary of the collected data is presented below in table 5.10

Table 5. 10 Gender distribution of participants of research

Value Label	N	%
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Male	265	75.7%
Female	85	24.3%
Total	350	100%

As can be seen from the table 5.10 above, the number of female participants in the current study is far less than the male participants, which was largely due to the low enrolment of the female students in the university. Since the targeted university (SALU) is situated in one of the less developed areas of the country, awareness of female education is still in its early stages. Unfortunately, patriarchal values seem to be profoundly in control in Pakistan, where home is generally considered to be the ultimate and physical space for a woman, where she can be seen performing her duties as a mother and daughter (Murtaza, 2013:266). Inversely to the trends of many other developing countries, girls' education is not prioritised in Pakistan because girls are generally understood to be good at domestic skills in order to be good wives and mothers (ibid., 266). In short, boys' education is prioritised over girls' education, which consequently results in a low number of female students in universities.

## **5.5 Users' willingness to communicate in terms of targeted audiences**

In this section of the analysis, research question 03 (RQ3) was investigated by using ANOVA to look at any differences in informants' willingness to communicate with different kind of audiences. It further aimed to see the individual and joint effect of the independent variables on the dependent variables by using a two-way and three-way ANOVA. The independent variables were three types of audiences, i.e. friends, acquaintances and strangers. Each independent variable was composed of three levels. The first independent variable was willingness to communicate with friends in English, composed of these three levels: informants who regarded their willingness to communicate with friends as being of a high level, informants who perceived themselves to have a lower level of willingness to communicate with friends and informants who perceived their level of willingness to be neither high nor low at the time of communicating in English with friends. The second independent variable, informants' willingness to communicate with acquaintances, was also composed of three levels: informants who felt a higher level of willingness to communicate with acquaintances, informants who felt a lower level of willingness to communicate with acquaintances and informants who felt neither a lower nor higher level of willingness at times of communicating with acquaintances in English. The third independent variable, informants' willingness to communicate with strangers in English, was also composed of three levels: informants who felt a higher level of willingness to communicate with strangers, informants who felt a lower level of willingness to communicate with strangers and informants who felt neither a lower nor higher level of willingness at times of communicating with strangers in English. The dependent variable for RQ3 was informants' responses on their willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language.

In table 5.11, preliminary findings indicated that Levene’s test of homogeneity of variance was greater than 0.05 and consequently the assumption of the homogeneity test was not violated. The means and standard deviations for willingness to communicate according to friends and gender were tabulated below.

Results tabulated in table 5.11 indicated that male informants of the current study appeared to be more willing to communicate in English with male friends than their female informants. However, the difference in the mean score indicated a very small level of difference in terms of communicating with friends. Findings further demonstrated that most of the informants (219 out of 350) reported having high level of willingness to communicate with friends and only 32 out of 350 reported having low level of willingness to communicate in English. These findings were lent support from the previous empirical studies conducted by various researchers across a variety of contexts where familiarity with audiences was considered to be an encouraging factor for users’ willingness to communicate in English (see literature review section).

Table 5.11 Mean and standard deviations for informants’ level willingness to communicate according to friends and gender

Dependent variable: WTC

Wtcfri	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
low level of willingness	Male	3.8522	.63485	29
	Female	3.6190	.57291	3
	Total	3.8304	.62448	32
neither low nor high level of willingness	Male	3.6776	.55420	76
	Female	3.6211	.66535	23

	Total	3.6645	.57880	99
high level of willingness	Male	3.7054	.51631	160
	Female	3.6368	.61076	59
	Total	3.6869	.54277	219
Total	Male	3.7135	.54137	265
	Female	3.6319	.61756	85
	Total	3.6937	.56100	350

Note: WTC= willingness to communicate; WTCF= willingness to communicate with friends

In table 5.12 below, the interaction effect between informants' level of willingness to communicate with friends and gender did not reach statistical significance  $F(1, 344) = .119$ ,  $p = .88$ ; partial et square = .008 suggesting small effect size.

Table 5.12 Interaction effect between informants' level of willingness to communicate with friends and gender

Source	Type III Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Partial Eta Squared
Wtcfri* gender	.75	2	.038	.119	.88	.008
Error	108.73	344	.316			

### 5.5.1 WTC with acquaintances and gender

A two-way ANOVA was conducted to investigate any differences in the informants' level of willingness to communicate with acquaintances and gender. The first independent variable, willingness to communicate with acquaintances, was composed of three levels: informants who felt a lower level of willingness to communicate with acquaintances, informants who felt neither a lower nor higher level of willingness to communicate with acquaintances and informants who a higher level of willingness at times of communicating with acquaintances in English. The second independent variable, gender, was composed of two levels: male and female. The dependent variable for RQ3 was informants' responses on their willingness to communicate in English as foreign language.

Preliminary findings revealed that Levene's test of homogeneity of variance did not exceed 0.05; thus, the assumption of the homogeneity test was violated suggesting that variance of our dependent variable was not equal across groups. In such a case, we set a more stringent significance level (i.e. 0.01) as suggested by Pallant (2013:279). The means and standard deviations for willingness to communicate according to acquaintances and gender were tabulated below in the table 5.13.

Table 5.13 Mean and standard deviations for informants' level of willingness to communicate according to acquaintances and gender

Dependent Variable: WTC

Gender	Wtcacq	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
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Male	low level of willingness	3.7530	.51992	83
	neither low nor high level of willingness	3.6762	.51777	90
	high level of willingness	3.7143	.58452	92
	Total	3.7135	.54137	265
Female	low level of willingness	3.7403	.68041	33
	neither low nor high level of willingness	3.6190	.64021	21
	high level of willingness	3.5253	.52539	31
	Total	3.6319	.61756	85
Total	low level of willingness	3.7494	.56710	116
	neither low nor high level of willingness	3.6654	.54030	111
	high level of willingness	3.6667	.57403	123
	Total	3.6937	.56100	350

*Note: WTC= willingness to communicate; WTCA= willingness to communicate with acquaintances*

As can be seen in table 5.13, the number of female informants was far fewer than male informants in the current study, which has also been explained in the previous sections of this chapter. For the knowledge of the reader, it was largely due to the fact that the site of the current study was one of the universities working in the less developed area of Pakistan, where more concentration and awareness was required for female education. Results further indicated that there was very little difference in terms of informants' willingness to communicate with acquaintances and gender. Interestingly, male informants reported having

a lower level of willingness ( $M = 3.75$ ,  $SD = .51$ ) than their female informants ( $M = 3.74$ ,  $SD = .68$ ), though the difference appeared to be extremely little.

In table 5.14 below, the interaction effect between informants' level of willingness to communicate with acquaintances and gender did not reach statistical significance  $F(1, 344) = .613$ ,  $p = .54$ ; partial eta squared = .004 suggesting small effect size suggesting very small effect size.

Table 5.14 Interaction effect between informants' level of willingness to communicate with acquaintances and gender

Source	Type III Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Partial Eta Squared
Wtcacq* gender	.386	2	.038	.613	.54	.004
Error	108.410	344	.315			

### 5.5.2 WTC with strangers and gender

A two-way ANOVA was conducted to investigate any differences in the informants' level of willingness to communicate with strangers and gender. The first independent variable, willingness to communicate with strangers, was composed of three levels: informants who felt a lower level of willingness to communicate with strangers, informants who felt neither a

lower nor higher level of willingness to communicate with strangers and informants who felt a higher level of willingness at times of communicating with strangers in English. The second independent variable, gender, was composed of two levels: male and female. The dependent variable for RQ3 was informants' responses on their willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language.

Preliminary findings revealed that Levene's test of homogeneity of variance did not exceed 0.05; thus, the assumption of the homogeneity test was violated, suggesting that variance of our dependent variable was not equal across groups. In such a case, we set a more stringent significance level (i.e. 0.01) as suggested by Pallant (2013:279). The means and standard deviations for willingness to communicate according to acquaintances and gender were tabulated below in table 5.15.

Table 5.15 Mean and standard deviations for informants' level of willingness to communicate according to strangers and gender

Dependent Variable: WTC

gender	Wtcstr	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Male	low level of willingness	3.7418	.53729	83

	neither low nor high level of willingness	3.6657	.52080	122
	high level of willingness	3.7714	.58707	60
	Total	3.7135	.54137	265
Female	low level of willingness	3.6216	.55402	37
	neither low nor high level of willingness	3.6776	.72727	35
	high level of willingness	3.5385	.48411	13
	Total	3.6319	.61756	85
Total	low level of willingness	3.7048	.54303	120
	neither low nor high level of willingness	3.6683	.57068	157
	high level of willingness	3.7299	.57406	73
	Total	3.6937	.56100	350

*Note: WTC= willingness to communicate; WTCS= willingness to communicate with strangers*

As can be seen in table 5.15, only 60 out of 350 informants reported having a high level of willingness to communicate with strangers. Results demonstrated that informants did not like to communicate with strangers, as supported and empirically investigated by Kang (2005:291). She believed that willingness to communicate could vary according to familiarity with audiences including many other factors (see literature review section). Like the male informants, the female informants of the current study appeared to have a low level of willingness to communicate with strangers, which further supported by the Kang's (2005) study.

In table 5.16 below, the interaction effect between informants' level of willingness to communicate with acquaintances and gender did not reach statistical significance  $F(2, 344) = .824$ ,  $p = .44$ ; partial eta squared = .005 suggesting small effect size suggesting very small effect size.

Table 5.16 Interaction effect between informants' level of willingness to communicate with strangers and gender

Source	Type III Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Partial Eta Squared
Wtcstr* gender	.520	2	.260	.824	.44	.005
Error	108.671	344	.316			

### 5.5.3 Willingness to communicate with friends, acquaintances and strangers

In this section of the analysis, RQ3 was investigated by using a three-way ANOVA to look at any differences in informants' willingness to communicate with different kinds of audiences. It further aimed to see the individual and joint effect of the independent variables on the dependent variables by using a three-way ANOVA. The independent variables were three types of audiences, i.e. friends, acquaintances and strangers. Each independent variable

was composed of three levels. The first independent variable was willingness to communicate with friends in English, composed of these three levels: informants who regarded their willingness to communicate with friends as being of a high level, informants who perceived themselves to have a lower level of willingness to communicate with friends and informants who perceived their level of willingness as neither high nor low at the time of communicating in English with friends. The second independent variable, informants' willingness to communicate with acquaintances, was also composed of three levels: informants who felt a higher level of willingness to communicate with acquaintances, informants who felt a lower level of willingness to communicate with acquaintances and informants who felt neither a lower nor higher level of willingness at times of communicating with acquaintances in English. The third independent variable, informants' willingness to communicate with strangers in English, was also composed of three levels: informants who felt a higher level of willingness to communicate with strangers, informants who felt a lower level of willingness to communicate with strangers and informants who felt neither a lower nor higher level of willingness at times of communicating with strangers in English. The dependent variable for RQ3 was informants' responses on their willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language.

In table 5.17, preliminary findings indicated that Levene's test of homogeneity of variance was greater than 0.05, and consequently the assumption of the homogeneity test was not violated. The interaction effect between three of the independent variables is summarised below.

Table 5.17 Interaction effect between informants' level of willingness to communicate with friends, acquaintances and strangers

Source	Type III Sum Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Partial Eta Square
wtcfri*wtcacq	2.814	4	.703	2.314	.057	.028
wtcfri*wtcstr	3.871	4	.968	3.184	.014	.038
wtcacq*wtcstr	2.903	4	.726	2.388	.051	.029
wtcfri* wtcacq*wtcstr	7.417	7	1.061	3.486	.001	.070
Error	98.491	324	.304			

*Note: WTCFRI = Willingness to communicate with friends; WTCACQ = Willingness to communicate with acquaintances; WTCSTR= Willingness to communicate with strangers*

In table 5.17, the interaction effect of two-way and three-way ANOVA indicated that there were statistically significant differences between willingness to communicate with friends, acquaintances and strangers.

- i. Willingness to communicate with friends X Willingness to communicate with acquaintances:  $F(4, 324) = 2.31$ , ( $p = .057$ ); partial eta squared = .028 suggesting a small effect size.
- ii. Willingness to communicate with friends X Willingness to communicate with strangers:  $F(4, 324) = 3.18$ , ( $p = .014$ ); partial eta squared = .038 suggesting a moderate effect size.
- iii. Willingness to communicate with acquaintances X Willingness to communicate with strangers:  $F(4, 324) = 2.38$ , ( $p = .051$ ); partial eta squared = .029 suggesting a small effect size.

- iv. Willingness to communicate with friends X Acquaintances X Strangers:  $F(7, 324) = 3.48$ , ( $p = .001$ ); partial eta squared = .070, suggesting a large effect size.

#### **5.5.4 Summary**

The findings drawn from the obtained data for RQ3 demonstrated that there was statistically no significant interaction or main effect of independent variables on the willingness to communicate (WTC) of the informants of the study. The independent variables such as willingness to communicate with friends, acquaintances and strangers and gender had statistically no significant difference. However, there was some difference in the ratings for willingness to communicate with friends, acquaintances and strangers. Besides that, findings further reported an interaction effect between willingness to communicate with friends (WTCFri) and willingness to communicate with acquaintances (WTCAcq). There was also a statistically significant interaction effect between willingness to communicate with friends and willingness to communicate with strangers (WTCStr). In addition to that, there was a statistically significant interaction effect between willingness to communicate with acquaintances and willingness to communicate with strangers. In the next section, the findings of research question 04 (RQ4) are reported.

#### **5.6 Willingness to communicate and conversational contexts**

This section of chapter 04 presents the results for RQ4, which was about informants' (male and female) level of willingness to communicate within three different kinds of conversation contexts such a one-to-one situation, a small-group meeting and large meeting of people. ANOVA was used to see the individual and joint effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable, which is willingness to communicate (WTC). The first

independent variable, willingness to communicate in a one-to-one situation, was composed of three levels: informants who felt a low level of willingness to communicate in a one-to-one situation, informants who felt neither a low nor high level of communication in a one-to-one situation and informants who felt a high level of communication in a one-to-one situation. The second independent variable, willingness to communicate in a small meeting, was also composed of three levels: informants who felt a low level of communication in willingness to communicate in a small meeting, informants who felt neither a low nor high level of communication in a small meeting and informants who felt a high level of communication in a small meeting. The third independent variable, willingness to communicate in a large meeting, was composed of three levels too: informants who felt a low level of communication in willingness to communicate in a large meeting, informants who felt neither a low nor high level of communication in a large meeting and informants who felt a high level of communication in large meeting. The fourth and last independent variable, gender, was composed of two levels: male and female.

### **5.6.1 Willingness to communicate in a one-to-one situation and gender**

A two-way ANOVA was conducted to investigate any differences in the informants' level of willingness to communicate with strangers and gender. The first independent variable, willingness to communicate in a one-to-one situation, was composed of three levels: informants who felt a lower level of willingness to communicate in a one-to-one situation, informants who felt neither a lower nor higher level of willingness to communicate in a one-to-one situation and informants who felt a higher level of willingness at times of communicating in a one-to-one situation. The second independent variable, gender, was

composed of two levels: male and female. The dependent variable for RQ4 was informants' responses on their willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language.

In table 5.18, preliminary findings indicated that Levene's test of homogeneity of variance was greater than 0.05, and consequently the assumption of the homogeneity test was not violated. The means and standard deviations for willingness to communicate in a one-to-one situation and gender were tabulated below.

Table 5.18 Mean and standard deviations for informants' level of willingness to communicate in a one-to-one situation and gender

Dependent Variable: WTC

Gender	Wtc in a one-to-one situation	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Male	low level of willingness	3.8393	.41512	20
	neither high nor low level of willingness	3.7019	.56284	75

	high level of willingness	3.7038	.54563	170
	Total	3.7135	.54137	265
Female	low level of willingness	3.8571	.84314	7
	neither high nor low level of willingness	3.8452	.52563	12
	high level of willingness	3.5693	.60219	66
	Total	3.6319	.61756	85
Total	low level of willingness	3.8439	.53856	27
	neither high nor low level of willingness	3.7217	.55713	87
	high level of willingness	3.6662	.56397	236
	Total	3.6937	.56100	350

A two-way ANOVA between the groups was conducted to investigate any difference between willingness to communicate in a one-to-one to situation and gender in the informants' level of willingness to communicate in English. In table 5.19 below, the interaction effect between informants' level of willingness to communicate in a one-to-one situation and gender did not reach statistical significance  $F(2, 344) = 1.12, p = .32$ ; partial eta square = .007 suggesting small effect size suggesting very small effect size.

Table 5.19 Interaction effect between informants' level of willingness to communicate in a one-to-one situation and gender

Source	Type III Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared

WtcOtOs*gender	.706	2	.533	1.12	.32	.007
Error	107.90	344	.314			

*Note: wtcOtOs= Willingness to communicate in a one-to-one situation*

### 5.6.2 Willingness to communicate in a small meeting and gender

A two-way ANOVA was conducted to investigate any differences in the informants' level of willingness to communicate in a small meeting and gender. The first independent variable, willingness to communicate in a small meeting, was composed of three levels: informants who felt a lower level of willingness to communicate in a small meeting, informants who felt neither a lower nor higher level of willingness to communicate in a small meeting and informants who felt a higher level of willingness at times of communicating in a small meeting. The second independent variable, gender, was composed of two levels: male and female. The dependent variable for RQ4 was informants' responses on their willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language.

In table 5.20, preliminary findings indicated that Levene's test of homogeneity of variance was greater than 0.05, and consequently the assumption of the homogeneity test was not violated. The means and standard deviations for willingness to communicate in a large meeting and gender were tabulated below.

Table 5.20 Mean and standard deviations for informants' level willingness to communicate in a small meeting and gender

Dependent Variable: WTC

Gender	wtscm	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Male	low level of willingness	3.7418	.57881	39
	neither high nor low level of willingness	3.7280	.56440	94
	high level of willingness	3.6948	.51629	132
	Total	3.7135	.54137	265
Female	low level of willingness	3.5065	.58506	11
	neither high nor low level of willingness	3.5952	.65510	36
	high level of willingness	3.7030	.59681	38
	Total	3.6319	.61756	85
Total	low level of willingness	3.6900	.58255	50
	neither high nor low level of willingness	3.6912	.59131	130
	high level of willingness	3.6966	.53349	170
	Total	3.6937	.56100	350

A two-way ANOVA was conducted between the groups to investigate any difference between willingness to communicate in a small meeting and gender in the informants' level of willingness to communicate in English. In table 5.21 below, the interaction effect between informants' level of willingness to communicate in a small meeting and gender did not reach

statistical significance  $F(2, 344) = .803, p = .45$ ; partial eta squared = .005 suggesting small effect size suggesting very small effect size.

