

Effect of Motivation, Willingness to Communicate (WTC), Self Perceived Communicative Competence (SPCC) and L2 Anxiety on the Frequency of Use of English as L2

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Abstract

The use of English as L2 for communication is the main purpose behind the teaching and learning of English and the whole task of ESL teaching and learning revolves around its use for communicative purpose. This study is an effort to explore the reasons because of which some of the students seek L2 use more frequently while others avoid it. The present study is carried out to estimate the effect of motivation, willingness to communicate (WTC), self-perceived communicative competence (SPCC) and L2 anxiety (ANX) on the frequency of use of English as L2 for oral communication (FREQ). Moreover, the study aims to explore which of the motivation, WTC, SPCC and ANX has comparatively more or less effect on FREQ. 123 University students studying English at post graduate level (MA English) participated in the study. A survey questionnaire was used as a data collection tool for the study. SPSS-20.0 software was applied to find out the values of mean, standard deviation, correlation coefficient and co-efficient of regression among the variables. The results showed that within the four variables; motivation, WTC, SPCC and L2 anxiety; SPCC is found to be the first, WTC is the 2nd and motivation is the 3rd positively influencing variable that affect FREQ among post graduate students of English in Pakistan. Anxiety is found to have a weak and negative effect on FREQ.

Key Words: English as Second Language (ESL), frequency of use of ESL for oral communication (FREQ), L2 anxiety (ANX), motivation, self-perceived communicative competence (SPCC), willingness to communicate (WTC)

Introduction

The present study was designed to measure the effect of motivation, willingness to communicate (WTC), L2 anxiety (ANX) and self-perceived communicative competence (SPCC) of the ESL learners on the frequency of use ESL for oral communication (FREQ). The main objective of the study is to discover the relationship and level of effectiveness among the above mentioned five variables which influence

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the teaching and learning of English as L2 and its use for oral communication. This study is based on the calculated value of mean, standard deviation, correlation coefficient and co-efficient of regression among the variables which influence the FREQ and will determine which of motivation, WTC, SPCC and Anx has comparatively more or less effect on the FREQ.

Pakistani ESL/ EFL Context

Coleman (2010) has mentioned following four types of educational institutions which are commonly found in Pakistan:

1. Private English medium institutions for the rich and powerful elite class
2. Private English Medium institutions for upper middle class
3. State run Urdu Medium institutions for the poor and lower middle class
4. Urdu Medium institutions for religious education known as Dini-madaris

Coleman stated that out of above mentioned four types of Pakistani educational institutions, the first type can be truly called English medium. These institutions are meant for the feudal and elite class children who can bear the expenses of these private English medium institutions. Including the second type of so-called private English medium institutions, the remaining three types of institutions are no doubt Urdu medium. Andrabi, Das, Vishwanath, and Khwaja (2009) clearly say that the second type of institutions merely bear the title of English medium institutions but the real picture shows that they have never been meant to be English medium institutions at all. As a result, the Pakistani ESL learners, cannot speak ESL proficiently especially for oral communicative purpose. Moreover, Ghani, Mahmood, and Akram (2008) have come to conclusion that in Pakistani ESL context, text based teaching of ESL is given undue importance “English language teaching has become text based in Pakistan” (p. 2). This undue emphasis on the text based teaching of ESL is a big obstacle for the successful teaching of spoken English.

Statement of the Problem

In the light of above mentioned arguments, ESL learners fall a prey to grammar and text based ESL teaching and learning environment. For them, the sole purpose of ESL learning is just passing the examination. According to Coleman (2010), in Pakistan, the ESL teaching and learning focus the written examination only. A lot of factors and circumstances are responsible for this failure of ESL learners in using English for oral communication. These factors can include improper system of syllabus designing, inappropriate evaluation system, lack of teaching material and proper facilities, improper teaching strategies and techniques, socio economic problems etc. The objective of this study is to focus some of the factors which are responsible for ESL learners’ use of English as L2 for oral communication (FREQ). These factors are: motivation; WTC; SPCC and L2 use anxiety.

