

1. INTRODUCTION

The teaching and learning of a second language (L2) have undergone numerous revisions and changes over the past five decades. In the past, the emphasis of English language teaching was on the mastery of structures. Nevertheless, using English for communication purposes has been stressed recently (Cetinkaya, 2005). Thus, the willingness to communicate (WTC) has emerged as the most vibrant topic in L2 pedagogy. The WTC concept was coined by McCroskey and Baer (1985) concerning first language (L1) communication. Subsequently, the concept was transferred into the L2 context. The WTC is defined as “a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using an L2” (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 547).

The WTC has resulted in a plethora of L2 communication research globally, such as the socio-cognitive aspect (Cao, 2014), dynamism (Cao, 2013; Syed & Kuzborska, 2019), the role of context (Cameron, 2015), learner agency (Mercer, 2011), non-English students (Ghonsooly et al., 2012), teacher’s influence (Zarrinabadi, 2014), learners’ participation (Bernales, 2016), and personality traits (MacIntyre et al., 2011). Nonetheless, learners’ reluctance, reticence, and shyness to engage in the L2 communication activities have been significant concerns in English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL) settings (Peng, 2012; Syed, 2016). The findings from previous studies provided significant evidence that learners demonstrate an unwillingness to communicate in L2 in the classroom due to cultural differences (Wen & Clement, 2003), lack of proficiency (Liu, 2005), and anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986). These ESL-related issues have been a constant concern in Asian nations, such as Pakistan (Ali, 2017; Kalyar et al., 2019; Syed, 2016).

Pakistan is a multicultural and multilingual country where more than 70 different languages are spoken. Approximately 85% of the people speak the main regional languages such as Balochi, Pashto, Punjabi, Sindhi, and Saraiki (Ali, 2017; Islam et al., 2013). English is the official language of Pakistan after Urdu, the national language. English is also taught as a compulsory subject from primary to undergraduate study and, in some instances, also to the graduate level in Pakistan (Ali, 2017; Khan et al., 2017). English also enjoys the status of ‘the passport language’ for highly-paid jobs in Pakistan (Shamim, 2011). English is closely linked to the language of dominance, elites, power, corporate sector, military, education, and media in Pakistan (Pathan et al., 2010; Shamim, 2011; Syed, 2016). Thus, students’ WTC in English is given paramount importance in Pakistan (Ali, 2017; Kalyar et al., 2019).

Although WTC in L2 has been extensively investigated, research regarding the classroom context is still at an early stage. Pedagogically, extensive research must be undertaken to identify how to assist students to enhance their WTC (Yashima, 2012). Concurrently, Cao (2013) asserted that although efforts were undertaken to examine the impacts of context and time on WTC in an L2 classroom, the existing gap concerning situational WTC in the L2 classroom requires further exploration. Hence, engendering learners’ communication is the main objective of modern L2 pedagogy. Therefore, the present study is significant for investigating WTC from a sociocultural perspective, whereas previous studies examined WTC from trait, state, and dynamic perspectives (Cao & Philp, 2006; Kang, 2005; McCroskey & Baer, 1985). Moreover, this study investigated language use outside the classroom in different domains. The study also examined language use outside the classroom concerning WTC inside the classroom, which was overlooked in previous studies. The study objectives were:

1. To investigate Pakistani undergraduates' WTC level in different social interactions among students inside the classroom.
2. To investigate Pakistani ESL undergraduates' language use in different domains outside the classroom.
3. To determine the relationship between Pakistani undergraduates' WTC inside the classroom and language use in different domains outside the classroom.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 WTC in L2 inside the Classroom

When learners are given an opportunity to speak up inside an L2 classroom, why do they exhibit different behaviours when expressing their ideas? Some learners with high linguistic ability are unwilling to speak, whereas other learners with minimal linguistic competence seem to have more WTC in L2. Various psychological, linguistic, individual, situational, and social factors of WTC have been examined (MacIntyre, 2020) to investigate this complex phenomenon. Different types of variables have been discovered to influence learners' WTC in L2 learning in the classroom. These factors included international posture (Yashima, 2002; Yashima et al., 2004), gender and age (MacIntyre et al., 2003), motivation (Hashimoto, 2002; Peng & Woodrow, 2010), and self-confidence (Baker & MacIntyre, 2003; MacIntyre, 1994). The WTC construct covers both trait and state propensities (Cao, 2014). Previously, WTC was examined as a trait variable that remains the same in all situations (MacIntyre et al., 1999).

Conversely, recent research claimed that WTC inside the classroom is a situational and dynamic variable that changes according to situations (MacIntyre, 2020; Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2018; Riasati & Rahimi, 2018). In an L2 classroom, the situational WTC is affected by contextual factors, such as class participation, interlocutor, the topic of conversation, and task type (Cao, 2009, 2014; Cao & Philp, 2006). Furthermore, Peng (2007) stated that the situational and dynamic nature of learners' WTC varies from time to time. The dynamic and situational WTC in large and small groups was mainly identified through stimulated recall interviews, diaries writing, and classroom observations (Cao, 2009; Cao & Philp, 2006; de Saint Leger & Storch, 2009). For example, Cao and Philp (2006) discovered that the participants' WTC fluctuated in the whole class, group work, and pair work interactions during the class observations.