Table 5.21 Interaction effect between informants' level of willingness to communicate in a small meeting and gender

Source	Type III Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Partial Eta Squared
wtcs <sub>m</sub> *gender	.509	2	.254	.803	.45	.005
Error	108.89	344	.317			

Note: wtcs<sub>m</sub>= Willingness to communicate in a small meeting

### 5.6.3 Willingness to communicate in a large meeting and gender

A two-way ANOVA was conducted to investigate any differences in the informants' level of willingness to communicate in a large meeting and gender. The first independent variable, willingness to communicate in a large meeting, was composed of three levels: informants who felt a lower level of willingness to communicate in a large meeting, informants who felt neither a lower nor higher level of willingness to communicate in a large meeting and informants who felt a higher level of willingness at times of communicating in a large meeting. The second independent variable, gender, was composed of two levels: male and female. The dependent variable for RQ4 was informants' responses on their willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language.

Preliminary findings revealed that Levene’s test of homogeneity of variance did not exceed 0.05; thus, the assumption of the homogeneity test was violated suggesting that variance of our dependent variable was not equal across groups. In such a case, we set a more stringent significance level (i.e. 0.01) as suggested by Pallant (2013:279). The means and standard deviations for willingness to communicate in a large meeting and gender were tabulated below in table 5.22.

Table 5.22 Mean and standard deviations for informants’ level willingness to communicate in a large meeting and gender

Dependent Variable: WTC

Gender	wtc1m	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
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Male	low level of willingness	3.7451	.45273	109
	neither high nor low level of willingness	3.6802	.58798	107
	high level of willingness	3.7157	.61850	49
	Total	3.7135	.54137	265
Female	low level of willingness	3.6037	.63324	42
	neither high nor low level of willingness	3.6538	.59511	26
	high level of willingness	3.6681	.64580	17
	Total	3.6319	.61756	85
Total	low level of willingness	3.7058	.51110	151
	neither high nor low level of willingness	3.6751	.58721	133
	high level of willingness	3.7035	.62096	66
	Total	3.6937	.56100	350

A two-way ANOVA was conducted between the groups to investigate any difference between willingness to communicate in a large meeting and gender in the informants' level of willingness to communicate in English. In table 5.23 below, the interaction effect between informants' level of willingness to communicate in a large meeting and gender did not reach statistical significance  $F(2, 344) = .293, p = .74$ ; partial eta square = .002 suggesting small effect size suggesting very small effect size.

Table 5.23 Interaction effect between informants' level of willingness to communicate in a large meeting and gender

Source	Type III Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Partial Eta Squared
wtclm*gender	.186	2	.093	.293	.74	.002
Error	109.11	344	.313			

*Note: wtclm= Willingness to communicate in a large meeting*

## 5.7: Summary

In this chapter, results from obtained data were reported and analysed separately for the all four research questions of the study. At the beginning of the chapter, an introduction to the all the variables, both dependent and independent, was given including the research techniques used in the current study. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22 was used to run both descriptive and inferential research techniques for analysing and reporting on collected data. The demographic information on all the informants was provided at length so that readers could properly understand the background of all who voluntarily consented to participate in this research. Results of the collected demonstrated that informants of the current study were willing to communicate in English in most of the cases. Interestingly, results further revealed that there were statistically no significant differences in male and female informants' willingness to communicate with friends, acquaintances and strangers. Initially, it was assumed that since female informants belonged to an economically marginalised class, they may not be willing to communicate in English, but the findings of

the current study revealed that there was not much difference between male and female in terms of willingness to communicate.

The demographic information revealed that there was statistically no significant difference between urban and rural informants of the study. However, statistical significance was reported between informants who studied in private-sector educational institutes and informants who studied in public-sector educational institutes. Those informants who reported having a high level of self-perceived knowledge of English were more willing to communicate than those who reported having a low level of self-perceived knowledge of English. Besides, there was statistically no difference between informants who reported having been abroad and those who had never been abroad. Informants of the current study were reported to be more willing to communicate with friends and in one-to-one situations. A large meeting as a conversational context and strangers as interlocutors were not favourable in terms of willingness to communicate in English. In chapter 05, detailed analysis of the collected data was provided with preliminary discussion. In the next chapter, qualitative analysis will be presented with in-depth discussion from data collected through semi-structured interviews.

## Chapter 06

### Qualitative Findings and Discussion on the Dynamics of WTC

#### Overview

This chapter reports and presents the results of the qualitative findings, coupled with a thorough discussion of the data collected through semi-structured interviews. The qualitative data were collected from 15 students of the Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, Pakistan. The qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis technique. Boyatzis (1998:01) defines thematic analysis as such: “*thematic analysis is a way of seeing... often... does not appear to others, even if they are observing the same information, events or situations*”. In other words, it is way of seeing something that may not be evident to others (*ibid*). The aim of the current research, as mentioned in the previous chapters, was to investigate the willingness of Pakistani university students who use English to communicate in English as a foreign language within the various conversational contexts and with types of interlocutors.

This chapter further aimed to investigate to what extent attractiveness of the topic, task type, familiarity with audiences (friends, acquaintances and strangers), role of teacher, background education, positive environment, desire to get good grades, conversational contexts (one to one, small group, large group and large meeting), role of gender and lack of confidence affect participants’ willingness to communicate. It is felt that the findings of the obtained data contribute towards exploring the dynamics of the WTC in EFL setting and its interrelationship with different strands of factors affecting WTC of the users of English in EFL settings in Pakistan.

Based on the technique of thematic analysis, the findings of the study identify the factors which either facilitate or inhibit the users' willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language. Factors which were reported to be affecting or facilitating users' willingness to communicate in English were classified into major themes. Boyatzis (1998:04) defines theme as a pattern found in the information which demonstrates possible observation and interpretation of different aspects of phenomena either manifested or underlying.

These major themes were firstly generated after a rigorous process of transcribing the data sets of each of the participants of the study and then thoroughly reading the data several times in order to develop sound familiarity with the data sets. By reading and re-reading the transcripts several times, it was fully ensured that there was a great deal of familiarity and understanding of the richness of the obtained qualitative data. Following upon the rigorous reading of the transcripts of each of the data sets, NVivo 10 was used in the process of generating themes and sub-themes with the intent of being more unbiased. NVivo is software designed to manage the complexity, diversity and richness of qualitative data. The developers of this software believed that this software primarily facilitates the researcher to manage the complex, diverse and rich sphere of qualitative data, and then to promote the rigour of qualitative investigation (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013:06).

Boyatzis (1998:31) argued that developing the coding patterns in the data involves a rigorous process because a good code not only determines the richness of the phenomenon but also enables the researcher to interpret and define the research. In this regard, coding was done to reduce the data for clear, concise and meaningful identification of the segments in the data in order to maintain the essence of the themes. In other words, an attempt was made to locate meaning in the data, believed (Guest et al, 2013:49). Following that, codes were developed and assigned in order to locate a set of patterns between them in the data because

the process of coding enabled the identification of *'anything'* and *'everything'* of interest and relevance to the researcher in his study (Virginia & Victoria, 2013:206). They further argued (p.205) that after coding the data, the researcher could develop the ability to mirror informants' language and concepts. After coding and identifying patterns in the data, an attempt was made to develop them into larger themes. The generated or emerging themes discussed here were related to inhibiting or facilitating user's willingness to communicate in English within EFL settings in Pakistan. Since this study is quantitatively driven mixed method, most of the themes were developed inductively by meticulously gaining familiarity with the data and constantly making comparisons. In contrast, some others were developed deductively by following the concepts from literature reviewed. As illustrated and conformed by Boyatzis (1998:29), the qualitative researcher could use both inductive and deductive approaches throughout in his analysis.

Factors encapsulated within those themes would be discussed here with the certain aim of investigating those factors that either facilitate or inhibit users' willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language. While reporting the qualitative data under the thematic analysis technique, each of the factors are also analysed and discussed in the subsequent sections of this chapter. All factors are discussed in detail in relation to other empirical studies conducted both in Western and Asian contexts (see sections 3.3 and 3.4) in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

## **6.1 Factors facilitating or inhibiting users' WTC in an EFL setting:**

This section of chapter 06 separately provides the qualitative findings and detailed discussion of each of the research questions in relation to other research studies conducted on WTC in Western and Eastern contexts (see sections 3.3 and 4.4). The working definition of

willingness to communicate (WTC) was developed after critically reporting the literature review. The definition which is used here has been proposed by Kang (2005:291). While conducting her empirical study across Koran context, she proposed a multi-layered definition of WTC and suggested that there was a joint interacting effect of the situational variables affecting users of English willingness to communicate.

Kang (2005:291) defined WTC thus: “*Willingness to communicate (WTC) is an individual’s volitional inclination towards actively engaging in the act of communication in a specific situation, which can vary according to interlocutor(s), topic, and conversational context, among other potential situational variables.*” This working definition for the current study appears to be potentially relevant when considering the fact that participants of this study did not consider willingness to communicate in English different from communication. For the participants in the study, willingness to communicate in English was largely affected by a host of factors as suggested by Kang (2005) in her study. Interestingly the participants in the interviews also frequently listed such variables as a stumbling block in their willingness to communicate. MacIntyre and Doucette (2010:01) believed that being willing to communicate is considered to be part of and the ultimate goal of users of a second language (SL). Similarly, the participants in the current study appeared to believe that WTC in English could be one of the factors leading to communication. The inductive nature of the qualitative part of the study and the openness of the responses given by the participants in the interview, it is argued that participants revealed both transient and permanent influences affecting their willingness and considering WTC entirely situation dependent. Thus, WTC has been conceived as a one of the potentially being independent individual differences variables and could be applied to all situations where participants believed it affected them in their

communication in English. Therefore, Kang's (2005) working definition seems potentially relevant.

The major generated themes are mentioned below for further clarity and as a reminder for the reader.

- i. Attractiveness/interestingness of topic
- ii. Task type
- iii. Familiarity with audiences (friends, acquaintances and strangers)
- iv. Conversational contexts (one-to-one situation, small meeting, large meeting and group of people)
- v. Role of teacher
- vi. Background education
- vii. Positive environment
- viii. Desire to get good grades
- ix. Conversational context (group size)
- x. Role of gender
- xi. Lack of confidence

Before discussing in detail, the qualitative results of those emerged themes, I will first present the extent to which participants in the current study were willing to communicate in English. By using the random sampling technique, fifteen (15) participants were chosen and interviewed. Interviews were conducted after getting voluntary consent from the participants. Each of the interviewed participants revealed the extent to which he/she was willing to communicate in English since all of them were different individuals with their unique way of conceiving of or interpreting willingness to communicate in English. Besides, every single participant of the study, while elaborating on his/her willingness, discussed the joint effect of

inhibiting and facilitating factors of willingness to communicate. Thus, it was extremely important to ask participants about their level of willingness and what affected their willingness to communicate. The details of the participants in the current study are given below in table 6.1

Table 6.1 Participant information

Name	Gender	L1	L2	Time studying English
Ajab	Male	Sindhi	English	5-6yrs
Asghar	Male	Sindhi	English	3-5yrs
Kadir	Male	Sindhi	English	6-8yrs
Hira	Female	Urdu	English	4-5yrs
Junaid	Male	Sindhi	English	4-5yrs
Kamran	Male	Sindhi	English	5-7yrs
Kashif	Male	Urdu	English	8-10yrs
Manhoor	Male	Sindhi	English	4-6yrs
Mukhtiar	Male	Sindhi	English	3-4yrs
Murtaza	Male	Sindhi	English	5-7yrs
Najeebullah	Male	Sindhi	English	5-7yrs
Paras	Female	Sindhi	English	4-5yrs
Rozina	Female	Sindhi	English	4-5yrs
Saima	Female	Sindhu	English	3-5yrs
Shazia	Female	Sindhi	English	4-6yrs

### 6.1.1 Level of Willingness to Communicate (WTC) for Ajab

At the beginning of the interview, Ajab appeared to be very confident and eager to communicate. He appeared to be ready for the interview. He was asked about the extent to which he was willing to communicate or whether he was always ready or willing to communicate in English and when he intended to initiate a communication. He revealed that he often considered the situation as an important factor in initiating a communication, and when the situation was healthy and positive, he gave little consideration as to whether to communicate or not. Kang (2005) suggested that that willingness to communicate is not static/fixed and could change from moment to moment. In regard to safe learning environment, Eddy-U (2015:51) claimed that learners seemed to be more willing to use L2. She further argued that a bad or negative atmosphere can hinder users' willingness to use L2.

*"It depends on situations; sometimes we want and sometimes we don't."*

*"For example, when we feel healthy environment like in class with friends or at home and teachers."* (Ajab commented)

For Ajab, communicating with friends, and at home, was the easiest way to improve and practise English language in a better form. Thus, we could draw from his interview that a friendly audience could trigger his willingness more and enable him to communicate in a better way, though not making his language error free, and he dropped the idea of communication due to some social issues. MacIntyre (2007:564) argued that some learners, despite some extensive study, could not become successful L2 learners due to the way they are evaluated in various social contexts.

*"...but when we are with strangers then we avoid due to some social issues."* (Ajab commented)

Ajab clearly demonstrated that he was not willing to communicate with someone outside of his familiarity zone, which suggested further that he was very specific about the kinds of persons he wanted to communicate with. He (Ajab) quite clearly asserted that interaction is important in communicating in English but he restricted this willingness to very specific types of audiences. Kang (2004:278) assumed that more interaction could lead to more language development, and his findings further suggested that Korean students were more willing to communicate in the presence of Korean participants and were found to be less secure while communicating with non-Korean students. It could further be argued that Ajab possessed a high level of WTC and was eager to communicate, as he felt, but was limited in the choice of people he wanted to interact with (friends, parents, siblings and familiar audience). He perceived WTC as situation dependent and was unwilling to communicate when approached outside of his given situations.

### **6.1.2 Level of Willingness to Communicate (WTC) for Asghar**

Asghar, like Ajab, was equally found to be vocal and communicative at the beginning to study and expressed his utmost willingness to communicate in English. He seemed aware about the importance of English and of making an effort to communicate in English. He felt that communicating in English was not difficult, and he continued to motivate himself to communicate in English in class and with friends. Considering the growing importance of English, Asghar believed that education demanded that we speak in English. Perhaps his comments on WTC were related to his learning of English. He outlined that English was relevant in today's world and could help him in his studies to get going in the right direction.

*“Of course, I feel very easier to communicate in my class and this is my very effort and I always try to motivate myself and my friends to communicate in English. Because we have to*

*justify the discipline we are studying because it demands us to speak in English.” (Asghar commented)*

He considered and conceptualised WTC as a direct result of his education, which he was receiving in the university. Similarly, Mystkows and Pawlkami (2014:245) demonstrated that the ability to communicate could likely stem from a combination of linguistic and educational dimensions of language including many others. They further advocated that the ability to communicate is both the means and the ends of language education, which Asghar also pointed out while emphasising the increasing demand for English.

*Actually, most of times, I try to speak with persons who are fluent in English and I am supposed to speak in English, but if other person does not speak in English then I remain silent. So basically, I like person who encourages me to speak.*

Asghar further believed that he often tried to communicate in English with people who were fluent and encouraging. Mystkows and Pawlkami (2014:245) also demonstrated that the ability to communicate in the target language was likely to be achieved and was indicated by the diligence and dedication applied by users of it. In the case of Asghar, willingness, dedication and efforts seemed to be channelled in the right direction as he was eager to communicate in English and considered it both the means and the ends of his education. Asghar possessed WTC but his willingness was only triggered when he found the right opportunity and was encouraged to initiate or engage in communication which somewhat in his case seemed to be less frequent.

### **6.1.3 Level of Willingness to Communicate for G. Kadir**

G. Kadir, like Ajab and Asghar, had a strong interest in communicating in English whenever someone encouraged him to speak. In his case, communication seemed to have been hampered by the lack of opportunities because he was always willing to communicate in the

class, outside the class or even in the crowd provided that he had a good vocabulary and proper knowledge of the topic. However, he did not deny that hesitation sometimes played its role and restricted him in communicating in English. Regarding familiarity with the topic, many researchers have demonstrated that the topic under discussion could greatly influence users' willingness to communicate in L2 (MacIntyre et al, 1998; Kang, 2005; Cao & Philip, 2006; MacIntyre et al, 2011).

*I am always willing to communicate in English, and when I get the chance of talking in English anywhere just like in crowd ,or in class if anyone asks me to come and talk something and if I have vocabulary and knowledge about the topic, then I certainly talk in English fluently. But sometimes I feel hesitant, when I don't have the knowledge about the topic; on that time I feel very hesitant. (Kadir commented)*

MacIntyre et al (1998:554) believed that familiarity with the topic under discussion could vastly influence the willingness to use L2. Besides the topic of discussion, hesitation or lack of confidence has also been one of the common problems among the users of English. The overall picture that emerged from interviews so far strongly suggested that participants had a considerably strong desire to communicate in English. However, this desire to communicate was hampered vastly due to a number of factors like lack of chances, hesitation, vocabulary and absence of English communication from everyday life. Wen and Clément (2003) differentiated between desire to communicate in English and willingness to communicate in English. They referred to desire as “preference or choice and willingness to communicate as readiness to act”. In case of all three above participants, they appeared to have enough desire to communicate but readiness to act or communicate was somewhat absent due to a number of factors as mentioned above, and this will be further elaborated on too when analysing the rest of interviews.

#### **6.1.4 The level of willingness to communicate for Hira and Junaid**

In comparison to Ajab, Asghar and G. Kadir, Hira and Junaid were no different when asked about their level of willingness to communicate in English. Hira seemed to be very clear and precise by saying that she could be ready to communicate if there was a positive and encouraging environment. She further said that she preferred to avoid communication quite frequently due to lack of a proper and conducive environment, which seemed to be one of the major and potential problems in a Pakistani context.