Research Questions

1. Does motivation affect the frequency of use of ESL for oral communication (FREQ)?
2. Does Willingness to Communicate (WCT) affect the frequency of use of ESL for oral communication (FREQ)?
3. Does self-perceived communicative competence (SPCC) affect the frequency of use of ESL for oral communication (FREQ)?
4. Does L2 anxiety affect the frequency of use of ESL for oral communication (FREQ)?
5. Which of the four factors i.e. motivation, WTC, SPCC and ANX have comparatively more or less potential to affect the FREQ?

Review of Related Literature

Motivation

It is difficult to define motivation in terms of a single definition because it is a concept that is very complex in its nature and composition. Gardner (2006) has termed motivation as a very “complex phenomenon with many facets” therefore it is very hard to describe it in terms of “a simple definition”. This multilayered phenomenon is defined by different schools of thoughts in so many different ways. In the light of behavioristic point of view, motivation is merely an “anticipation of reward” (Brown, 2000, p.160). Cognitivists believe that motivation is the “the degree of effort” the people apply in order to achieve any specific goal or objective (Keller, 1983, p.389). According to the constructivists “social context” and “individual decisions” are more important in terms of motivation (Brown, 2000, p.161). Brown (2000) thinks that “need” is a common notion among these three schools of thought.

Skehan (1991, p.509) has described motivation in terms of four hypotheses: Firstly, the Intrinsic Hypothesis is based on the innate or inborn interest of the learner. Secondly, the Resultative Hypothesis is based on the learner’s good or bad performance during a task. Thirdly, the Internal Cause Hypothesis is based on the learner’s already existing motivation to accomplish any task. Fourthly, the Carrot and Stick Hypothesis is based on concept of reward or punishment as a result of the accomplishment of any task.

Gardner (1985) has described motivation in terms of its two types: Firstly, integrative motivation refers to ESL learner’s desire to incorporate and fit into target L2 community. Secondly, instrumental motivation refers to some educational and professional life benefits.

Willingness to Communicate (WTC)

Burgoon (1976) introduced the notion of Unwillingness to Communicate (UWTC) in the field of L1 language learning. Burgoon defined UWTC as a tendency to avoid oral communication by the introverts because of language anxiety. McCroskey &

Baer (1985) introduced the notion of WTC by inverting the UWTC to WTC. Then, for the first time, the notion of WTC was shifted from the realm of L1 to L2 by MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, (1998). Different language researchers have conceptualized WTC in terms of various affective variables as show in Table 1.

Table 1
Affective variables that affect WTC as described by different language researchers

Researchers	Affective variables
Burgoon (1976)	Anomia, Alienation, Introversion, Self-esteem, Communication apprehension
Burgoon (1976)	Anomia, Alienation, Introversion, Self-esteem, Communication apprehension, Perceived competence
MacIntyre, Babin, & Clément, (1999)	Extroversion, Emotional stability, Self-esteem, Communication apprehension, Perceived communication competence
Yashima (2002)	Attitude, Language motivation, L2 competence, Self-confidence

This trend of the linguists to describe the notion of WTC in terms of different affective variables asserted MacIntyre et al. (1998) to present Heuristic Model of WTC.