*I always try to communicate in English, but environment does not support me, so I sometimes avoid communication too. (Hira commented)*

One of the apparent reasons for lack of positive environment could be a rule-ridden approach which was frequently adopted by Pakistani users of English. Drawing upon that, Ali (2010:10) conducted a study in a Pakistani context in which it was found that many Pakistani users of English are often pre-occupied with the assumption of having to learn grammatical rules and remember idiomatic expressions by heart. Wen and Clément (2003:18) also demonstrated that focusing on grammar-based written examinations restricted the chances of users of English to communicate in English, and thus made them poor speakers of English. Seemingly, the established trend of gaining proficiency through mastering a grammatical structure largely impeded users' speaking ability, which, though covertly, played a negative role in promoting willingness to communicate. Thus, it resulted possibly in a lack of a proper and positive learning environment among many other factors, which will be discussed further in later sections of this thesis.

Junaid, like his peers, faced similar problems of not having an easy access to communicating in English. He noted that Pakistan is not an English-speaking society so the chances to use English would not ideally be great. But his desire to communicate in English was not prevented by such an unavoidable problem of a non-English speaking society. Like

all his other peers, he also indicated that absence of communicating environment, lack of vocabulary and grammatical problems considerably impeded his frequency of communicating in English.

*I am always willing to communicate in English, but there are some problems we are facing because we are not living in a society where we can only communicate in English. There are some vocabulary and grammar problems but here we don't have maximum chance to speak in English; otherwise I am willing. (Junaid)*

Junaid also revealed that willingness to communicate was vastly situation dependent and he only chose to speak when required by his listeners.

*it depends upon the situation where I feel that I should speak and there is need to speak; otherwise I stay silent. When I feel that I should speak here and my words will not be given importance, there I remain silent. Language of communication matters here, but if I am not valued, then I don't speak there. (Junaid)*

We could argue that his willingness, besides other potential problems he indicated, was a direct result of his desire to be a valued speaker and was also influenced by the willingness of others to listen to him as a valued speaker. In regard to being a valued speaker, we could claim here that if a user of English is valued as speaker regardless of errors he/she makes, it is more likely to have a pull-and-push effect (Eddy-U 2015:51) on the willingness of the users. It could not only pull users of the L2 to communicate by increasing the willingness to use L2 frequently but also push them to speak naturally, which may only be possible in the safe learning atmosphere.

### **6.1.5 The level of willingness to communicate for Kamran**

In contrast to the previous respondents, Kamran though showed his intent to communicate in English; however, his intent appeared to have been hampered somewhat by the presence of

the first language (L1). He wanted to communicate and used second language (L2) but he was sometimes, as he felt, unable to explain everything in English, which eventually led him to use his L1.

*I always try to communicate with my fellow students in English, but there are some certain situations in which I can't explain things, and I feel that I should speak in mother tongue rather than speaking in English so as to communicate well with them. Sometimes I do not think I can convey my message in a foreign language to them or the listener I don't feel catch my point of view. (Kamran)*

Though Kamran had a desire, as Wen and Clément described when differentiating desire to communicate (DC) from willingness to communicate (WTC), his readiness to act or communicate was hampered due to some potential factors such as positive learning environment, encouraging audiences and lack of vocabulary, including many other issues which made him unable to express everything in English. His reliance on L1 could be related to comprehension difficulties in resolving any relevant issue or his inability to say everything in the targeted language. Freiermuth and Jarrel (2006:201-202) found that reliance on L1 could be used to compensate for the weakness in L2, and it may be the likeliest preference for the users of L2 to remain silent in any uncomfortable or stress free situation or revert to L1.

*To me, I think environment plays an important role; if you are in environment where English-language speaking is really interesting and encouraging, I really love to speak, such as in class and as I am speaking to you because it is really helpful to me, and when you know environment in university overall is not so encouraging as regard to speaking English, therefore I resist myself from speaking English outside the class because audience discourages me. (Kamran)*

Like the other participants, the concept of WTC appeared to have been situation dependent to him as well. To him, like all other previous respondents, a safe atmosphere was a vastly important factor in encouraging him to be more willing to use the targeted language. A stress-free, safe and positive learning atmosphere was found to be the major factor for successful

language learning (Krashen, 1982). Until recently, researchers seem to have focused upon a safe learning environment and asserted that a safe, positive or conducive learning atmosphere could promote users' willingness in the targeted language (Eddy-U:2015:51).

### **6.1.6 The level of willingness to communicate for Kashif**

Unsurprisingly, Kashif's willingness to communicate was also situation dependent, and he preferred to initiate communication when required to do so. Although there is still heated debate in academia as to whether WTC is a static trait or dynamic state, a great deal of empirical research has been contributed to investigating both the static and dynamic nature of WTC. The mixed method seems to have been a very useful method of analysing WTC, leading the thorough investigation of the moment-to-moment or situation-dependent WTC (Cao, 2011; Cao & Philip, 2006; MacIntyre, Burns, & Jessome, 2011; MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011). There seems to be enough evidence presented to support both facets of WTC (see literature review section). In the case of the present study, respondents have so far indicated that WTC is of a dynamic nature and situation dependent. Kashif is no exception in this regard; he very clearly pointed out that his WTC was situation dependent and he didn't attempt to communicate in targeted L2 all the time if audiences were disinterested.

*Not always but situation to situation, I always try to speak in English. Because sometimes I do not think so that the audience before me is interested to speak English with me.*

As shown in a number of previous studies, audiences seemed to have major effect on the willingness of the users of English WTC (Cao, 2011; Cao & Philip, 2006; Kang, 2005; Peng, 2008). When Kashif was asked the extent to which he was willing to communicate, the

immediate response he gave was about if the situation allowed him to initiate communication, followed by the reactions of the audiences he encountered. Furthermore, he said:

*It completely depends on situation. Whenever I feel that I should speak in this environment or not. The person I am communicating whether he will be able to understand me in English or he thinks that I am going to influence him by speaking in English, and then I decide what language I should use. The positive and negative evaluation of my language ability often influences my decision of speaking in English. (Kashif)*

Like other participants of the study, he revealed that a conducive atmosphere was the first and foremost condition of using target language, followed by the language proficiency of audiences he interacted with. Before engaging in communication in L2, Kashif was mindful of the evaluation of his actual language ability and considered it extremely important to initiate any sort of interaction in L2. To him, negative evaluation of his language ability was an extremely negative factor in increasing any sort of willingness to communicate in English. Peng (2007b) reported that losing face is one of the negative factors which substantively affected one's willingness to communicate. Cohen and Norst (1989) also identified that the nature and immediateness of communication often posed some potential threat to one's face value. While developing an Asian construct for WTC, Wen and Clément (2003:23) argued that MacIntyre's model of WTC is a far more complex notion in the Chinese context in which English can be seen the language of an out-group, often perceived as something different, which students approach at the risk of losing face if they are unable to speak it properly (p:24). Similarly, Kashif appeared to react negatively when he encountered the kind of audiences who could evaluate his language ability and tacitly put him in any sort of uncomfortable position. Besides all these potential problems, Kashif still appeared to show his intent to be willing to communicate in L2, which could be seen as an encouraging approach towards WTC.

### **6.1.7 The level of willingness to communicate for Manhoor**

In contrast to other participants, Manhoor was seemingly different but very positive towards increasing his willingness to communicate in English. He appeared to be more confident, talkative and fluent when compared to other participants. To him, factors such as audiences, vocabulary, negative face evaluation, and positive or negative atmosphere had no meaning at all. It was probably the reason when (MacIntyre et al, 1998:545; Huseyin oz et al, 2015; Eddy-U, 2015) demonstrated that the users of L2 under similar learning conditions with a high level of linguistic competence find themselves unwilling to communicate in L2, while others with limited level of linguistic competence communicate incessantly. Surprisingly, Manhoor seems to have fall into that category in which he is wary of all those factors which actually influence most of the other users of willingness in L2.

*I am very positive and optimistic, and I believe that making mistakes means you are learning faster, and second thing is that practice makes men perfect, and the third thing is that the more you speak, the more you make mistakes and the more you correct them; and the more you correct them, the more your English will improve. I am student and at the same time I am teacher as will sir and in university whoever comes to teach I am just curious to ask any sort of questions, and I just love this thing, and in school when I teach my students I do same things. (Manhoor)*

Manhoor's high level of willingness to communicate could be triggered by the practical consideration of improving his language proficiency regardless of mistakes he makes while speaking it. He believed that the more you tried, the more you could learn and improve. This practical approach made him extremely positive and increased his willingness to communicate in English.

When he specifically mentioned how he intended to remain quiet and initiate communication, his responses were really becoming interesting when he said that he first evaluated his mood if it was positive then he began his communication.

*Mood is very important, and when I am in class, I have to make up mind and say myself.*  
(Manhoor)

He was the very first participant of the study who gave some weight to his mood and made WTC linked to affective bearing/variable. MacIntyre et al (1999:216) claimed that a person with emotional stability tended to be calm and self-assured, which could somehow contribute to one's willingness to communicate. Besides that, research suggested that academic emotions, apart from negative emotions such as anxiety, and positive emotions such as enjoyment and satisfaction, could be potential factors contributing to users' willingness (Goetz et al, 2008). However, Manhoor was little unclear in his comments about the definition of mood as to what kind of emotion he felt while engaging into communication. But we could draw some possibilities on his strong and positive intent of willingness to communicate that his reference to mood could be the sense of the satisfaction and feeling of ease.

### **6.1.8 The level of willingness to communicate for Mukhtiar**

Mukhtiar like his other peers was no exception when asked about his intent regarding willingness to communicate. He was, like many others, pretty much sure and believed that willingness was the very first step to learning L2. The ability to use or learn L2 is a goal for many users of English (Kawai, 2008) with a strong intent of developing proficiency in speaking (Richards and Renandya, 2002). Similarly, Mukhtiar seemed to be strongly positive about increasing his willingness when it came to speaking in English. Like his all peers, he

experienced the same problems of not having easy access or exposure to an English-speaking atmosphere:

*I always think to communicate in English in class because there is lack of such environment outside the class in which we make continue our communication with friends. There is lack of confidence when we come in front of teachers and other students; we think we have hesitation, and in this way, we cannot communicate, but I always think to communicate in English. (Mukhtiar)*

Mukhtiar strongly felt that he could not have an ideal atmosphere to communicate in English. Lack of confidence, anxiety and fear of losing face have been strong negative factors affecting users' willingness (Baker, MacIntyre 2000, 2003). In the language class, Peng (2007b) found that anxiety and fear of losing face were two of the negative factors affecting users' willingness. Situation in Pakistani university students was not different as Mukhtiar like all his previous peers identified these factors as extremely negative in affecting their willingness to communicate in English.

He further commented,

*practice is must even a man who is operating a computer if one day he operating and next day he is not operating and third he will forget all things means practice is must everywhere either in education either in other fields*

He strongly believed that regardless of the lack of an ideal atmosphere and other potential negative factors, one should not stop practising and using English. His example of computer operator might not be relevant to many, but he tacitly made a very strong connection of practice with learning L2. MacIntyre et al (2010:161) argued that students often thought in a way that aids them in their learning; for example, engineers learn how to design buildings, surgeons are taught how to operate and chefs are taught how to prepare a meal. In addition, it was further claimed that for many students, authentic communication is the ultimate goal of

education (Alalou, 200:461; Ushioda, 2001). In the case of Mukhtiar, learning English through practice seemed to be one of the ways of improving his willingness to act in any sort of conversation in an EFL setting.

### **6.1.9 The level of willingness to communicate for Murtaza**

While reporting his intent to be willing to communicate, Murtaza appeared to be very confident and fluent in articulating his interest in speaking English. At the very beginning, he commented that he would always be willing to speak with his friends, teachers and his roommates in his hostel.

*Of course I want to speak English with my fellows, with my teachers, my friends and roommates in my hostel too. (Murtaza)*

So, he seemed to be communicating frequently in L2 in his everyday life with regard to improving his ability to speak as much as he could. Familiarity with interlocutor(s) has been considered one of the major contributing factors in users' willingness to communicate in English. Cao and Philp (2006:487-88) found that users preferred to have conversation in an L2 with interlocutors who were friends to them and were found to be reluctant to communicate with those who were strangers and acquaintances. In addition, they suggested that users of L2 were unwilling to communicate with unfamiliar classmates, which is clearly in consistent with our findings in this study too. Murtaza was only confident when he interacted with interlocutors who he was familiar with, be they friends or even a teacher.

Murtaza further commented,

*In this matter knowledge matters; if I have knowledge, I will speak, but if I don't have knowledge, how can it be possible for me to speak?*

Murtaza also asserted that his willingness to communicate was vastly determined or controlled by the level of knowledge he had about the topics. He believed that if he had ample enough knowledge of the topic, he would certainly speak; otherwise he preferred to avoid communication. Knowledge of the topic could be both a contributing and reducing factor for users' willingness to communicate. MacIntyre et al (1998) claimed that knowledge of the topic determined the level of users' willingness to communicate in an L2. Similarly, Murtaza's willingness was also determined by the knowledge of the topic and was consistent with the findings of MacIntyre et al (1998).

#### **6.1.10 The level of willingness to communicate for Najeebullah**

Unlike all other participants of the study, Najeebullah appeared to be a little nervous and hesitant while reporting his intent to be willing to communicate in English. Gaining the ability to speak in a second language is generally deemed to be a daunting task for users of English (Gan, 2013:231) because speaking, besides other learning skills, requires command of speech and production of sub-skills such as vocabulary retrieval and choice of grammatical patterns (Celce-Murica & Olshtain, 2000). When asked about his willingness, Najeebullah commented,

*This question is very interesting; every time I am willing to speak in the class in English, sometimes, my class fellows hesitate me to speak, and I don't have a suitable environment to speak in English. (Najeebullah)*

He was even unable to speak in the class before his classmates due to hesitation. He further mentioned that he did not have an ideal atmosphere to learn or speak English, which had been a common problem for most of the participants in EFL settings in Pakistan. Besides that, most of the students in the Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, did not have easy access to communication in English largely due to the rural setting of the city. Absence of an ideal

atmosphere had been the restraining force in exerting negative effects on the WTC of the participants of this study. When Najeebullah was further asked the details of his being seemingly unwilling to communicate due to a number of factors, he replied:

*First of all, it is environment. We do not have suitable environment to speak English, because most of the students are unwilling to speak. Secondly, they do not have good educational background; that's they hesitate to speak and they feel shy in speaking English. We have adopted the sense of criticising students who speak, and it creates many problems in speaking English. (Najeebullah)*

He quite categorically pointed out the restraining forces which inhibited his willingness to communicate in English. Besides a positive environment for speaking, which had obviously been one of the commonly negative influences among participants, poor educational background, he indicated, was another factor that negatively influenced his willingness. He felt shy and hesitant while speaking in English and was scared of publicly losing face, increasingly due to the fear of making mistakes and being criticised by peers. Mohammadian (2013:2036), while investigating the effects of shyness on Iranian ELF learners, indicated that the constant performance evaluation by peers put users of English alarmingly in a frightening situation. He further suggested that students who reported to be shy were unlikely to initiate communication (p.2041). Likewise, Pathan (2012:190) found that students in Pakistan felt shyness or anxiety due to the constant performance evaluation of peers and users of English felt that their peers would laugh at them if they made any mistakes.

#### **6.1.11: The level of willingness to communicate for Paras**

Much of a great surprise, Paras was the very first participant in the study who emphatically made it clear that she was not always willing to communicate in English. She was different in a way in that she, at the first time of asking, showed her reluctance to be

willing and went on to explain those restraining forces that inhibited her ability to communicate. She commented:

*No, due to lack of class in me, because I feel lack of confidence, I am not confident even before coming for this interview. I was so nervous how to talk or how will I talk in English with you. So it is confidence problem here with me. I think it with all students who are studying in this university. (Paras)*

In the case of others, unlike Paras, they revealed their positive intent to be willing to communicate but narrated the restraining factors too which eventually came to hinder their success in being a fluent L2 speaker. Although the nature of the restraining factors that make participants unwilling to communicate seemed to be identical, unlike Paras they maintained and posited a very positive posture and seemingly showed the likelihood of them overcoming the negative factors. When enquired further as to why did she seem to be negative and unwilling to communicate, she commented,

*First of all, confidence level; second thing is speaking power, afraid of speaking English due to some grammatical problems. I just thought when I speak in English, I feel that I would make some grammatical mistakes. I decide ummmm I decide that actually when teachers force to talk, we ourselves won't talk in English just because of my personal point of view, lack of confidence. I have no such confidence to talk in English properly. (Paras)*

Lack of confidence, inability to speak and fear of communicating, including grammatical problems, collectively played a negative role in preventing her in being able to communicate in English. Lack of confidence, in spoken English, could result in avoiding communication (Liu and Littlewood, 1997, cited in Cao and Philp, 2006: 489). It further supported the findings when Cao and Philp (2006:488-89) suggested that lack of confidence comparatively resulted in the low level of participation among the users of English. MacIntyre et al (1994) argued that the notion of WTC entails, its essence, to initiate communicative behaviour which

could often be predictive of actual behaviour. Similarly, MacIntyre et al (1998) indicated that lack of perceived competence could result in lowering willingness to communicate. In the case of Paras, we could see that her intention to initiate communication appeared to be negative, which may be, in all likelihood, predictive of her actual behaviour. We could not deny that factors such as lack of confidence, use of correct grammar and low proficiency collectively are likely to have played some strong role in making Paras so unwilling to communicate even after being either forced or convinced to do so by teachers.

### **6.1.12: The level of willingness to communicate for Rozina**

When asked about her willingness to communicate in English as foreign language (EFL) setting, Rozina commented,

*Sometimes I do not, sometimes I feel difficulty aaaaa few words are... I don't think so sometimes I feel communicate in English fluently. I am not always happy to communicate in English. The main reason is that some words could not come in mind. Sometimes I use my own language to explain things. Vocabulary is especially the main the reason. (Rozina)*

Rozina did not appear to be happy while communicating in English largely due to lack of vocabulary. She was more likely to rely on the use of L1 whenever she felt some problem in explaining things in English. Her reliance on L1 could be related to comprehension difficulties in resolving any relevant issue or her inability to assert everything in the targeted language. Reliance on L1, sometimes, could be used to compensate for the weakness in L2, and it may be the likeliest preference for the users of L2 to remain silent in any uncomfortable or stress free situation or revert to L1, demonstrated Freiermuth and Jarrel (2006:201-202). When further enquired about her intent regarding willingness to communicate, she commented,

*It depends on my area of knowledge; if I have good expertise to speak on certain things, then I would definitely participate, and if I think that I don't have area knowledge and expertise to speak on certain topics, then I would definitely be silent. Sometimes I think that I will talk or speak in English, I might be not good enough; that's why I sometimes think I should be quite. If I cannot convey my message to people, then why should I speak? (Rozina)*

Like the other participants of the study, Rozina believed that knowledge of the topic was a very important factor when one showed intent to communicate in English. She believed that if she had ample enough knowledge of the topic, she would certainly speak; otherwise she preferred to avoid communication. Knowledge of the topic could be both a contributing and reducing factor for users' willingness to communicate. MacIntyre et al (1998:54) claimed that knowledge of the topic determined the level of users' willingness to communicate in an L2. They further maintained that familiarity with a topic significantly affected the ease of language, and Rozina's willingness seemed to be affected if the contents of the topic were unfamiliar to her.

### **6.1.13: The level of willingness to communicate for Saima**

Saima sounded extremely encouraged when she reported her willingness to communicate in English. She, with extreme ease, displayed her interest to be willing to communicate most of the time and would also be able to speak if her teacher asked her to do so. With such positive intent, she commented:

*I am willing to speak in English just because our teachers told us that you will improve your English, just because of speaking if you will do practise then you will improve your English and I am strongly willing to speak in English in the classroom. (Saima)*

Like Mukhtiar, she also believed that practice would improve her willingness to communicate in English. Likewise, MacIntyre et al (2010:161) argued that students often think and channel their efforts in a way that aids them in their learning. So Saima, on the instruction of her teacher, was trying to speak as many times as she could with the specific aim of improving her speaking ability. She further commented,

*ummm no, if someone is speaking in English, then I will start speaking with him or her. If I am in the class I know I have to speak and use English language. Sir I have learnt about code switching and have studied it, we have to change our code according to situation. That's what I was taught by my teacher. (Saima)*

Saima commented that she would feel encouraged to initiate communication when someone spoke with her. Cao (2006:487) suggested that users of English prefer to initiate communication with someone who could mutually reciprocate or respond to them affirmatively. Hence, it would be perceived to be a contributing factor to WTC (ibid). It was further indicated that the interlocutor's motivational disposition could have a pulling effect on the overall disposition of the interaction in doing a task or having a conversation. These findings can thus be seen as being in line with studies conducted by Cao (2006) & Kang (2005). Saima also hinted towards code switching and intended to use it where required depending on the situation. However, it was less likely to determine as to why she was doing it, but could be seen as another way of making her communication easier or reverting to L1 to compensate her L2 weakness. The former seemed to be more likely than the latter because she was never found to be nervous and unsure about her intent to be willing, instead

mentioning that code switching could be seen as a boosting factor in her knowledge of language.

#### **6.1.14: The level of willingness to communicate for Shazia**

Shazia, like all other participants, showed her intent to be willing to communicate but only when she is supported by the teacher in the class. She commented that she would prefer to communicate when she could understand what the teacher was teaching in the class. Zarrinabadi (2014:288) argued that teacher variables may be involved in promoting or debilitating learners' intentions to use an L2. In addition, previous research indicated that teachers' involvement and teaching style could exert a significant and determining influence on learners' engagement and WTC (MacIntyre et al, 2011; Cao, 2011). Thus, Shazia's example could be seen from that perspective when she was asked about her intent to communicate:

*Sometimes, but not always, whenever in the class if I understand the teacher who is teaching us, then I try to speak in English with him and participate in the class in English, not in my native language. (Shazia)*

She further commented,

*Whenever teachers give me an opportunity to speak, if anybody wants me to speak in the class, I always say that I can speak. I don't speak in English when I am upset and when I know that if I make mistakes students are laughing. (Shazia)*

She emphatically highlighted the role of the teacher and strongly believed in the support provided from the teacher. Kang (2005:283) claimed that social support from the teacher could influence the learners' WTC because speakers felt secure from the fear of being

unpleasant or bad when the teacher listened to them carefully. Shazia, like most of the participants of the study, reported that she could not initiate communication when she was insecure about being laughed at by peers. Most of the users of English like Shazia abandoned the idea of engaging in any sort of communication in an L2 when they feared losing face, and this was reported to have a negative influence on the WTC of the learners (Peng, 2007b).

In this section, a detailed analysis and discussion was conducted to find out the extent to which Pakistani university students were willing to communicate in English and what affected their willingness in an EFL setting. Participants of the study showed their interest and desire to be willing to communicate in English while highlighting some of the major problems they encountered, which will be discussed at length in the next section of this chapter. Having examined participants' intent or conceptualisation about their willingness to communicate in an L2, some of the major themes emerged and developed which will be discussed in the next section.

## **6.2: Qualitative major or common themes**

In this section of the chapter, I will discuss in detail the major themes that emerged from the responses of each participant's conceptualisation of WTC in an L2. Although each of the participants of the study had his/her perspective on the WTC and what affected those perspectives most, some of the ways overlapped and collectively affected English language users' willingness to communicate in an EFL setting. Each of the major themes will be discussed with a certain view to illustrate the way it (theme) shaped up users' willingness to communicate. The major themes that I will be discussing are: attractiveness of the topic, task type, familiarity with audiences (friends, acquaintances and strangers), role of the teacher, background education, positive environment, desire to get good grades, conversational

contexts (one to one, small group, large group and large meeting), role of gender and lack of confidence. These themes will be discussed in relation to previous empirical studies conducted in different contexts.

### **6.2.1 Attractiveness of the topic**

Participants in the current study frequently stated that their willingness to communicate was affected by the topic of discussion and was highlighted at every stage of the data collection. Most of the students reported that they tended to initiate communication when the topic was of interest to them. Dörnyei (2009) suggested that the attractiveness and easiness of the topics under discussion are extremely important in increasing users' involvement in communication. MacIntyre et al (1998:554), while developing the WTC construct into L2 by designing a pyramid heuristic model, posited that topic familiarity greatly affects the ease of language use. Content knowledge and topical expertise is more likely to boost up one's linguistic self-confidence, and lack of familiarity with the register may inhibit communication (ibid). Concerning background knowledge of a topic, empirical research across different contexts has consistently indicated that learners or users feel more secure and willing to speak if they have background knowledge both of topics in general and when related to any specific topic (e.g. Cao & Philp, 2006:489; Kang, 2005:283). It was further claimed that a lack of background knowledge of a topic ends in the form of halting conversation, a lack of ideas or the fear of comprehension problems (Kang, 2005:283). Lack of content knowledge or unfamiliarity with the topic seemed to be another debilitating factor, besides many other factors, in decreasing the willingness of the users who still could not master L2 speaking skills. In the current study, the majority of participants very specifically

mentioned that if they were unfamiliar with or unprepared for the topic, they were more likely to avoid communication. Three of the students (Ajab, Asghar and Mahnoor) of the university in Khairpur reported that,

*as far as topic is concerned, and when I am assigned the topic and I am prepared I will be more willing to communicate to speak, but if there is a new topic then I will not be able to speak in English. (Ajab)*

*I think topic and theme are very important, they always push us to speak and sometimes we have many ideas in our mind but we don't have the vocabulary, but sometimes we have vocabulary but we don't have ideas, so therefore theme and topic are very important for communication. (Asghar)*

*Topic plays an important role when the topic is of our own choice, and if we are good in that we have much and more information and connection with topic so we can speak better. For example, if someone would topic about politics I think I would not communicate because I don't know much about it and it's not interesting too. So topic of my interest increases my willingness level. (Manhoor)*

Kashif and Mukhtiar also reported that preparedness or familiarity with the topic could increase their willingness and vice versa:

*without proper preparation and without understanding the topic, I cannot communicate. (Kashif)*

*If I know the English language rules and regulations and when I will use them in my daily life and I choose a new topic for communication daily, then my willingness will be more and increased. And my vocabulary for communication will also be strong because I know the topic and I am already prepared for that... (Mukhtiar)*

All participants in the current study reported that attractiveness of the topic was more likely to increase their willingness. MacIntyre et al (1998) claimed that the topic of communication could largely affect the use of language, which would further inhibit the communication due

to lack of knowledge of the topic and unfamiliarity with the register. Dörnyei (2009) also stated that attractiveness of the topic was essential in boosting the willingness of the users of English to communicate. Learners would find communication extremely difficult if the topic of communication was not interesting (Cao, 2006: 489; Kang, 2005: 283). The effect of a boring or uninteresting topic could have a negative effect on the willingness or participation of the users of English, indicated Atay and Gokce (2007). As stated by two of the participants in the current study:

*of course, if the topic is more interesting I will be more willing to speak in English. If I know the topic, it increases my confidence and willingness. (G. Kadir)*

*if the topic is according to my interest then I get interested in it and then I love to speak, but if the topic is not of interest to me I become confused and I cannot speak then. (Hira)*

Atay and Gokce (2007) found that lack of content knowledge of the topic or no knowledge of the topic could hinder communication. In the current study, G. Kadir, Junaid, Karman and Rozina appeared to be unwilling to communicate due to a boring topic or their unpreparedness.

*when we are communicating about a topic we don't have knowledge of, it affects our communication in English. When there is a topic of interest to us and we communicate in that topic, it will increase our willingness. (G. Kadir)*

*it will harm your confidence if topic and you don't have sufficient knowledge regarding it, it will really mar your confidence and you will be hesitant to speak in English or throw light on the topic. (Kamran)*

*Because when I feel that the current topic is running in my area of knowledge then I will definitely participate; when I think that it's not my area of knowledge I will not participate. Yeah, it will affect my willingness and it will continue to affect my willingness. (Rozina)*

*it affects my speaking, if I know many things about a particular topic I will talk more, but if I don't know anything about the topic I will keep silent; it's a very big component of speaking and confidence. (Saima)*

As mentioned above, content knowledge can be substantial in initiating communication, as reported by Rozina and many other participants of the current study. Past empirical research (Cao & Philip, 2006; Kang, 2005; Dornyei, 2009; Eddy-U 2015), specifically qualitative, has shown that familiarity and preparedness, interest and attractiveness of the topic collectively play an essential role in contributing to users' willingness to communicate in English.

### **6.2.2 Type of task**

Type of task was one of the major themes discussed by most of the participants of the interview. Participants in the current study stated that most of the time they were unwilling to communicate when type of task was difficult. So, the majority of participants reported that the difficulty of the task was a major factor in their unwillingness to communicate in English.

*it is affected; when a task is easy I am more willing, and when a task is difficult I am less willing because of the difficulty of task. (Asghar)*

*every task or test or presentation or every competition has effects on me, and if it's positive I get confidence and if it is negative it has a negative effect on everything I do. (Kadir)*

*yeah sir, in any specific task it affects my willingness to communicate. When a topic or task is easy I speak in English and when a task is difficult I communicate less in English. As I am talking to you in English and I feel I communicate more with you. If a task is easy it will be more good for me and I will take more interest. (Hira)*

*yeah it can be affected, but we have to see the nature of the task too, but it changes or influences our willingness. (Junaid)*

*it really depends on the nature of task; if the task is easy I am willing and the harder the task the more difficult it is to speak. (Kamran reported)*

Willingness to communicate was more likely to be determined by a number of factors including easy or difficult types of task. MacIntyre and Legatto (2011:09) claimed that learners were consistently found to be more willing to do a task in an L2 when it was easy, but once it was perceived to be more difficult, participants' willingness slowed noticeably, which eventually ended in deteriorated performance, and learners reverted to L1. In the current study, participants were quite clear in reporting that difficult tasks had a negative impact on their willingness to communicate; in fact, they quit communication if the task was found to be difficult.

Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Pawlak (2014:245) argued that the decision to initiate communication in English, besides users' perceived level of English, largely depends on various things like instructional context, motivation, personality, interlocutor, type of task and many other things. They further argued that some pedagogical implications should be offered with the view that more WTC could be generated by types of task that allow students to decide their choice of topic and content output (p.256). In the previous empirical studies, it was generally claimed that students' WTC could be increased with a view of the choice of topic and task they preferred to opt for communication (Mystkowska-Wiertelak & Pawlak, 2014, MacIntyre and Legatto, 2011; Cao & Philp, 2006; Kang, 2005). In the current studies, more than half of participants of the study revealed that they were reluctant or unwilling to communicate when the task type is difficult.

### 6.2.3 Familiarity with interlocutor(s)

Familiarity with interlocutor(s) appeared to have played a very positive role in contributing to users' willingness to communicate in an L2. In the current study, users of English reported that their willingness increased when they communicated with friends because friends or familiar interlocutor(s) made them more confident to speak without being self-conscious about their mistakes.

*Yes, of course, sir, all these things help us, inspire us, motivate us to communicate more and more. (Ajab)*

*I think and I can speak in English with because I know them, I know their nature, their speaking power and their knowledge, so that can more help me to speak with them in a fluent way. (Shazia)*

*yes, it is natural phenomena if a person whom we know, whom we are familiar, we are easy, we are informal to talk to them, but if there are some strangers, of course we will avoid to talk with them. (Saima)*

*yes, sir, with friends we are willing to talk in English with friends, because they are of the same age and they know little bit English like us. (Paras)*

Empirical research has shown that users of L2 feel more encouraged, supported and motivated to communicate with interlocutors familiar to them (Cao & Philip, 2006; Kang, 2005; Liu, 2005; Peng, 2008). Kang (2005:282) maintained that users of English tend to feel more insecure while thinking of initiating communication with unfamiliar and unfriendly audiences. Cao (2011:472) found that learners tend to prefer talking with those who are more competent, talkative and outgoing than them and had lots of ideas to share.

As can be seen above, some of the participants in the current study felt more comfortable with interlocutors who were friends or were familiar to them. In other contexts, likewise, it

was revealed that users of an L2 considered familiar interlocutors more favourable to communicate with (Cao & Philip, 2006; Kang, 2005; Liu, 2005). Some of the following excerpts from the interviews of the participants in the current study clearly indicated that:

*Of course I am more willing to communicate with friends, because friends are ideal persons you communicate with, and I always feel good when I have my friends to speak in English to because they know me and I know them. (Asghar)*

*yes, sir, because friends don't pick our mistakes when we talk in English, and they are supporting us very well. I must say here sir that teachers and friends support us a lot. (G. Kadir)*

*there is no hesitation among the friends and there is not anxiety that occurs, and friends are good and they get interest when you talk in English. (Hira)*

*knowing the audience plays an important role; if you know the audience you will be more willing to communicate in English and it will boost your confidence and you will like to speak. (Kamran)*

The majority of the participants in the study did not feel any hesitation or fear of constant performance evaluation while communicating with friends. Pathan (2012:190) found that students, in Pakistan, felt anxiety due to the frequent performance evaluation of peers and users. However, in the presence of ideal interlocutors (friends), users of English felt more confident and less anxious about the issue of fear of performance evaluation because they knew that their friends, as an interlocutor, would inspire and motivate them to be more willing to communicate. MacIntyre et al (2001:281-282) also suggested that users of an L2 considered best friends and other friends to be attractive interlocutors, and felt more likely to

be confident and less hesitant when speaking with them. Similarly, De Saint Larger & Storch (2009:280) indicated that users of an L2, at the time of communication, felt exposed and concerned about being negatively evaluated by their peers. But in the case of the present study, more than half of the participants described friends as a pulling and encouraging source of communication.

*I feel more willing to communicate and speak with friends, and I always try to speak English with them because they are my friends and they understand me that I am learning English.*  
(Mukhtiar)

*yes, with friends we develop a sense of intimacy with friends, and we do not feel any kind of shyness, that's why it increases level of willingness to communicate in English.*

*The people or the audience who you know very well. For example, you go to school and you are too much aware of the level of the people I will be more willing to communicate in English.* (Najeebullah)

In the present study, most of the participants were rather more concerned about the interlocutors whom they did not know well (like strangers and acquaintances). They (participants of the current study) believed that strangers and acquaintances, as interlocutors, may not be the ideal audiences to interact with. The fear of being negatively judged or laughed at was one of the negative influences that participants of the current study perceived to be a major factor in decreasing their willingness.

*I will not feel as willing with strangers as much I know my friend because I don't know him and will be hesitant to start communication. But if he encourages me I will be willing to communicate in English.* (Najeebullah)

*I was actually really confused to come for interview due to my hesitation, and you are also a stranger to me. Yes, I feel hesitation.* (Paras)

*I am less willing to speak English with unknown people because I have not proper knowledge about how to speak with unknown people, and I feel that maybe a stranger does not like it or if he has better knowledge of English he can laugh at me if I make mistakes in English.*

(Mukhtiar)

The findings highlighted that participants of the current study considered friends as more suitable interlocutors than strangers and acquaintances. Their confidence level was eroded and they felt more anxiety if asked to communicate with strangers or acquaintances. Thus, it would not be wrong to comment or argue that interlocutor(s) as a variable is socially grounded and cannot be disassociated from the social or EFL setting in which learning takes place.

#### **6.2.4 Role of the teacher**

It is generally believed that teachers play a central role in the promoting or debilitating learners' intention to use an L2. In the current study, almost all students considered their teacher to be a great support in fostering communication, be it in choosing a topic of discussion or encouraging learners to speak in an L2. Thus, students reported that they were motivated and inspired to initiate communication. As Ajab commented,

*teachers' role is very important in this regard because teachers are a great source for us to learn and communicate in English, and if the teacher plays a good role then we can learn a*

*lot. (Ajab)*

*I think I am understanding what the teacher is teaching; I get more interested in the class and participate more. (Hira)*

Moreover, teachers' involvement, which Reeve (1996, cited in Wen and Clément, 2003:27) referred to, is quality of interpersonal relationship and providing greater psychological resources to students in an embodiment of taking time to listen to students' concerns, expressing affection, enjoying interaction with students and paying attention to students' needs and emotions. When students perceive that the teacher is greatly involved, they feel emotionally strong and stable from being constantly evaluated (Connell & Wellborne, 1991, cited in Wen and Clément, 2003:27).

*there is only one person who can encourage and discourage you, and that is your teacher...if he encourages you so what if you are making mistakes; he will my dear student this is not in this way but it is in that way. (Saima)*

Zarrinabadi (2014:294) found that when the teacher created a supportive learning environment through different verbal or non-verbal strategies, it enhanced users' willingness to communicate in an L2.