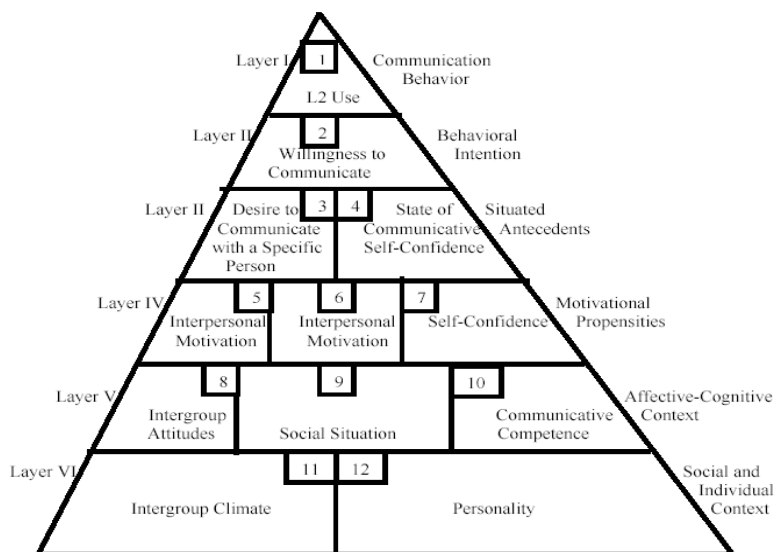


Figure 1. Heuristic Model of WTC presented by Macintyre et al. (1998)

This heuristic model of WTC is scaled in a pyramid organization with different

six layers based on different variables as shown in Figure 1.

Self-perceived Communicative Competence (SPCC)

SPCC can be described as a degree of confidence that an ESL learner has about his competence level which enables him to communicate in ESL context or ESL classroom. The ESL learner who has high competency level may have ability to communicate in ESL more confidently and more frequently while the ESL learner who has low competency level may be a victim of L2 anxiety (Horwitz & Young, 1991). SPCC has been defined by McCroskey (1984) as an “adequate ability to pass along or give information; the ability to make known by talking or writing” (p.261). MacIntyre (1994) argued that higher SPCC affects WTC which in turn affects the FREQ. Baker and MacIntyre (2000) concluded that SPCC is an important variable which can determine the FREQ. MacIntyre & Charos (1996) examined Gardner’s Socio-educational Model (1985) and MacIntyre’s WTC model (1994) and the results affirmed SPCC as a strong predictor of FREQ. SPCC is an important variable in the field of ESL learning and teaching. SPCC gives the ESL learner an awareness about his personal strengths and weaknesses that facilitates the process of ESL learning and its use for oral communication (Pintrich, 2002).

L2 Anxiety

Anxiety is defined as “subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness and worry” (Speilberger, 1983, p. 1). Anxiety has been divided into two types; Social anxiety and L2 anxiety. Social anxiety is associated with fear of negative evaluation, feelings of stress and uneasiness in the company of others (Schwazer, 1986). Schwazer described three dimensions of the causes of social anxiety: cognitive aspects; emotional aspects; instrumental aspects. MacIntyre et al. (1998) defines L2 anxiety as the feeling of “worry and negative emotional reaction” (p.27) which is stimulated during the L2 learning process and its actual use to accomplish any communicative task.

Scovel (1978) has described two types of L2 anxiety. Firstly, there is facilitating anxiety which works as a motivating agent and proves beneficial and helpful to accomplish any language task. Secondly, there is debilitating anxiety which refers to high amount of anxiety and it has harmful effect on the accomplishment of any language task.

Frequency of use of English as L2 for Oral Communication (FREQ)

L2 learners output can be estimated through the FREQ and this output serves as measurement of L2 proficiency. The FREQ is an indicator of success of ESL teaching and learning. Seliger (1977), Swain & Lapkin (1995) and Swain (1998) argued that FREQ determines the accomplishment and success of ESL teaching and learning. Ely (1986) found that language class risk taking has significantly positive effect on FREQ in ESL classroom. Hashimoto (2002) identified FREQ as an indicator of success of ESL teaching and learning. Seliger (1977) concluded that the ESL learners who interacted

more and more showed greater proficiency in terms of *FREQ*.

Research Methodology

The present study falls in the domain of descriptive research. Survey questionnaire is quantitatively analysed in order to calculate the value of mean, standard deviation, correlation co-efficient and co-efficient of regression among the variables. Post graduate students of ESL studying at Pakistani universities were the population for the study. 123 university students studying English at post graduate level (MA English) at the Department of English, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan, were selected randomly as sample by using cluster sampling technique.