*I do feel that we should communicate in English, and the teacher really helps me a lot to achieve this because we don't have a positive environment here except the teacher encouraging us to speak. I do always ask anything if I don't know, and my teachers are nice and they help me in that. (Junaid)*

*teacher's role can increase students' willingness to communicate in English if he gives a practical environment to students to speak in English to any other person. (Kashif)*

*Teacher has to be very encouraging, and everybody has to be given chances to communicate, and each and every one should try to participate in the class. When teacher and student interaction is there so sometimes situations come where we generate new thoughts and new ideas so it enhances our communication. When I have any sort of confusion I just put up a question and ask my teacher that helps a lot. (Manhoor)*

Zarrinabadi (2014:294) indicated that teachers could encourage users to communicate confidently in an L2 by smiling and nodding in an agreement. As Najeebullah remarked,

*Teacher plays a vital role in the development of willingness of the students in speaking English. If he pays good attention towards his students, definitely students can speak better and become more willing to speak in English. (Najeebullah)*

*Teacher plays an important role in developing our confidence, and we will automatically be more willing to communicate because vocabulary and grammar is always in our mind, but lack of practice and confidence and we can't speak, and if teacher comes and helps us our hesitation will be broken and we can communicate then. (Mukhtiar)*

The general impression gleaned from the previous empirical studies on the role of teachers indicated that teachers' attitude, involvement, immediacy and teaching styles exert a great deal of impact on the learners' willingness to communicate (MacIntyre et al, 2011 & Cao, 2011; Wen and Clément, 2003:29). Kang (2005:283) claimed that social support from the teacher could influence the learners' WTC positively and consequently reduce users' anxiety. Cao (2011:473) indicated in his study that students tended to be more willing to communicate and became active participants when they liked their teacher. MacIntyre et al (2011:88) revealed in their study that students were more willing to communicate when their teachers were helpful and uncritical without giving much further contextual detail. It was further demonstrated that teachers "have the potential at any moment to increase or decrease WTC among the students" (ibid). Therefore, teachers are considered to play a central role in contributing to L2 users' willingness to communicate.

We can see that the majority of the participants of the present study believed that their teachers were more likely to play a contributing role in the willingness to communicate in an L2. From creating a supportive learning environment to psychologically boosting their

confidence, the teacher was considered to be a bridge between users' willingness to communicate and all other debilitating WTC factors.

### **6.2.5 Background education:**

By background education, we refer to education taken by students from public and privately run schools, colleges and universities. Generally, the impression that people have about the nature of education, in Pakistan, is that private or English-medium schools are more effective in providing better education. Parents generally believe that private schools are equipped with better facilities and have far more effective syllabuses and good teachers (see context chapter). Traditionally, English is taught as a subject or academic discipline, not as a language, in Pakistani schools, colleges and universities (Ali, 2010). According to Rahman, English is also the medium of instruction in the private schools and empowers the elites (Rahman, 2002; 2007: 219). He further argued that the level of competence students attained from vernacular-medium schools was low and students were unable to write or speak in English (Rahman, 2007:222). Regarding private or elite English-medium schools, Rahman further claimed that those schools were set up by private entrepreneurs and were probably meant to offer education for the students of the upper middle class and upper class (p, 223). Pathan (2012:192) also found that students from private English-medium schools were more likely to identify themselves with the English-speaking Pakistani community. In the present studies, most of the students had their basic education from vernacular-medium schools and did not have access to effective teaching and material.

*the problem is that mostly students come from government schools, and you know the environment there, therefore this is also the reason for lack of communication skills and learning English. (Ajab)*

*yeah, backgrounds affect my willingness to communicate in English. Educational background is a must when I talk and if my educational background is good it increases my willingness to communicate in English. If my educational background is poor, it decreases my willingness and it really matters a lot. (Hira)*

*yes, it plays an important role when we communicate and we have no environment of that and no background of language or such society. So, it sometimes decreases our willingness. (Junaid)*

One of the participants of the study reported that formal educational background played an important role in the development of her willingness to communicate in English. While mentioning English-medium education in the university, she indicated that it could play a positive role in increasing her willingness.

*formal educational background has an impact on my willingness to communicate. Educational background plays an important role in my willingness; here we have got education in English, definitely I will speak in English. (Rozina)*

Kashif believed that when your educational background is rich, you could be a fluent English speaker and it would exert a positive impact on your willingness to communicate.

*It does, sir. You are right. It depends on the base of the student; if the educational background is poor it always affects not only your willingness but so many other things. But if your educational background is rich you can communicate more and your confidence is also high in English language. (Kashif)*

*if you are educational background is rich then it will have a positive role in encouraging you to speak in English. (Hira)*

English has become unavoidable in Pakistan due to the rapid growth of English across the world generally and in Pakistan particularly. English holds a prestigious position in Pakistan (Mansoor, 2005; Rahman, 2002), and unsurprisingly a more powerful one than Urdu which is the national language of Pakistan (Shamim, 2011). As a matter of fact, almost all participants

despite not having easy access to private English-medium schools still tried to learn and use it.

*when I was in school there was no concept of English language talking. Many students and teachers criticised me over there. (Kadir)*

The findings of this section demonstrated that the learning context appeared to be of pivotal importance in societies like Pakistan where two different educational systems run in parallel, such as public and private sectors. Despite this parallel educational system, most of the participants in this study stated that they had a positive inclination towards improving their willingness to communicate.

### **6.2.6 Positive learning environment**

All the participants of the current study reported that a positive learning environment was extremely important for fostering willingness to communicate in an EFL setting. By a positive learning atmosphere, they meant having a safe learning environment where the fear of losing face may not exist. Mohammadian (2013:2036) claimed that communication could be frightening for some of the learners due to the fear of losing face and experiencing a negative evaluation. Kang (2005:283) indicated that users of an L2 could be more willing to communicate when they feel “secure from the fear of being an unpleasant conversation partner”. Zarrinabadi (2014:294) found that students reported having a high willingness to communicate when there was a supportive learning environment.

In the present study, users of English very clearly believed that a positive learning environment could directly influence their willingness to communicate.

*this is the one and only way to communicate and enhance our language learning, so this is the only way. (Ajab)*

Concerning the positive impact of a safe learning environment,

*Positive environment is very good. Yes, when we are provided a positive environment in which we can speak or communicate easily with our friends, definitely it will have a positive impact on our willingness, and it will also increase our willingness to communicate in English and it will have a positive impact on our learning English. (Asghar)*

*Yeah, I think a positive learning environment can help us more to learn the English language. When we make a positive environment we will practise more, and practice makes man perfect and we need practice to communicate in English and we automatically communicate in that environment. (Mukhtiar)*

*definitely it is. If no one criticises us then we have a chance to speak, whatever we are speaking whether wrong or right so that we can improve our English. (Shazia)*

For most of the participants of the current study making mistakes while communicating and being ridiculed by others seemed to equate to losing face. Bond (1991:58-60 & Ting Toomey, 1998:53-63, cited in Bamfield, 2014:) found that when users of L2 were ridiculed or criticised they often adopted an unassertive style and avoided communication in order to save their respect and face. In the case of the present study, participants accordingly reported the negative influence of being ridiculed when committing mistakes in communication.

### **6.2.7 Desire to have a bright academic career**

The growing emphasis on authentic communication as a necessary part of L2 learning (Kang, 2005:278) and the shift of L2 teaching and learning towards communication, both as an essential process and a goal of learning an L2 (Yashima, 2002:54), led to the emergence of the WTC in L2 communication. Learning English to communicate seems to be one of the

growing motivations of most of the students in Pakistan because they believe that it would help them achieve a bright career in their country and abroad. MacIntyre et al (1998:547) argued that “the ultimate goal of the learning process should be to engender in language students the willingness to seek out communication opportunities and the willingness actually to communicate in them”. Dörnyei (2001:51) maintained that “generating a willingness to communicate in a foreign language is arguably a central – if not *the* most central – objective of modern L2 pedagogy.”

Considering the growing importance of communicating orally in English, participants of the present study believed that when they began communicating in English, it helped them achieve better results in their academic career.

*Each and every subject is in English; if we are able to understand English then of course we will improve our every subject, and we will get good marks in every subject, and if our ideas are clear then we can define things in our own way and words. (Saima)*

Rozina related communicating in English to respect:

*Yes, definitely. My people pay attention to people who speak in English. My people give them respect too. (Rozina)*

Some of the participants of the current study reported that being unable to communicate in English negatively influenced their academic grades and achievements. For instance:

*if I can't speak in English it is a real fact that it will affect my education because no one would notice me at all. (Murtaza)*

*Yes, definitely. My people pay attention to people who speak in English. My people give them respect too. Suppose if I am getting a job teaching anywhere I am using my native language and students think that our teacher is not intelligent and it will affect my professional career.*

(Rozina)

*absolutely sir, nowadays in society everybody gives importance to whom who speaks in English because they think that he knows English and he is educated, and everybody knows that he is intelligent, even teachers, friends, so it is good it affects. (Shazia)*

Analysis of the data showed that most of the participants perceived an influence of grading on their willingness to communicate. When you communicate in an L2 as one of the leading goals (Yashima, 2002; MacIntyre et al 1998) of your academic career, you then need to be more willing to communicate, which was also revealed by all the participants of the study. Collentine (2009:) posited that context of language “is one of the most important variables that affects the nature and extent to which learners acquire second (L2). It was further argued that learners seemingly determined the extent to which learning L2 was productive or not (Serrano et al, 2011:133). In the current study, analysis showed that participants were more willing to communicate even under reasonably difficult EFL settings in order to achieve better grades and an academic career, because in a country like Pakistan English is seen as a largely important distinction in securing professional and academic success (Ali. 2010).

### **6.2.8 Conversational contexts:**

The participants in the current study were offered four different conversational contexts (one-to-one situation, small meeting, large meeting and group of people) for communication in an L2. Kang (2005:278) argued that by engendering WTC in L2 learners, we expected them to be autonomous and active language learners who could make independent efforts to learn language through communication by being involved in different activities, not just in the classroom, but also outside the classroom. According to MacIntyre et al (1998:547) WTC is influenced by immediate situational variables. Under this assumption,

we asked the participation of the study how they felt when they initiated communication under the aforementioned conversational contexts. In a one-to-one situation, Ajab remarked:

*I can speak easily, communicate and sometimes we have many ideas in our mind and we can only do it in a one-to-one situation. A one-to-one situation is easier than other conversational contexts. (Ajab)*

Concerning small meetings,

*In the small meeting I get interest to communicate in English, because among a small meeting my confusion is not at a high level and I want to communicate in English. (Hira)*

Concerning large meetings,

*Actually, the problem is confidence level; the problem is hesitation, we feel hesitation in front of them; if there are so many people in front of us, how then we can speak or communicate with them. (Paras)*

Concerning groups of people,

*sometimes I feel shy or hesitant when I see so many people. Maybe they will criticise me, they will laugh at me when I am speaking, so sometimes I avoid talking in English and my willingness will be low. (Shazia)*

Ajab was seemingly very clear about the types of conversational contexts he preferred to communicate in. To him, a one-to-one situation was the best kind of audience to initiate communication, followed by a small meeting, large meeting and group of people. For Hira, communication was easy when it was among small numbers of people where there was likelihood of being ridiculed or laughed at if she made some mistakes during conversation. Her low confidence and fear of being ridiculed or losing face value could be indicators of not

considering large meetings as a favourable conversational context. Shazia believed that she could not initiate communication under the conversational context of a group of people. Researchers arguably proposed that learning could take place through meaningful interaction (Gass, 2003; Long, 1996) and stressed that “learners have to talk in order to learn” (Skehan, 1989 & Swan, 1995, cited in Cao & Philp, 2006:480). So, from Ajab’s point of view, large meetings and groups of people did not appear to provide ideal conversational contexts for interaction.

Paras, like Ajab, reported the same pattern and classification of conversational contexts when asked about her choice. She remarked that she was more comfortable in one-to-one situations followed by small meetings, large meetings and groups of people.

*I am easy and I think I can speak in one-to-one situation. (Paras)*

*there is not any kind of hesitation if there are few or small people around. (Paras)*

*I feel hesitation, I can’t communicate. (Paras)*

*actually, I want to speak in English in front of them, but I can’t due to my hesitation. (Paras)*

All the participants in the current study proposed “one-to-one situations” as favourable conversational contexts. Some of the examples are:

*when I am in a one-to-one situation I mostly speak to communicate in English with my friend. I prefer one-to-one situations because I can express myself well in that situation. (Asghar)*

*One-to-one talking is very easy in my opinion, as a single person is asking something about any topic at that time I am talking, just like when I am talking in my own language, Sindhi. (G. Kadir)*

*I like a lot in one-to-one situations because there won’t be anyone, we both will be there and if it is my friend I will love it. (Shazia)*

*Yes, I feel more confident in a one-to-one situation. I am more willing to communicate in this situation. (Rozina)*

As can be seen above, participants of the study stated it categorically and very clearly that they wanted to communicate in one-to-one situations. They generally perceived friends as favourable interlocutors under one-to-one conversational contexts. However, they deny interaction in one-to-one situations with strangers. The preference of friends as interlocutors could be a factor that further encouraged them to communicate easily. Broadly similar results have been found in which, as with previous empirical research, the interlocutor was one of the major factors affecting users of an L2 willingness to communicate (Cao & Philip, 2006; Kang, 2005; Liu, 2004).

### **6.2.9 Role of gender**

There were five female participants in the current study who were interviewed. The role of gender has been an under-researched variable until now. Very few studies have reported the way females showed an increase in their willingness in comparison to males (MacIntyre et al, 2002 & MacIntyre et al, 1999). Shehadeh (1999) argued that the issue of gender and its impact can be socio-culturally bound because in some cultures or societies males and females could communicate freely, but in others they may not be allowed to communicate freely due to some cultural or religious restraints (Taheryan and Ghonsooly, 2014:01). Pakistan is an Islamic country and Islam does not encourage co-education; there are single-sex schools, single-sex colleges and surprisingly some single-sex universities in Pakistan. In contrast, Shah Abdul Latif University is one of the mixed sex universities. Situated in one of the small towns of Sindh, the females have never outnumbered the males. For this reason, the impact of the opposite sex on the participants' willingness to

communicate was chosen as one of the major variables to examine. Furthermore, it was also interesting to examine the impact of the opposite gender because some of the participants in the current study had experience of studying in single- and mixed-sex institutes. For instance:

*I always speak with my friends, not with the opposite gender; I feel hesitation when I speak with the opposite gender. (Mukhtiar)*

*it is what the cultural aspect; sometimes we are unable to speak to the opposite gender in our native language, then how can we be able to communicate in English? (Najeebullah)*

*Sometime it increases and sometimes it decreases my willingness. (Hira)*

Surprisingly, only two of the participants reported that they were influenced by the presence of the opposite gender in their willingness to communicate. Those two participants were male students and did not appear to be confident when it came to communicating with the opposite gender. Chambers (2005) found that male students felt embarrassed in the presence of females in the target language because of a “fear of feeling stupid” (cited in Atefeh and Behzad, 2014:04). Apart from those two, most of the participants were stress-free while communicating with the opposite gender. There could be various reasons why students were so confident communicating in English. The first reason could be their increasingly growing intent for communication in English; second it could be largely due to the fact that they were all university students so it mattered less to them. Third, it is likely that the growing trends of social and electronic media have bridged the communication gap with the opposite gender, because most of the participants of the study seemingly appeared to be rather willing and confident to communicate in English with the opposite gender. For instance:

*No sir, I don't think so, because we study in university and we often meet them, so there is no problem for me in this regard, but from my personal opinion I don't feel any problem in communicating with the opposite gender. (Ajab)*

*where there is a matter of communication, to me, it is not a matter for me whether I am communicating with a male or female. Communication means our knowledge of English is more important than gender. (Junaid)*

The qualitative findings in the current study suggested that participants were equally willing to communicate in the presence of the opposite gender. I would still suggest that further in-depth study should be conducted to investigate and then generalize those results in a Pakistani context.

### **6.2.9 Lack of self-confidence**

Unlike gender, self-confidence (believed to be a combination of perceived competence and lack of anxiety) is the variable which has widely been investigated in previous empirical studies as an individual difference factor directly affecting willingness of the users of an L2 (e.g. Baker & MacIntyre, 2003; Clément et al, 2003 and Yashima, 2002). For instance, MacIntyre et al (1998:549), while developing a heuristic model, demonstrated that self-confidence operated dually. First L2 self-confidence is more like an enduring factor and represents the overall belief of users in being able to communicate, whereas state self-confidence tends to be of a transient nature and can fluctuate at particular times.

In the current study, participants reported their overall confidence level and did not specifically mention the transient nature of confidence. As Ajab remarked,

*Yes, sir, of course, confidence is a very important thing for communication, and sometimes we feel some hesitation and a lack of confidence in some situations. (Ajab)*

*Yes, confidence plays a very important role in making one fluent and communicative; when we have a lack of confidence definitely we cannot prove our communication successful. Then there will be lack of communication due to lack of confidence because there would be a gap in our communication and we could not convey to our listener so our way of communication would not be successful. (Asghar)*

*Yes, I believe that if a person does not have confidence he cannot talk in English fluently. Before even coming to this department, I joined a private centre for learning English and at that time I learned many things that support my English language. (G. Kadir)*

*Confidence is a really important thing; it plays an important role. If you want to speak English language, first of all you should have confidence, and you get confidence with frequent speaking; if you don't speak frequently you can get confidence, so I think confidence is important, and to get confidence one should speak very frequently and to get fluency. If you are not confident enough to speak English language with fellow students or teachers, you hesitate a lot; you can't convey your point of view. (Kamran)*

### **6.3 Summary**

In this chapter, qualitative findings in the current study have been reported with a detailed discussion. The discussion was done with reference to existing studies conducted qualitatively. At the outset of the chapter, the findings of the study reported the extent to which participants were willing to communicate in an L2. Most of the students showed their willingness to communicate despite indicating some of the problems understandably in the EFL setting. It is felt that the current study lent support to the comprehensive conceptual framework given by the Kang (2005:291) in which a new definition of the willingness to communicate was proposed: *Willingness to communicate is an individual's volitional inclination towards actively engaging in the act of communication in a specific situation*, which can vary according to interlocutor(s), topic and conversational contexts, among other potential situational variables. The common factors that emerged from the current study run parallel with findings suggested by Kang (2005), Cao and Philip (2011) and Peng (2007b) in which all reported that L2 users' willingness to communicate could be affected by a number of factors as mentioned above. Readiness to enter into communication was believed to be affected by all those factors, and students' reluctance to engage in the act of communication

could thus be affected by the lack of one or more such readiness factors. Hence, we could safely claim that the findings of the current study are supported by previous qualitative empirical studies.

## Chapter 07

### Discussion and Conclusion

#### Overview

This chapter presents detailed discussion of the results of the analysed data collected through self-administered questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. In addition to results and preliminary discussion of the quantitative and qualitative findings in last two preceding sections, this chapter elaborates each of the research question and discusses the extent to which the results of this study correspond to, refute and complement other empirical previous results on willingness to communicate (WTC). The analysed data for Pakistani university students were collected through self-administered questionnaire of 350 research participants and semi-structured interviews of the 15 participants, who took part in the questionnaire survey. The chapter begins with in-depth discussion of the each of the research question introduced earlier in the thesis, quantitative findings, collected through questionnaire, are discussed at length in this chapter. The qualitative findings, collected through individual face-to-face interviews are elaborated in the light of the previous empirical research studies on willingness to communicate (WTC). It is noteworthy to mention that results of each research questions are inexorably interwoven, so the degree of overlap seems to be unavoidable while discussing the results of each of the research question.

#### **7.1 Research Question One: What is the overall level of Pakistani university students' (male and female) willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language who are resident of Lower Sindh province?**

The objective of this study was to investigate the extent to which Pakistani university students were willing to communicate in English as a foreign language in the context, where

English was taught, learnt and used as a foreign language. The first research question specifically determined the level of Pakistani university students' WTC which was, for the participants, seemed to be newest way of measuring their level of WTC in English. The research question was analysed by collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. We would first discuss the analysed quantitative results with in-depth debate followed by the qualitative findings and its discussion. The relevance of WTC construct in the Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, Pakistan (SALU) was of particular importance because SALU, which was research site as well, is situated in one of the less developed areas of the province, and findings of the current study would help us gain better understanding of users' level of WTC in such areas, where resources to teach and learn English are not sufficient compared to other big cities of the country.

The analysis of the results showed that Pakistani university students were reasonably willing to communicate in English. However, users' willingness was reported to be neither high nor low, which was supposedly because of the lack of appropriate resources to teach English in Pakistan. Results revealed that 68.09% of the research participants were willing to communicate in English, whereas some 20.35% were unwilling to communicate in English. This finding is consistent with previous research on WTC conducted by Xie (2011:84) among Chinese rural students. His findings suggested that research participants were ranging from "sometimes willing to usually willing", and his findings generally suggested that Chinese rural students have low level of WTC. According to McCroskey (1992:22) any WTC score between 52% to 82% was considered to be the cut-off points for higher and lower WTC. Although English enjoys immense amount of importance in the social, academic and professional strands of the Pakistan (see Kachru, 1986; Baumgardner, 1993; Rahman: 2006; Ali:2010 and Rahman:2007), results demonstrated comparatively reasonable level of

willingness to communicate in English. One of the major reasons of the relatively low level of research participants' willingness to communicate in English could be rural setting of SALU and poor educational background of the students of the university. The white paper report released in 2007 in Pakistan which appropriately summed up the overall dichotomy between parallel educational systems in country.

*“There are vast differences in education services between rural and urban areas which continue to broaden the gulf between the urban elites and the comparatively marginalized and disempowered rural population. Unfortunately, the issue of quality service delivery in rural areas receives scant attention specifically and it has been seen that the worst public sector schools are in the rural areas.*

#### Education in Pakistan: A White Paper Report (2007)

Results of the analysed data further revealed that there was not much difference between male and female research participants' level of WTC in English. Male (M= 3.71) were reported to be slightly more willing than female (M= 3.36). The findings of the current study revealed that female participants were willing to communicate and their WTC was unlikely to be affected by the dominant patriarchal values in Pakistan. Despite the established views in the social fabric of Pakistan that girls/females are productive as mother and wife domestically (see Murtaza:2013), females' participants still appeared to be willing and ready to converse in English when required. The number of the female (n= 85) participants was relatively lesser than male (n= 245) participants. Since SALU is situated in one of the economically marginalised areas of the province where all rural areas are connected with university. Parents, in rural areas, are unaware about the importance of the female education. Families, in rural areas, still believe in patriarchal values where females are generically understood to be good at domestic skills (Murtaza, 2013:266).

This pattern in results was largely because English, in Pakistani context, could be associated with success for professional career (Mehboob:2009). Rahman (2007) demonstrated that higher jobs are only reserved for the people who could read and write good English. Both male and female were reported to be willing to communicate in English because of the global and enterprise and acceptability of English not only in Pakistan, but across the world (Ali:2010).

## **7.2 Qualitative results of research question (RQ1)**

The first research question investigated the level of Pakistani male and female users of English willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language. The analysed qualitative data suggested that users of English were willing to communicate, but their willingness was either situationally dependent or hampered by inappropriate environment where user felt encouraged to communicate in English. Besides that, participants level of willingness was neither high nor low in terms of communicating in English. This result could generically be consistent with the findings of the other research studies conducted in the Asian English as a foreign language (EFL) context. Kang (2005) collected data from (n=04) Korean nonnative speakers of English by taking interviews, videotaped conversations and stimulate recalls. Results of analysed data indicated that WTC could dynamically emerged and more likely to be fluctuating during communication. Kang's findings suggested that most of the participants in the study preferred safe environment for communicating in English. Weaver (2005), in the Japanese English as a foreign language (EFL) context, demonstrated that level of Japanese college students' like Pakistani university students, was neither high nor low. In the Chinese EFL context, Askar (1998) indicated that Hong Kong EFL students were less willing to communicate than their western users of English. Regarding inside and outside classroom WTC, Shi (2008) conducted an empirical study by combining both qualitative and quantitative methods. Shi (2008) found that Chinese EFL learners' willingness

to communicate in English was somewhere between ‘probably not willing’ to ‘probably willing’.

It is noteworthy to mention that the research studies, outlined above, appeared to have similar findings, that is, the users of English WTC were neither high nor low, though using different research instruments for data collection. The findings of the data further revealed that all those empirical research studies conducted in Asian EFL contexts though the learning context or culture could be little different from country to country. It is generally believed that EFL users learn English inside the class because they often may have access to authentic material inside the classroom. The interaction, in English, outside the class is immensely limited because English is commonly spoken language in their daily communication. However, students often try to find better and safe place to communicate in English, as Ajab, one of the interviewees of the current study said, ‘*when we feel healthy environment like in class with friends or at home*’. Ajab considered home and class as two of the safest places to communicate in English because Pakistani university students generally reported to be reticent and quite in the class (Ali:2010). With regard to Asian EFL setting of learning English, some of the empirical research studies indicated that Asian learners often found to be reluctant to communicate in classroom activities and hardly volunteered to initiate communication or reply or even ask question in English (Ali:2010; Jackson: 2002). Ali (2010) argued that communication, in Pakistan, often found to be written and learners found it difficult to communicate in English regularly which could be one of the potential reasons for the participants of the current study to be less willing to communicate in English.

It is generally viewed that Asian students have low level of willingness when it comes to engaging into communication. Klopff (in press) argued that Asian valued silence over getting engaged into direct communication (cited in Lu & Fang, 2008:76). Wen and Clément (2003)

found that Chinese EFL learners seemed to be very good at grammar based written examination, but their ability to communicate in English extremely poor. Similarly, Ali (2010:10) argued that many Pakistani students are preoccupied with assumption that learning much of the grammatical rules, mesmerising a wide range of vocabulary, remembering idiomatic expressions and translating sentences from L1 to L2 will make them a competent learner. Thus, most of the EFL learners are unable to communicate in English because they have lack of exposure to communicate in English both inside and outside of the class which eventually make users of English less willing to communicate in English (Ali:2010; Wen and Clément:2003). In addition to that while investigating Chinese students' willingness to communicate, Cortazzi and Jin (1996) linked students' reluctance to communicate to their value of modesty and silence. In the Pakistani EFL context, users of English have little opportunity to communicate outside the classroom setting which could be among many one of the main reasons of their low-level willingness to communicate in English.

Despite having low level of WTC, Pakistani university students seemed to have showed their eagerness and interest to communicate in English. Most of the participants in semi-structured interviews mentioned that they would often be willing to communicate if they are encouraged and appreciated despite making mistakes. As G. Kadir, one the interviewees of the current study said, *"I am always willing to communicate in English and when I get the chance of talking in English"*. Hira and Junaid also said, *"we always try to communicate in English"*. Besides them Kamran mentioned, *"I always try to communicate with my fellow students in English"*. Mukhtiar said, *"I always think to communicate in English in class"*. The purpose of the mentioning few of the names of research participant was that users of English, in the current study, showed their willingness to communicate in English, but their willing was hampered by some of the factors like unsafe environment, lack of opportunities to

communicate in English, unpleasant past experiences, nature of audiences, lack of authentic resources to communicate and lack of vocabulary. In the later sections of this chapter, all these problems would be discussed in connection with previous research studies conducted on WTC.

### **7.3 Research Question Two: Are there any significant differences between Pakistani university students' level of willingness to communicate in English in the following background variables? (1) Provenance (2) Types of education (3) Self-perceived level of English (4) Exposure to English**

The second research question aimed to investigate the difference of background variables in the research participants' level of willingness to communicate in English. Background variables were extremely relevant and important in the context of the current research because Pakistani society appeared to have been divided socioeconomically and academically since independence. People of Pakistan apparently live at two extremes such as poor and rich. Besides, there is growing middle or working class which plays substantial role in maintaining the social fabric of the country. The awareness to this class system is important for the readers because students from upper class have totally different facilities in terms of education, health, and career, whereas poor or middle class struggle to meet the acceptable standard of living. In short, there are broadly two educational different systems run in parallel in Pakistan. The (RQ2) specifically dealt with background information provided by the research participants so that we could be able to differentiate differences in the users' willingness to communicate in English.

The detailed description of the background variables has already been elucidated in the (4.1 section of quantitative chapter). In order to gain better insight into the background of the research participants of the current study, it was important to have detailed information of

their background so that we could properly comprehend to what extent variations in the participants' background may account for the differences in their communication in English. For this purpose, background variables instrument separately administered to collect quantitative data. The four variables which are provenance, types of education, self-perceived level of communication and exposure to English. All these variables have been analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. In this section of the chapter, these variables have been discussed with regard to previous research conducted on WTC in EFL/ESL contexts specifically and all other contexts generally.

### **7.3.1 Provenance**

Provenance, as explained in the previous chapters, composed of two levels: urban and rural. The terms urban and rural are seem to be clear with apparent contrasting images. For the purpose of the readers, it was felt important to define both terms: urban is related and categorized through cities where the access to better education, job opportunities, better health care and almost all resources could be available for better social live; while rural areas could be defined as where development ratio seems to be far less than cities. It is generally believed that the ration of developmental growth in the rural part of Sindh seemed to be relatively slower, which eventually widen the income gap with urban areas of the province (The Nation:2008). Besides that, literacy rate in the rural areas of Sindh is 42% in comparison to 77% of urban areas (Pakistan social and standards measurement survey: 2012-13).

The findings of analysed data revealed that there was statistically significant difference in the rural and urban participants with regard to their willingness to communicate in English. However, the number of the rural participants (N=267) was higher than urban participants

(N=83). The urban participants' level of willingness, in the current study, was little higher than their rural group. Previous research on the WTC in the Asian EFL contexts revealed that users of English from rural background are generally less willing to communicate in English because their willingness is directly related to their success in second language (L2) proficiency. Kim (2004) while analysing results of (191) Korean college students demonstrated that willingness of the participant was generally low due to their less successful results in obtaining English proficiency. In the Chinese context, Xie (2011) indicated that Chinese rural secondary EFL students WTC was generally low because they had little actual communication in English outside the classroom setting. In the light of previous research studies specifically conducted in the Asian EFL contexts and the results of the current study indicated that rural users' willingness to communicate is generally low. In the context of the current study, it could be linked to lack of trained teachers, outdated courses and teaching material and the poor physical infrastructures of the schools and colleges of the rural areas' educational institutes in Pakistan. Besides that, the disparity in the socioeconomic development in rural and urban areas of Pakistan could be considered potential cause of the low level of rural participants' willingness to communicate in English.

### **7.3.2 Types of education**

Institutionally, English enjoys immense amount of the instrumental popularity (for higher education and career prospects) ever since the independence of the Pakistan in 1947. However, with establishment of the Pakistan, the parallel educational system has been negatively influencing the prospects of students in Pakistan. Drawing upon that parents, though having extremely financial resources, still wish to provide better education to their children which is only offered by expensive private schools, colleges and universities of Pakistan. The prospect of better education is synonymous to the ability to communicate in

English fluently. Rahman (2003:243) demonstrated that parents generally do not regard public sector education as a better prospect for their children's academic as well as professional career. In this connection, types of education were included in the current study as to account for users' willingness to communicate in English.

The descriptive findings of the analysed data, in the current study, indicated that the number of the participants who studied in the public sector (N=218) was greater than the number of participants in the private sector (N=132). As has been elucidated above, getting better education in the country like Pakistan is linked to socioeconomic conditions of the people, most of the people could not afford expensive tuition fees and other expenses of the private educational system. Although Private elitist schools are run by the businessmen, armed forces and some of the high political figures in the country in the metropolitan cities of Pakistan, however, those schools charge very high fees and could only be affordable for rich people because they generally prepare you for British Ordinary and Advanced School level examinations. The findings of the analysed data suggested that the difference between informants educated in the public sector and those educated in the private sector with regard to willingness to communicate in English was not statistically significant. As mentioned in the context chapter that, most of the parents could not afford to provide better education to their children in the expensive schools, colleges and universities which eventually led parents to get their children admitted into cheap private schools where the level of education may not be as satisfactory as generally found in reputed private schools such as: Beacon House System and City School System. It was largely by didn't of establishment of alternative cheap or sub-standard private sector in which the expectations of the better education seemed to be impractical which further deteriorate the existing education set up in Pakistan.

In addition to that, Warsi (2004:02) demonstrated that schools appointed inexperienced teachers who lacked training in the use of the modern teaching pedagogical methods which immensely affected the overall leaning of L2 teaching. Teachers in the low budgeted or sub-standard private schools could not keep themselves abreast of the modern techniques of teaching. Azam (2009) argued that most of the English language teachers (ELT), who have been assigned to teach English language in the class, have got English literature degrees. Additionally, Amna (2010) while conducting empirical research study regarding the perception of the ELT practitioner, in Pakistan, indicated that most of the ELT practitioners confessed of using Grammar Translation Method (GTM), which could not encourage students to improve their ability to communicate in English. Soomro et al, (2016:119-120) argued that teaching English has vitally become industry in Pakistan until recently. It was further demonstrated that so many English language academies have been established all over the Pakistan with regard to improving the spoken English of the students. However, the efficiency of the teachers, in those private academies, remains questionable because those teachers seemed to have never been trained before. Thus, it was largely due to these reasons that there was no difference reported in the willingness of research participants who have either been educated in the public or private sectors of Khairpur and its adjacent small towns and villages.

### **7.3.3 Self-perceived level of English**

The self-perceived level of competence or perceived communicative competence defined as a level of one's own ability to speak or to communicate in an L2 with other users of L2 (MacIntyre et al.,1998:549). Generally, it has been debated and then suggested that users of L2 who perceived themselves to be good or poor speaker in an L2 seemed to be more or less willing to communicate in English. Baker and MacIntyre (2002:316) demonstrated that, "it is

not individual's actual skills that count, rather, it is how they perceive their communication competence that will determine their WTC".

The analysed data suggested that participants who perceived themselves better in L2 tended to be more willing to communicate than those who perceived themselves or their level of competence low in an L2. There was statistically significant difference in the users' willingness to communicate in English who considered their level of proficiency higher than those who viewed their perceived level of proficiency low in an L2. While using questionnaire (n=200), Kim (2004) examined the reliability of the MacIntyre et al.'s heuristic model (1998), and Findings of her study suggested that informants WTC in L2 was directly predicted by higher level of perceived communicative competence and lower level of anxiety. She further demonstrated that self-reported low level of proficiency in an L2 could account for users' lower level of self-perceived competence in their willingness to communicate, which resultantly ended up with limited success of L2 learners. MacIntyre et al. (2001) conducted study among (n=268) 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade students of small junior school. Findings of the research study indicated that WTC, language anxiety, communication frequency and perceived competence were positively correlated, which demonstrated that those students who were motivated tended to be more willing to communicate and had both higher perceived competence and lower anxiety (p. 554-55).

Series of the other empirical research studies indicated that self-perceived level of proficiency in L2 could be direct predictors of WTC in L2 (MacIntyre and Baker, 2003; MacIntyre et al., 2003b; MacIntyre and Doucette, 2009; Bernales, 2016). All these research studies, though in different contexts and with different informants, collectively suggested that higher self-perceived level of proficiency and lower level of anxiety could be direct predictors of the WTC in L2. In case of the current study, findings demonstrated that participants who had

high level of WTC in L2 were basically had low anxiety which in turn corresponded with their WTC in L2. Most of the informants in the current study were from rural background, educated either in public sector or private sub-standard educational system had understandably low level of self-perceived competence and higher level of anxiety.

#### **7.3.4 Exposure to English**

The findings of current study indicated that Pakistani university students did not have many opportunities to communicate in English. No informant has ever been in any English-speaking countries of the world. The informants who reported to have been abroad was (n=69) and others were (n=281). Exposure to English or perceived opportunity to speak in an L2 is generally regarded as one of the substantial conditions for enhancing the WTC of the L2 learners (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; MacIntyre et al., 1998; MacIntyre, 2007). MacIntyre et al., (2003) demonstrated that learners of L2 required practice in communication in order to learn L2, which could only be possible to users of English should proper opportunities arise. In the case of exposure to English, Cao (2009) argued that learners' perception largely determined or identified the opportunity or chance to communicate.