Research Instrument

Survey questionnaire has been used for data collection for this study. This questionnaire comprised five parts and 59 items in all.

Part 1st was based on a modified brief version of Motivation Attitude Test Battery (AMTB) as mini-AMTB (A. C. Gardener, 1985). This part comprised of 11 questionnaire items which were rated on 7 point Likert scale. Many studies have used mini-AMTB successfully which shows that this scale is highly reliable e.g. Baker & MacIntyre, 2000; MacIntyre & Noles, 1996; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996.

Part 2nd was based on Willingness to Communicate Scale (modified version based on WTC scale presented by McCroskey, 1992). This part comprised of 12 questionnaire items which were rated on 7 point Likert scale. This scale has also been used by many researchers e.g. Yashima, 2002; Hashimoto, 2002.

Part 3rd measured Self-perceived Communicative Competence (SPCC) (modified version based on 12 situations presented by McCroskey, 1992). This part comprised of 12 questionnaire items which were rated on 7 point Likert scale. Part 4th calculated the level of L2 Anxiety (modified version based on Yashima, 2002). This part comprised of 12 questionnaire items which were rated on 7 point Likert scale.

Part 5th determined the Frequency of use of English as L2 for oral communication (*FREQ*) (modified version based on 12 situations presented by McCroskey, 1992). This part comprised of 12 questionnaire items which were rated on 7 point Likert scale.

The questionnaire was analysed on SPSS-20.0 to calculate the value of mean, standard deviation, correlation and co-efficient of regression among the variables.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Variable's Descriptive Statistics

The five variables were analysed on the basis of descriptive statistics i.e. mean and standard deviation. SPSS-20.0 software was applied for data analysis. The calculated values of mean and standard deviation are interpreted qualitatively in order

to discuss the reported level of the variables discussed in the present study.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistical Analysis for the Variables

	AMTB	WTC	SPCC	ANX	FREQ
Mean	4.24	3.63	3.74	2.64	3.71
S.D.	0.71	0.90	0.96	0.99	1.0
n	11	12	12	12	12

Table 2 shows that calculated value of mean is 4.42 and standard deviation is 0.71 at AMTB (motivation) scale. It indicates that most of the ESL learners rate themselves motivated towards FREQ. The calculated value of mean is 3.63 and standard deviation is 0.90 at WTC scale. It indicates that most of the ESL learners rate themselves willing to communicate in ESL in different real life situations. The value of mean is 3.73 and standard deviation is 0.96 at SPCC. It shows that most of the respondents rate themselves competent for using ESL for the oral communication in different situations. The calculated value of mean is 2.64 and standard deviation is 0.99 at L2 anxiety scale. It demonstrates that most of the ESL learners rate themselves a bit anxious while using English for oral communication. The value of mean is 3.71 and standard deviation is 1.0 at FREQ scale. It demonstrates that most of the ESL learners rate themselves frequently using English as L2 for oral communication while speaking in different situations.

Correlation co-efficient and Multiple Regression Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed to find out correlation (Pearson correlation, two-tailed) and coefficient of regression among the five variables. Then data were interpreted on the basis of value of correlation and co-efficient of regression.

Table 3
Correlation Coefficient

	AMTB	WTC	SPCC	ANX
FREQ	0.32*	0.35*	0.54*	-0.16*

Pearson Correlation (two tailed) * $p < .05$

Table 3 presents value of correlation for the above mentioned 5 variables. Value of correlation between motivation (AMTB) and FREQ is 0.32. It shows that significant correlation is present between motivation and FREQ. The value of correlation between WTC and FREQ is 0.35. It indicates that significant correlation is present between WTC and FREQ. Value of correlation between SPCC and FREQ is 0.54 and it is also a significant correlation. Value of correlation between L2 anxiety and

FREQ is -0.16. It shows that weak but significant and negative correlation is present between ANX and FREQ.