The analysed data indicated that there was statistically no significant difference between the group of informants who have been abroad and the informants who have never been abroad. The result of not going to any Inner Circle countries didn't expose research informants in an environment where they could have seen how English was spoken and used in the daily communication. The most plausible explanation for not going to abroad could be socioeconomic condition of the research participants of the current study. However, those who claimed to have gone some gulf countries shown better level of willingness to communicate in English (M=3.73) than those group of informants who have never been

abroad (M=3.63). Although the difference didn't seem to be too high if both groups compared. Some of the research has shown that if language learner aim is to meet the educational requirements and pass examination, they would never be able to communicate in L2 under any circumstances. However, there are some learners who consider authentic communication as an ultimate goal of language learning (MacIntyre and Doucette, 2010; Ushioda:2001). In case of the current study, it could be inferred from the analysed results participants of the research wanted to enhance their willingness to communicate in English, but lack of exposure to communication in their daily routine negatively influenced their overall WTC. Therefore, MacIntyre et al., (1998: 547) argued that "the ultimate goal of the learning process should be to engender in language students the willingness to seek out communication opportunities and the willingness actually to communicate in them" (p. 547). By reflecting on this assumption, MacIntyre and Doucette, (2010) demonstrated that any educational programme which failed to cultivate WTC in learners of L2 should be omitted from syllabus. However, the informants of the current research actually seemed to be deprived of standard of updated and modern pedagogy of language teaching in place like Khairpur (for details, see context chapter). Thus, we can conclude that places where access to modern language pedagogy still consider to be distant future work, generating WTC educational programmes or providing learners better exposure to English requires long time.

#### **7.4 Qualitative results of RQ2**

This section of the chapter discusses the qualitative results of the RQ2 in consonance with previous empirical studies specially in Asian EFL contexts and across world generally. In the preceding section, quantitative results of RQ2 were discussed in the light of previous studies on WTC but in isolation from the qualitative results. Using thematic analysis technique, the

qualitative findings and relationship of variables affecting informants' WTC in English along with patterns of interaction of variables would be presented.

#### **7.4.1 Background and contextual variables**

This section specifically discussed the background and contextual factors, which affected L2 learners WTC. The contextual factors, besides background variables as mentioned above, explored during data analysis included followings: Attractiveness and interestingness of topic, type of task, role of teacher, positive learning environment desire to get good grades and lack of confidence. These contextual variables were relevant in a context of current study because most of the learners of L2 during their interviews quite frequently mentioned the joint strong influence of these variables on their WTC. Cao (2011:468) demonstrated that WTC emerged from joint effect of the contextual variables such topic, task type, interlocutor, teacher and group size along with other linguistic factors. From the background variables to the contextual factors emerged while analyzing the obtained data from semi-structured interviews, most of the participants revealed that there was joint potential influence all those variables on their (learners') L2 WTC.

#### **7.4.2 Attractiveness of topic**

Attractiveness of the topic was frequently quoted to be one of the most potential variables influencing L2 learner WTC. Most of the participants reported to show immense amount of interest to initiate interaction when topic of discussion was of interest to them. In the current study, attractiveness and interestingness of topic related to situation in which learners' WTC could increase while discussing the topic. Dörnyei (2009) suggested that the attractiveness and easiness of the topics under discussion are extremely important in increasing users' involvement in communication. MacIntyre et al (1998:554), while developing the WTC construct into L2 by designing a pyramid heuristic model, posited that topic familiarity

greatly affects the ease of language use. Content knowledge and topical expertise is more likely to boost up one's linguistic self-confidence, and lack of familiarity with the register may inhibit communication (ibid). Majority of the participants reported to show large amount of interest to initiate communication when topic of discussion was attractive and interesting to them. For example, Hira intended to initiate communication when topic was interesting to her

*If the topic is according to my interest then I get interest in it and then I love to speak*

On the other hand, boring or unattractive topic of discussion was seen to have negative effect on the overall WTC of the participants of the current study. Hira believed that her unwillingness to communicate in English could largely be hampered if the chosen topic of discussion was not interesting to her. She further said:

*but if the topic is not of my interest I become confused and I cannot speak then.*

For Junaid, interest referred to knowledge or familiarity with topic and educated audiences. He mentioned that his willingness increased when he had a good knowledge of the topic under discussion. Familiarity with topic appeared to be based on the pre-knowledge and preparation of the topic. Sometimes besides familiarity with topic, if L2 learners does not have encouraging listeners as audiences, their WTC does not increase and they prefer to switch to first language (L1). For example, Junaid mentioned:

*certainly, when we are communicating about the topic we don't know have knowledge it affects our communication in English. If people listen to positively I will prefer to communicate in English rather than native language. If people don't listen to me or don't understand me then prefer to speak in my native language.*

Analysed data demonstrated that attractiveness and knowledge of the topic could be essential for increase in L2 learners WTC in English. Most of the research participants (see qualitative chapter) revealed that their WTC largely increased if the chosen topic of discussion was

interesting to them. Previous empirical research studies have also found that background knowledge of the topic is necessary for L2 learners' boost in WTC so that they (L2 learners) may feel secure to talk (Cao and Philp, 2006; Kang, 2005; Liu, 2005).

### **7.4.3 Task Type**

Type of task was generally considered to be one of the essential predictors of the L2 learners' WTC in English. Previous research studies identified task type as a variable influencing L2 learners' WTC (Cao, 2006; Cao and Philp, 2006; Weaver, 2004). Majority of the learners, in the current study, expressed their preferences for task, which was easy because participants thought that easiness of the task could increase their WTC in English. For example, Kamran and Manhoor believed:

*WTC can be affected but we have to see the nature of task too but it changes or influences our willingness (Kamran)*

*off course specific task or topic or presentation whatever is given to student has great role to play and sometimes it affects our willingness (Manhoor)*

Qualitative analysed data indicated that difficulty of task could largely negatively affect the WTC of L2 learners, as it has been identified in the current study. Cao (2011:474) found that difficulty or nature of task type along with boring topic and uncooperating interlocutors exerted restraining and negative effects on WTC of L2 learners.

### **7.4.4 Interacting effects of background variables**

WTC construct conceptualised in an L2 as having both trait and state characteristics. The trait characteristics, which MacIntyre and his associates (1998) referred to the enduring variables, remain stable and do not change across different communicating contexts. The state or

situation variables were classified as variables which fluctuate with regard to change in communicating situation. The enduring variables encompassed personality, family background, educational background, language learning background, socio-economic background, and self-perceived level of proficiency in an L2. In case of the current study, some of these background variables (Provenance or family background, types of education or educational background, self-perceived level competence and exposure to English) were investigated with regard to L2 learners WTC.

Previous research studies demonstrated that trait variables or background variables had a strong influence on the L2 learners WTC. Liu (2009:192) indicated self-perceived level of proficiency in an L2 and past educational experiences as the main enduring variables. Cameron (2013:192) explored the effect of self-perceived competence in L2 and personality as the trait influences on learners' L2 WTC. In current study, research participants during interviews mentioned that their educational background, low level of proficiency or actual level of proficiency and lack of exposure to communicate in an L2 significantly affected their level of WTC. For instances, Manhoor mentioned,

*My educational background has had influence on my willingness to communicate in English.*

Mukhtiar mentioned,

*I always try to communicate my ideas with friends and teachers but lack of practice and lack of chances we cannot speak*

Though most of the research participants, while being interviewed in the current study, believed that trait variables had a strong effect on the overall level of their WTC, however, quantitative findings indicated that there were statistically no significant differences in their

WTC. This could be largely linked to nature of the research site which could neither be completely termed as urban part of the country nor could it totally be classified as a rural part of the Sindh Province. With regard to personality as a trait variable, though not investigated in the current study, MacIntyre et al. (1998:547) placed personality right at the bottom of the highly complex construct pyramid heuristic model of WTC, indicating the distal role of it in the overall WTC of L2 learners.

The publication of the MacIntyre et al's (1998) pyramid heuristic model of WTC invited researchers across the globe to investigate highly complex pyramid heuristic model. Subsequent research studies have suggested that language learning anxiety and actual language competence could be indirect aspects of the L2 learners personality (Elwood, 2011 and MacIntyre & Charos, 1996). However, the findings in the current study demonstrated that L2 learners WTC was affected by the language learning anxiety. For instance, Murtaza mentioned

*It's my hesitation that I can't talk to you or anybody else in a good manner*

Like many previous empirical studies, findings further suggested that some of the psychological linguistics variables affected research informants level of WTC in English. Those variables reported to be communication anxiety, level of proficiency and reliance on L1.

Most of the participants, in the current study, mentioned that getting better grades was almost the ultimate of the of the L2 learners. Results of the current study indicated the strong proximal relationship between getting good grades and speaking better English. Dörnyei (2001:51) maintained that “generating a willingness to communicate in a foreign language is arguably a central – if not *the* most central – objective of modern L2 pedagogy.” The findings were consistent with Askar's (1998:165) study in which desire to get good grades directly

affected the educational expectation of L2 learners. On the basis that Kang (2005:278) and Yashima (2002:54) accentuated that the ultimate goal of language learning should be focused on the increase level of WTC. Research participants strongly believed in the present study that communicating orally in English facilitated them in getting better grades. However, access to better education largely based upon the socio-economic conditions of the L2 learners because getting better education is directly associated with educational institutes reputations. The well reputed institutes seemed to be too expensive to afford by most of the research participants of this study. In that scenario, socio-economic conditions of the learners determine their access to types of institute L2 learners would like to be educated from. Pourjafarian (2012:04) indicated a strong correlation between L2 learners WTC and their educational background and socio-economic background. In this next section of this chapter RQ 3 would be discussed which was specifically about the L2 learners' WTC and types of audiences they felt comfortable in communicating in English.

### **7.5 Research Question Three: Are there any significant differences between Pakistani university students' level of willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language with following interlocutors: (1) friends, (2) acquaintances, (3) strangers**

The RQ3 aimed to investigate the relationship between L2 learners' level of WTC and types of audiences they (research participants) preferred to communicate with in English. The findings, in the current study, indicated that friends were taken to be preferable type of audience, research informants wanted to communicate with in English. It was further suggested that male informants, in the current study, were found to more willing with their male friends than their female friends. However, the mean score was on the lower side and did not report much difference when communicating with other gender.

Several of previous empirical research indicated friends as the preferable type of audience which could largely affect L2 WTC positively (MacIntyre et al. 2012; MacIntyre; 2001; Kang; 2005;). Evidences from analysed data demonstrated that research informants, in the current study, viewed their friends who could motivate and encouraged them to communicate in English. The level of communication anxiety was reported to be reduced when their friends did not evaluate their (L2 learners) WTC. Pathan (2012:190) revealed that L2 students, in Pakistan, preferred to communicate with those friends who didn't evaluate their performance. De Saint Larger & Storch (2009:280) indicated that users of an L2, at the time of communication, felt exposed and concerned about being negatively evaluated by their peers. But in the case of the present study, more than half of the participants described friends as a positive and encouraging influence.

In addition to friend being a preferable audience, teachers were also reported to be desirable type of audience for research participants in the current study. MacIntyre (2012:13) found that teacher, as type of audience, could encourage and boost L2 learners level of WTC. Several other empirical research has shown that social support, academic encouragement and friendly behaviour both from friends and teacher, could raise the level of the L2 learners WTC. Kang's (2005) findings demonstrated that participants felt lower level of WTC when they encountered with some non-native speakers who had higher level of L2 proficiency. The participants, in the current study, also revealed that they didn't feel comfortable when they communicated with someone who had a higher level of L2 proficiency irrespective of being familiar type of audiences. Occasionally, participants reported to be little nervous and showed lower level of WTC when their peers posited negative evaluation of their abilities in an L2. This result is consistent with findings reported by several other empirical studies conducted in various contexts (Cao, 2009; 2011; Peng, 2012; 2014). In case of gender, (Riasati, 2012)

found that age and gender as variables had strong influence on the L2 WTC. However, present study though found little difference in L2 learners WTC when male participants or vice versa intended to initiate communication in an L2.

## **7.6 Qualitative findings of RQ3**

Like quantitative results, qualitative findings in the current study clearly demonstrated that two of the interlocutors such as friends and teachers enjoyed immense amount of positive influence on the overall level of research participants WTC in an L2. Although the role of teacher was not initially part of the RQ3, however, while holding semi-structured interviews most of the research participants hailed the role of teacher as an ideal interlocutor in fostering the WTC of the L2 learners in an EFL contexts. Previous empirical research studies have frequently investigated and then emphasised encouraging the role of familiar audiences and teachers specifically in EFL contexts (Wen & Clement, 2003; Cao, 2009; Peng, 2012; Riasati, 2012). With regard to the role of teacher as facilitator, most of the research participants in the current study, viewed teacher's role as a fostering source to bolster the level of L2 learners WTC. It was further disclosed that teacher severed the great impetus in even removing the difficulties of the L2 learners and helped them (research participants) in choosing the right topic for discussion so that level of WTC could be boosted during academic discussion in the class. In the Chinese EFL context, Wen & Clement (2003:27-28) considered the role of teacher's support and teacher immediacy as positive influence in developing WTC of the L2 learners. Cao and Philip (2006) suggested that teacher's role and teaching styles could determine L2 learners WTC. Similarly, research participants in the present study highly appreciated the role of teacher in boosting WTC in an L2. For instances, Junaid mentioned

*I do feel that we should communicate in English, and the teacher really helps me a lot to achieve this because we don't have a positive environment here except the teacher encouraging us to speak. I do always ask anything if I don't know, and my teachers are nice and they help me in that*

Until recently, Zarrinabadi (2014:288-95) revealed that teacher's decision to choose topic of discussion and approach to error correction immensely contributed in the overall boost of L2 learners WTC. Evidences from the previous empirical research lent strong support to the findings in the current study where role of teacher was taken to be contributing variable in fostering L2 learners WTC specifically in Asian EFL contexts.

Besides the role of teacher, interlocutors (friends, acquaintances and strangers) emerged to be one of the essential variables in determining the overall WTC of the L2 learners. The research participants, in the current study, made clear that teachers, classmates and friends could be the potential interlocutors when they (L2 learners) intended to communicate in English. Several previous research studies lent support with notion that familiarity with interlocutors and their attention during conversation found to be source of fostering and increasing the level of WTC of the L2 users (Wen & Clement, 2003; Zarrinabadi, 2014; Kang 2005; MacIntyre et al., 1998; MacIntyre et al., 2003). The result in the current study demonstrated that research participants were more comfortable with familiar interlocutors when they (research participants) intended to engage into communication. For instances, Murtaza mentioned

*I talk in English in good manner with my friend, with my fellows, with my family members but it's my hesitation that I can't speak in good manner with you because you are new to me.*

In contrast to previous empirical studies as outlined above, some of the research participants in the current study revealed that they wanted to exhibit their linguistic skills or level of L2

proficiency to acquaintances and strangers. They further disclosed that they felt sense of pride by highlight their linguistic competence. In this connection, no evidence has been reported until now where we could comprehend the reasons behind feeling pride if someone had a high level of L2 proficiency. In addition to that qualitative findings suggested that research participants in the current study didn't feel much hesitation in engaging communication with opposite gender. However, familiarity with opposite gender was also one of the essential requirements of the initiating communication. Riasati (2012) found mixed responses while investigating the role of gender in communication an L2. Some of the participants preferred to have communication with same sex while others choose to communicate with opposite sex; thus, showing some variation in their willingness to communicate in terms of gender.

#### **7.7 Research Question four: Are there any significant differences between Pakistani university students' level of willingness to communicate in English as foreign language with following conversational contexts? (1) one to one situations (2) small meeting (3) large meeting**

The RQ4 investigated the differences between interactional contexts and L2 learners level of WTC in an EFL contexts. Three of the interactional/conversational contexts were employed in this study which were one-to-one situations, small meetings and large meetings. More recently, the current approaches to learning and teaching L2 shifted towards exposure of L2 and provisions to engage into some meaningful communication (Cao & Philip, 2006:481). Drawing upon that recent emphasis on the interaction-based second language development, many researchers recommended the benefits of the learning through meaningful interaction with others, accentuating that 'learners have to talk in order to learn' (Skehan, 1989; Swain, 1995; Gass, 2003). Considering the benefits of the engaging into communicative interaction, some of the researchers argued that ultimate goal of language learning should be the creation of the WTC in the language learning process (MacIntyre et al., 1998, 2003).

The results indicated that research informants' level of WTC was not statistically significant between one-to-one situations and gender  $F(2, 344) = 1.12, p = .32$ ; partial eta squared = .007, suggesting small effect size. The mean scores revealed that both male and female research participants seemed to be almost having same level of WTC when they communicated in one-to-one situations. The interactional contexts have been of particular importance in the field of WTC research and have contributed to great deal in the overall level of L2 learners' WTC. Several empirical research studies indicated that students were more likely to have higher level of WTC when they communicated with each other in small groups and dyads (Cao & Philip, 2006; Cao, 2014; Liu, 2005; Peng, 2012).

The findings further suggested that there was statistically no significant difference between research informants overall level of WTC in a small meeting and gender,  $F(2, 344) = .803, p = .45$ ; partial eta squared = .005, suggesting small effect size. Cao and Philip (2006:487) found that six of their research participants believed that small number of interlocutors in a conversation contexts was preferable. The results in the current study also suggested that Pakistani university students were more willing to communicate in in small meeting. Ali (2010:62) found that participants were more willing to communicate in small group of the people. In this connection, Cao and Philip (2006:487) demonstrated that L2 learners could only take up opportunities to engage into communication when they perceived it extremely suitable for them in terms types of audiences and conversational or interactional contexts.

Several research studies have shown that L2 learners overall WTC seemed to be reducing when users of English provided interactional or conversational contexts with large number of people listening to them (Kang, 2005; Cao & Philip, 2006; Cao, 2011). The results, in the current study, indicated that there was statistically no significant difference between research informants overall level of WTC in a large meeting and gender. The previous research studies

also found that audiences had a profound influence on the overall level of L2 learners' WTC (MacIntyre, 1995; McCroskey & Bear, 1985).

## **7.8 Qualitative findings of RQ4**

Interactional contexts with perceived opportunity to communicate in an L2 was frequently quoted by the research participants in the current study. Kang (2005) argued that by creating WTC in an L2 learners, we facilitated them to be active learners who could increase their efforts to learn and use language by involving in different types of interactional activities, both inside and outside the classroom. The research participants, in the current study, preferred interaction in one-to-one situations followed by small and then large meetings. Most of the participants preferred one-to-one situation because they felt less anxiety and more motivated to communicate in English. For instances, Ajab mentioned that one-to-one situations were easier than other conversational contexts. Cao (2011:487) argued that group size could affect L2 learners level of WTC. The findings, in the current study, are consistent with other empirical studies (Baker and MacIntyre, 2000; Kang, 2005).