Table 4
Regression Co-efficient between Motivation and FREQ

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Std. Error
Constant	27.816	4.2474	.000
Motivation	.384	.095	.000

The regression co-efficient between motivation and FREQ is 0.384 and the p-value is 0.000 which shows that there is a highly significant effect of motivation on the FREQ.

Table 5
Regression Co-efficient between WTC and FREQ

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Std. Error
Constant	21.323	6.255	.001
Willingness to communicate	.498	.132	.000

The regression co-efficient between WTC and FREQ is 0.498 and the p-value is 0.000 which shows that there is a highly significant effect of WTC on the FREQ.

Table 6
Regression Co-efficient between SPCC and FREQ

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Std. Error
Constant	19.824	3.656	.000
Self-Perceived Communicative Competence	.551	.079	.000

The regression co-efficient between SPCC and FREQ is 0.551 and the p-value is 0.000 which shows that there is a highly significant effect of SPCC on the FREQ.

Table 7
Regression Co-efficient between ANX and FREQ

	Unstandardized		Sig.
	Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Std. Error
Constant	49.769	3.051	.000
Anxiety	-.164	.090	.070

The regression co-efficient between ANX and FREQ is -0.164 and the p-value is .070 which shows that there is a weak but significant effect of ANX on the FREQ. Moreover there is negative effect of ANX on FREQ.

Research Question wise Analysis

Research question wise interpretation of data is given below:

Research Question No.1

Table 3 shows that significant correlation exists between motivation and FREQ and it are evident that the ESL learners who are highly motivated to learn English have potential to use English more frequently. According to Table 4, there is highly significant effect of motivation on the FREQ. It indicates that in order to increase the FREQ, the motivation level of the ESL learners should be increased.

Research Question No. 2

According to Table 3, significant correlation is present between WTC and FREQ. It shows that ESL learners who are more willing to communicate in ESL are also more frequent in using ESL for oral communication. Table 5 indicates that there is highly significant effect of WTC on the FREQ. It implies that WTC should be considered important in ESL classroom by the ESL teachers in order to increase the FREQ.

Research Question No. 3

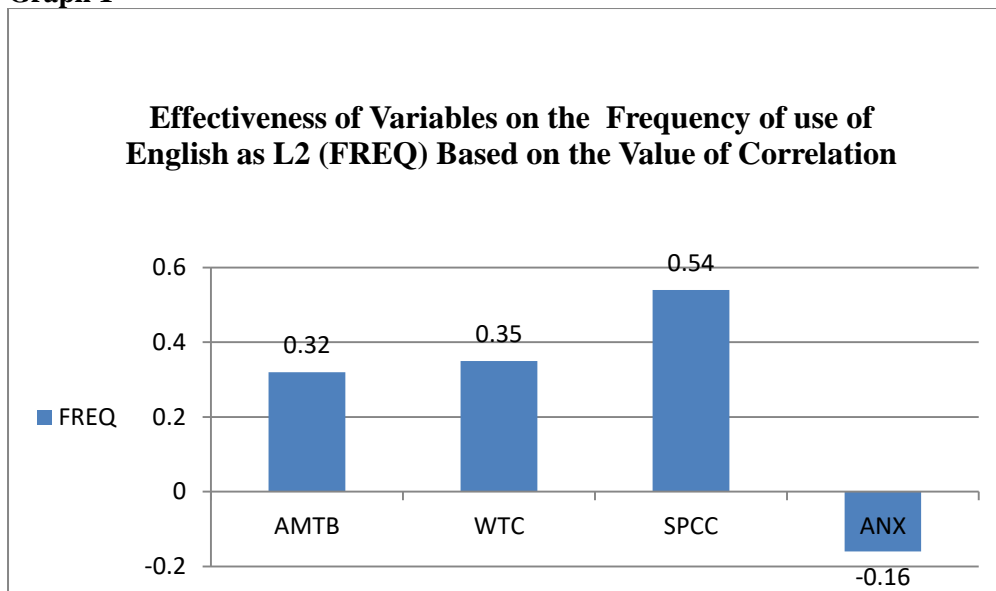
Table 3 shows that significant correlation is present between SPCC and FREQ. On the basis of value of correlation, it can be concluded that SPCC highly affects FREQ. Table 6 indicates that there is highly significant effect of SPCC on the FREQ. Therefore, ESL teachers should focus SPCC in order to increase its level which will ultimately increase FREQ.

Research Question No. 4:

According to Table 3, there is weak but significant and negative correlation is present between ANX and FREQ. It can be concluded that ANX has potential to affect FREQ negatively. Table 7 clearly shows that there is also a weak but significant and negative effect of ANX on the FREQ. It indicates that increased level of ANX reduces the FREQ. The efforts should be made to decrease the level of ANX among ESL

learners in order to increase the FREQ.

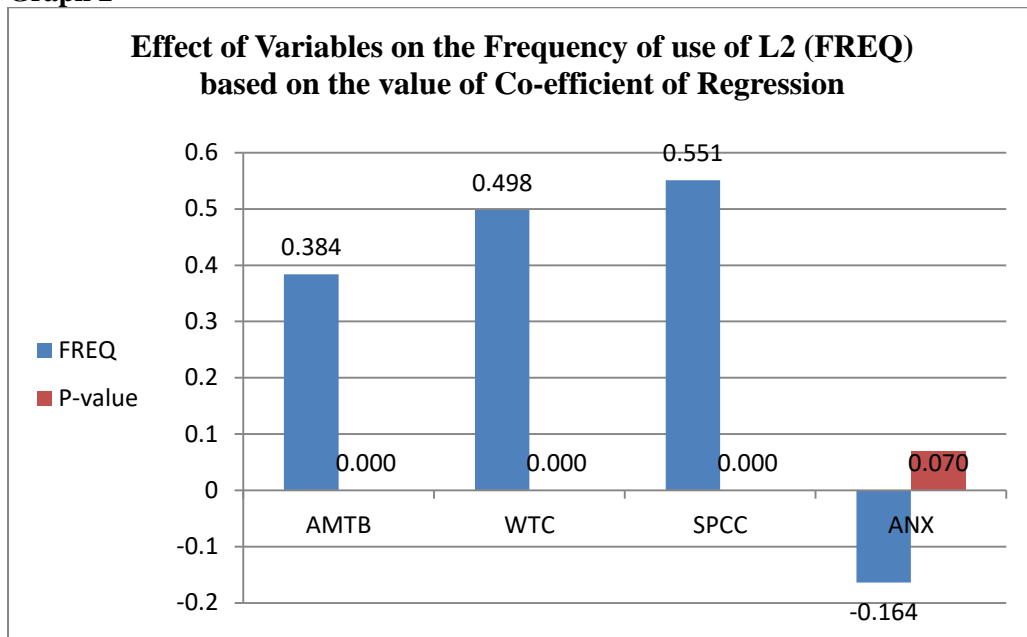
Graph 1



Research Question No. 5

Graph 1 is based on the value of correlation and it shows that SPCC is 1st, WTC is 2nd and motivation is 3rd most influencing variable that affects FREQ. On the other hand, ANX has a weak and negative effect on FREQ. The same results are shown by the regression analysis in Graph 2 which is based on the co-efficient of regression and it's P-value. These results show that out of four variables SPCC has maximum potential to affect FREQ. The other three variables are also important but SPCC should be a point of focus to increase FREQ. In order to increase the level of FREQ, the level of WTC and motivation should be enhanced and the decreased level of ANX can be helpful in increasing the FREQ.

Graph 2



Findings and Discussion

The calculated value of mean shows that most of the respondents rate themselves high on the motivation, WTC, SPCC and FREQ scale still there is room for improvement on the basis of better ESL pedagogical implications. The calculated value of mean on ANX scale shows that most of the ESL learners rate themselves a bit anxious and nervous while using ESL for oral communication. L2 anxiety should be reduced to increase the FREQ. The calculated values of S.D. for motivation, WTC, SPCC, Freq and Anx indicate that the respondents rate themselves consistent in their responses yet the results are somewhat dispersed and varied. It means more concentrated results can be obtained with the help of better ESL pedagogical implications.