In case of the small meeting, Hira mentioned that she felt more interested to communicate in English and her level of confusion or anxiety was found to be highly reduced. The research informants in the present study believed that interactional or conversational contexts where less number of people present could be the preferable context for them. The immediate reason cited by most of the participants was that they felt the fear of being negatively evaluated. The fear of losing face value increase their level of anxiety and reduced the level of WTC in interactional contexts where large number of people are present. For instances, Paras mentioned,

*Actually, the problem is confidence level; the problem is hesitation, we feel hesitation in front of them; if there are so many people in front of us, how then we can speak or communicate with them.*

The findings in the current study are consistent with previous empirical research studies in which fewer number of interlocutors preferred over large number of interlocutors in any interactional contexts by L2 learners (McCroskey and Richmond, 1991 and Cao, 2011).

## **7.9 Summary**

This chapter provided the detailed comparative discussion of the results of the analysed data obtained in the light of the previous empirical research studies conducted especially in Asian EFL. Each of the research question was elaborated, both quantitatively and qualitatively, and results of the present study complemented the previous research by showing the dynamic and trait like nature of WTC. The present study explored a number of contextual and linguistics variables, which have not previously been investigated in the Pakistani contexts. The findings of the present study demonstrated that Pakistani university students level of WTC was neither high nor low due to effect of the several variables such as Provenance, types of education, perceived level of competence, exposure to English, topic, interlocutors, task type, gender, lack of positive environment, role of the teacher. It was further found and then discussed in the light of previous research that WTC is complex construct which could fluctuate dynamically and could remain static at the same time due to the personality of the learners. The research findings of the further revealed that one to one situations and small meetings were two of the ideal and preferable interactional context including friends being the most comfortable audiences to communicate with. In the next section, the limitations, pedagogical implications and recommendations for future studies would be elaborated.

## **Chapter 08**

### **Pedagogical implications, limitations and recommendations for future studies**

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section of the chapter elaborates the pedagogical implications of the present study. The second section highlights contributions and limitations of the present study. The third and final section of the chapter provides recommendation for future studies based on the findings of the present study.

#### **8.1 Pedagogical implications of the current study**

The present study provides detailed description of the willingness to communicate (WTC) construct in English as foreign language (EFL) context. This study found that no single variable could be related to L2 learners' WTC. This study further offers investigative and reflective information about how second language (L2) learners perceive WTC construct. WTC, in an L2 context, is attributed to a host of variables and their complex patterns of interaction. It further provides valuable insight as well as information to teachers for classroom practice. The findings of the study provided information to teachers that WTC is a direct predictor of frequency of communication and the amount of conversation takes place in different conversational contexts. Results further added that language teachers should understand that WTC does not function solely, rather the interdependence of the environmental, individual and linguistic factors greatly affect users' willingness to communicate. The findings of the study further indicated that teachers should also understand that there is a lot more involved in the users of English behaviour at given context or given the point of time in the class. It is important for language practitioners to recognise WTC as a learning factor and its role in the language learning in order to assess L2 WTC systematically

in a given context. Kang (2005) also emphasises that teachers must create language activities in class which could promote and enhance facilitating factors WTC as much as possible.

The detailed discussion on the various variables of WTC have provided insightful reflection to the teachers about the dynamic nature of WTC. The findings of the present study have cast great deal of light upon the complex nature of WTC so that teachers should understand, specifically in Pakistani context and generally across the world, that it seems completely inappropriate to relate WTC to a sole factor/variable. The findings of the present study support that WTC should be seen as an essential component of second language acquisition (SLA) and educational programmes must be design in a way that aids to learner needs of improving WTC (Kang, 2005; MacIntyre et al., 1998). In a Pakistani EFL context, English is generally taught and learnt only in classroom settings; and there is dire need of cultivating and enhancing L2 learners WTC by introducing and designing such educational programmes which could be useful for the students of the region. The results of the present study have thoroughly elaborated the reasons due to which L2 students, especially at Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, (SALU) could not improve their WTC.

It is imperative for teachers as well as students to understand the complex dynamics the WTC in an L2. The complex nature of the WTC construct, it appears difficult for teachers to manipulate L2 learners' WTC at any specific moment. Therefore, it is extremely essential for teachers to enhance self-confidence among L2 learners by fostering their self-perceived level of competence and reducing the level of communication anxiety. MacIntyre et al., (1998) argued that L2 learners could not learn or perform appropriately in the target language if they believed that their self-confidence was low in English. While addressing the role of teachers, Larsen-Freeman and Cameron (2008) considered teachers as managers of dynamics language learning in an L2 classroom. They further highlighted that by comprehending the dynamics of

the WTC in an L2 class, teachers could be in a better position to intervene in the learning process of the L2 learners and enhancing the role of the facilitating WTC variables and elimination of negative factors (ibid., 1998-226). Additionally, teachers should pay little more attention to reticent students and encourage and provide them more opportunities to communicate in an L2. Based on the results of the present study, the contributions and limitations of the study would be discussed in the next section.

## **8.2 Contributions of the current study**

The current study made significant and novel contributions specifically for Pakistan and generally for the world in the field of IDs research. It demonstrated and identified different strands of variables that affected users' willingness to communicate in English in a setting which is neither fully developed in terms of appropriate facilities of learning and teaching English, nor do students belong to highly developed areas of the country where their previous education was any better. This study was set out in the context in which most of the participants were from remote areas of the country where basic access to schooling considered to be privileged. Previous research in the field of WTC was mainly conducted in the China, Japan, Canada, New Zealand, and very few studies reported from Pakistan (for details see section 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5). Thus, in line with mainstream SLA field where most of the research conducted traditionally from cognitive perspective to more complex-sensitive perspectives, current study experienced a shift and investigated IDs factors situated in a specific learning context. This study which was conducted in very specific learning context of Shah Abdul Latif University examined the influences of the learning environment and sociocultural contexts on the dynamic nature of the WTC.

Dörnyei and Ushioda (2009) argue that the convergence between L2, motivation theory and mainstream SLA lies in the adoption of a person-in-context to a rational approach to examine the motivation as a dynamic and situated concept. They further demonstrated that this approach focuses on the “the complexity and idiosyncrasy of person’s motivational to particular events and experiences in their life (p. 355). In this connection, the results of the current study are in harmony with their approach or proposal. This study investigated the WTC factors and its underlying effects in the given context which one or another way experienced by participants. The findings give us empirical evidence that all underlying factors of WTC work in collectively to create WTC among the users of English.

The present study makes a number of methodological and pedagogical contributions to the already rich existing research on WTC. The present study applied mixed method research design to distinctively investigate the level of WTC in the Pakistani EFL context. Past studies into L2 WTC were investigated by employing either quantitative or qualitative research approaches. Some of the earlier studies were completely characterised by the quantitative measures (MacIntyre, 2007, pp. 207-208; Weaver, 2009, pp. 2-7). Until recently, some good body of research was devoted to investigating WTC qualitatively from sociocultural and ecological frameworks (Cao, 2009; Cao, 2011; Cao, 2014; Peng, 2012).

This study is distinctive in a sense that most of the previous studies were devoted to investigating the WTC quantitatively, while the present study designed to take holistic view in order to examine the factors affecting WTC of the L2 learners by combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Cao (2009) argued that though quantitative studies have largely contributed to our understanding of the WTC construct, however, most of those studies could not explore the underlying variables of WTC by virtue of the methodological limitations. Thus, both quantitative and qualitative research techniques are served as complementary in a

way that present study attempted to examine the complexities of the WTC construct in an L2 context.

In addition to methodological perspective, the current study has also contributed to WTC research by examining the factors in a Pakistani EFL/ESL context where little research has been conducted to investigate WTC and its complex construct. It has been reported in the literature review section that most of the studies have been conducted in western ESL and EFL contexts (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; MacIntyre et al., 1999; MacIntyre, 2007a; MacIntyre et al., 2001; Cao and Philip, 2006; Cao, 2009; Hashimoto, 2002; Kang, 2005; Peng, 2007; 2012). Besides that, the present study has investigated WTC at university level, whereas most of the past studies have been conducted at schools and colleges level.

Lastly, the findings of the present study have contributed to L2 pedagogy in a Pakistani context where English is still taught as subject even at university level. The results to the present study could improve teachers' insight about complex process of communication in an L2 class. The findings of the current study could specifically be used for teachers to understand 'the many workable compromises that language learners make on-the-fly as they engage with the complexities of using someone else's tongue to communicate' (MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011:169).

### **8.3 Limitations and recommendations for future studies**

Like many other research studies, the present study has also some of the limitations. First, the research site of the present study was in the semi-urban areas of the Sindh, Pakistan where access to updated and modern resources of the language teaching are still at its early stages. Most of the participants of the research study hails from the rural areas where the standard of

the education is still questionable. So, the findings of the present could not be generalised beyond specific learners and the immediate context involved in the current study.

Secondly, the findings of the present study revealed that Pakistani university students' level of willingness to communicate was neither high nor low. These results could be extremely limited to Khairpur because there is socio-economic division or discrepancies in Pakistan. The level of the L2 learners from elitist or privately run school, colleges, and universities likely to higher than those who lived and studied in the rural areas of the country. In order to obtain holistic and more comprehensive picture of Pakistani university students' level of WTC, further empirical research is required from metropolitan cities of the country.

Thirdly, the present study was limited to the oral communication of the L2 learners. MacIntyre et al., (1998) argued that, besides speaking, WTC construct addressed all other modes of communication such as reading, writing and listening. Further research is required to see and examine WTC level of L2 learners' reading, writing and listening perspectives.

Fourthly, the findings of the study suggested that WTC of the L2 learners change across various interactional and conversational contexts such as type of interlocutors, task type, topic and level of perceived competence. All these associated factors need to be investigated further with the L2 learners of different proficiency levels.

Fifthly, the results of the study indicated that there was not much difference in the WTC levels of research participants who were educated in the state-run schools than those who claimed to seek education from privately run schools. The immediate reason could be the rural setting of the research site where the standard of private schools and colleges may not be as different as in the fully urbanized cities of Pakistan. It is, therefore, suggested that future research may be directed towards examining the differences between state-run

education and privately-run system of Pakistan. Interestingly, most of the research participants during semi-structured interviews appreciated the level of privately run educational system in their locality. However, more in-depth research is required to investigate the underlying differences between two different types educational system running in the country.

Finally, the present study was devoted to examining WTC level of Pakistani university students, no research has yet been found, in a Pakistani ESL/EFL context, which could have investigated WTC level of L2 learners from schools and colleges. This has, perhaps, unmasked the dearth of research activities across Pakistan. In this connection, researchers, linguists and policy maker should pay little more attention towards such challenging task at schools and college levels.

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# Appendix A

## Research Instrument

### Questionnaire

#### Investigating Pakistani University Students' Willingness to Communicate in English as a Foreign Language: A Case Study of Shah Abdul Latif University Khairpur

Dear student,

I am very thankful to you for showing your agreement to participate in this survey. This questionnaire is the part of research study and will not be used anywhere else. Your name and the information you provide will absolutely remain confidential. Please answer each question given below as seriously and honestly as you can. Your name or any other mark of identity will not be used while discussing this research both verbally and in writing. This research study has got ethical approval and information given by the participants will be kept secret in the strictest sense of confidence in line with Northumbria's ethics protocols.

Student Number: -----

Gender: Male

Female

#### Willingness to communicate in English with different interlocutors:

**Direction:** There are twelve situations mentioned below in which speaker of EFL/ESL may or may not choose to communicate. You have completely free choice to indicate by putting "X" in the following box that describes you best that how much willing or unwilling you are when you communicate with different audiences i.e. strangers, acquaintances, and friends.

Strongly unwilling to communicate	Unwilling to communicate	Neither willing nor	Willing to communicate	Strongly willing to communicate
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			unwilling		
1. Present a talk to a group of strangers <u>in English.</u>					
2. Talk with an acquaintance while in one to one situation <u>in English.</u>					
3. Talk in a large meeting of friends <u>in English.</u>					
4. Talk in a small group of strangers <u>in English.</u>					
5. Talk with a friend in one to one situation <u>in English</u>					
6. Talk in large meeting of acquaintances <u>in English.</u>					
7. Talk with a stranger in one to one situation <u>in English.</u>					
8. Present a talk to a group of friends <u>in English.</u>					
9. Talk in a small group of acquaintances <u>in English.</u>					
10. Talk in a large meeting of strangers <u>in English.</u>					
11. Talk in a small group of friends <u>in English.</u>					
12. Present a talk to a group of acquaintances <u>in English.</u>					

**Willingness to communicate in different conversational contexts:**

**Direction:** There are twelve situations mentioned below in which speaker of EFL/ESL may or may not choose to communicate. You have completely free choice to indicate by putting “X” in the following box that describes you best that how much willing or unwilling you are in the following conversational contexts such as one to one situation, group, small meeting and large meeting.

	Strongly unwilling to communicate	Unwilling to communicate	Neither willing nor unwilling	Willing to communicate	Strongly willing to communicate
1. Present a talk to a group of strangers <u>in English.</u>					
2. Talk with an acquaintance while in one to one situation <u>in English.</u>					
3. Talk in a large meeting of friends <u>in English.</u>					
4. Talk in a small group of strangers <u>in English.</u>					
5. Talk with a friend in one to one situation <u>in English</u>					
6. Talk in large meeting of acquaintances <u>in English.</u>					
7. Talk with a stranger in one to one situation <u>in English.</u>					
8. Present a talk to a group of friends <u>in English.</u>					
9. Talk in a small group of acquaintances <u>in English.</u>					

10. Talk in a large meeting of strangers <u>in English</u> .					
11. Talk in a small group of friends <u>in English</u> .					
12. Present a talk to a group of acquaintances <u>in English</u> .					

**Willingness to communicate:**

**Direction:** There are twelve situations mentioned below in which speaker of EFL/ESL may or may not choose to communicate. You have completely free choice to indicate that how much are you willing or unwilling to communicate in the following statements by putting “X” in the following box that describes you best that how much willing or unwilling you are.

	Strongly unwilling to communicate	Unwilling to communicate	Neither willing nor unwilling	Willing to communicate	Strongly willing to communicate
1. I communicate in English in the class when teacher comes					
2. I participate in the class when asked question in English					
3. I speak to teacher in English about my homework assignment					
4. I ask a teacher when I feel I do not understand the task in the class					
5. I play a role actor in English in the class					
6. I explain my hobbies and rules in front of the class					
7. I read a newspaper article aloud in English in the class					
8. I speak about my favourite game in English					

9. I listen to the instruction of the teacher and complete the task in the class					
10.I present the review of the movie in English in the class					
11. A stranger enters the class you are in, how willing are you to communicate with him/her in English for clarification or instructions					
12. I communicate in English to explain my summer vacation in the class					

## Appendix B

### Background research questionnaire

Q1. What is your mother tongue?

1. Sindhi    2. Urdu                      3. Balouchi    4. Seraiki    5. Punjabi

Q2. How did you receive your previous education?

1. Public sector  
2. Private sector

Q3. Have you ever been abroad?

1. Yes  
2. No

Q4. Did you ever communicate in English with any native speaker of English?

1. Yes  
2. No

Q5. Did you study English before majoring in English at University?

1. Yes  
2. No

Q6. Where do you live?

1. Urban  
2. Rural

Q7. How do you assess your self-perceived level of English to communicate in English?

1. Low level of proficiency
2. High level of proficiency

## **Appendix C**

### **Questions for semi-structured interviews**

Q1. Do you really feel that you are always WTC in English?

Q2. Do you feel more willing to communicate in English when teachers ask you to participate in the class?

Q3. Do you feel more or less willing to ask anything your teacher if you don't understand anything in the classroom?

Q4. Do you think that if you are given more chances to communicate, your willingness to communicate in English will increase?

Q5. How do you intend to speak or stay quite ? (what influences this decision?)

Q6. Do you think that number of years you spent learning English..will that increase or decrease your willingness?

Q7. What are the most difficult things that you think stop you from being willing to communicate in English?

Q8. Do you really think that WTC has any link to your previous L2 experiences, like pleasant or unpleasant?

Q9. Do you really think that different contexts or situations affect your willingness to communicate in English?

Q10. Do you think that any new or novel situation may influence your willingness to communicate in English?

Q11. Do you really feel that topic and medium of communication affects your WTC in English?

Q12. Do you think that familiarity with topic of communication can increase or reduce your willingness to communicate in English?

Q13. Do you think that your actual knowledge of English affect your willingness to communicate in English?

Q14. Do you really feel that being more willing to communicate in English can help you get respectable or bright career?

Q15. Q10. Do you think that your willingness to communicate in English changes from moment to moment or situation to situation or even person to person?

Q16. Do you really think that your background for example educational or social background affect your willingness to communicate in English?

Q17. Do you really feel that being less willing to communicate in English influence your educational achievements?

Q18. Do you think that you learn English language for communication purposes?

Q19. Do you really think educational programs should be designed in a way that it engenders willingness to communicate in English?

Q20. Do you really feel that teacher's role in the class can help or decrease your WTC in English?

Q21. Do you feel that any relation with person u communicate can increasing your WTC to communicate?

Q22. Do your really feel that your WTC can be affected by any specific task given to you?

Q23. Do you feel that willingness to communicate with opposite gender can influence your WTC in English?

Q24. Do you feel that communication anxiety or we may call hesitation can affect your willingness to communicate?

Q25. Do you use any other mode of willingness to communicate in English except talk, I mean, through reading or writing?

### **Communication audiences**

Q1. Do you really think that familiarity with audiences can help you to be more willing to communicate in English?

Q 2. Do you feel that there are some situations where you think you are more or less willing to communicate than others?

Q3. Do you think you can be more willing to person you know well? I mean friend..if yes why? ? (in one to one situation, group, small and large meetings)

Q.4 how do u feel when you communicate in English with somebody you don't know?

Q5. How do you feel when you communicate with someone you do not know much?

Can you tell that what kind of audiences or people you feel more willing to communicate in English?

### **Conversational contexts**

Q1. Do you feel more or less willing to communicate in English in group of people you don't know (strangers, friends and acquaintances)?

Q2. Do you feel more or less willing to communicate in English in a large meeting of people you don't know?

Q3. Do you feel more or less willing to communicate in English a small meeting of people you don't know?

Q4. Do you think that you are more or less willing to communicate in one to one situation?

Q5. Do you really feel that large number of people listening to you can affect your WTC in English?

Q6. Do you really feel that willingness to communicate may vary according to conversational contexts and nature of audience?

Q7. Do you think there is any situation in which u wish to speak but choose not to (why?)

Q8. Can you tell the situations in which you were most or least willing to communicate?