The results for the first research question shows that motivation has strong effect on FREQ. The results for the second research question indicate that WTC also has strong effect on FREQ. The results for third research question shows that SPCC also affects FREQ strongly. Therefore, Motivation, WTC and SPCC should be given more importance in the teaching of ESL in order to enhance FREQ. The results for the fourth research question indicates that ANX has a weak and negative effect on FREQ. Therefore the level of ANX should be reduced in order to increase FREQ.

For the fifth research question, the results indicate that SPCC is identified as the most effective variable that affects the *FREQ*. It is contrary to the findings of Hashimoto (2002) who found no significant path from SPCC to *FREQ* in Japanese ESL context but in Pakistani context significant correlation is found between SPCC and *FREQ*. In other words, it is found to have maximum potential to increase *FREQ* as affirmed by MacIntyre and Charos (1996).

WTC is identified as the second most effective variable which has strong potential to increase *FREQ* as suggested by Hashimoto (2002) and MacIntyre et al. (1998). It implies that in order to make ESL learners more frequent to communicate in ESL, the level of WTC should be increased.

Motivation is identified as the third most effective variable that affects *FREQ*. It can be concluded that motivation plays an important role in order to increase *FREQ* as affirmed by Hashimoto (2002). Steps should be taken to increase the motivation level of the students.

L2 anxiety has comparatively weak and negative effect on *FREQ* as suggested by Daly (1919) and Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope (1986). Steps should be taken to decrease the level of ANX. The results of the fifth research question point out the importance of the four variables under discussion i.e. motivation, WTC, SPCC and ANX according to the preference of the ESL learners. This order of preference determines the comparative importance of the variables that affect the *FREQ*.

Conclusion

Self-perceived communicative competence (SPCC) is identified as the most effective variable that affects *FREQ*. Therefore, ESL teachers, syllabus designers and learners should pay more attention to increase the level of SPCC with the help of better ESL pedagogical implications.

WTC is identified as the second most effective variable that affects *FREQ*. The ESL learners should be provided with the encouraging and cooperative teaching of ESL as will increase the willingness to communicate (WTC) of the students.

Motivation is identified as the third most effective variable that affects *FREQ*. The traditional boring and dry ESL teaching should be replaced with activity based teaching of ESL that will possibly motivate the ESL learners to use ESL for oral communication. ESL teachers should take steps to motivate the ESL learners with the help of positive reinforcement.

L2 anxiety has comparatively weak and negative effect on *FREQ*. If ESL teacher wants to increase *FREQ*, he/she will have to adopt anxiety reducing techniques and strategies which can prove helpful in decreasing the level of L2 anxiety. ESL learners should be provided with activity based cooperative and encouraging ESL class

room environment that will reduce the ANX and increase FREQ.

Oral communication is the point of focus among SPCC, WTC, FREQ and CLT (Communicative Language Teaching). It implies that CLT can be better choice as a teaching method as compare to DM (Direct Meted) and traditional GTM (Grammar Translation Method). Therefore, the syllabus of ESL should be revised on the basis of CLT and new contents should be introduced with special focus on the use of ESL for oral communication. A new set of SLO's (students learning outcome) should be framed which should have the potential to increase the SPCC.

Oral communication skills should be a point of focus for ESL evaluation and assessment system. Marks should be specified in the scheme of study of ESL for oral communication skills ranging from at least 10 to 30. It will help increasing the level of oral communication skills and FREQ.

ESL teacher's professional and training courses should include special topics based on the importance of SPCC, WTC, Motivation, ANX and FREQ. These topics should be based on the practical exercises for the use of ESL for oral communication. In this way, teacher can be equipped with better pedagogical skills and practice which can help increase the FREQ among Pakistani ESL learners.

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