De Saint Leger and Storch (2009) also found differences in learners' WTC in the classroom. The learners' speaking activities influenced the participants' WTC. In another study that examined the moment-to-moment changes in L2 WTC, Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Pawlak (2014) found that the respondents reported several reasons for the fluctuation in their WTC in the classroom, such as proficiency level, engagement level, interlocutor, type of task, grouping mode, and topic of discussion. Khajavy et al. (2017) investigated the classroom environment and students' emotions. Their study revealed that communicative language teaching functioned well compared to traditional teaching methods. Besides, the positive classroom environment was enjoyed by the learners, which lessened their anxiety.

Zhang et al. (2019) examined the changes in WTC through a high-density repeated test on a group of Chinese students. They discovered systematic WTC changes among the students throughout the semester. This variation was found in different learning settings, such as peer support, task-interest, and task importance. Nevertheless, quantitative research lacks involving undergraduates' WTC in the classroom, particularly in multiple situations (individually, in pairs, small groups, and whole class), different activities in social interaction types (role play, presentation, discussion) with the same and opposite gender, the physical classroom conditions (seating positions: in front, in the middle, and at the back of the class), and students' preparedness in the classroom, which are all the main foci of the current study.

Furthermore, Dewaele (2015) maintained that the sociocultural perspective of language use must be investigated. Similarly, social support regarding WTC is rarely examined (Cao, 2009; Kang, 2005; MacIntyre et al., 2001), whereas the learners' domain-wise language use outside the classroom in relation to WTC in the classroom is yet to be explored. The current study investigated the undergraduates' WTC inside the classroom in relation to their domain-wise language use outside the classroom to fill the existing gap.

2.2 Domains of Language Use outside the Classroom

Fishman (1972) developed the domain concept, emphasising that every language is used in its respective setting. Fishman (1972, p. 20) defined domain as “a sociocultural construct abstracted from topics of communication, the relationship between communicators, and locales of communication, in accord with the institution, of a society and the area of activity of speech community in such a way that individual behaviours and social patterns can be distinguished from each other and yet related to each other”. Furthermore, Fishman elaborated that domain is a combination of settings of topics, communication, and role relation among interlocutors. The domain could be either private or public, formal or informal, concrete or social settings (recreational place, transactional settings, social networks, worship places, workplace, school, and university) (Fishman, 1972).

Every domain has its own association with its interlocutors (Leo & Abdullah, 2013). In addition, Holmes (2001) maintained that language use in a specific speech community should be investigated through domains because domain, as the primary agent, determines the types of contexts and specific language used in that situation (Lim, 2008). Moreover, Schrauf (2002) pointed out that one language may be covered by one domain while others may cover other languages. Spolsky (2005) argued that the notion of who speaks what language, to whom, when, how, and why it needs further exploration.

2.3 Sociocultural Theory (SCT)

The relationship of sociocultural theory (SCT) with WTC could lie in the role played by SCT in providing opportunities for students to use L2. In addition, SCT demonstrates the association of cultural, biological, and social factors and caters to the basic need to explore the cognitive and social aspects of ESL (Block, 2003). Jamalvandi et al. (2020) stated that SCT provides special attention to negotiation, interaction, and collaboration among learners to enhance L2. The SCT believes that

human mental functioning is primarily a mediated process operated by utilising cultural artefacts, activities, and concepts (Ratner, 2002). Regarding the connection between tasks and SCT, Lantolf (2000) asserted that mediation appears in three situations during L2 learning. The three situations are mediation with others in social activities, self-mediation through private speech, and mediation by artefacts.

The current study drew on the third type of mediation as mediation with classmates in social activities by applying tasks in the artefact category. Thus, this study is significant for investigating WTC inside the classroom from a sociocultural perspective individually, in peers, and small groups during different tasks (presentations, discussion, and role-play) and in different classroom situations, such as gender, task preparation time, sitting position, and the relationship with language use in different domains outside the classroom. Previous research in WTC L2 indicated that peer work increases performance in WTC (MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011). Similarly, Cao (2011) found that learners preferred to talk with talkative and competent interlocutors. Besides, numerous studies also discovered that group dynamics form learners' WTC with others inside the L2 classroom (Cao & Philp, 2006; Cao, 2009; de Saint Leger & Storch, 2009; Riasati & Rahimi, 2018).

3. METHODS

By using SCT, the study focused on the concept that learning L2 is a mediating process. Mediation is one of the most vital concepts in Vygotsky's (1978) SCT. This study is guided by mediation with others in social activities (Lantolf, 2000). Lantolf (2000) asserted that L2 occurs when learners interact with each other in different social interactions. Therefore, the current study examined the learners' WTC L2 level in different social interactions inside the classroom. To reflect upon the undergraduates' WTC L2, the researcher utilised a quantitative approach using the survey design. Quantitative data assist a researcher to obtain factual information (Kalsoom et al., 2020). Kalsoom et al. (2020) further asserted that results achieved from numerical data, such as questionnaires, offer accurate, complete, and deeper insight into the researched phenomenon.

3.1 Participants

The study participants were Pakistani undergraduates pursuing their studies at universities in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province of Pakistan. The cluster sampling method was used for data collection. Out of 31 universities in the province, eight universities (the University of Peshawar, National University of Modern Languages, Islamia University, Agriculture University, Gomal University, Hazarah University, Abdul Wali Khan University, and the University of Swabi) were randomly chosen. Fifty-five undergraduates were selected from each university. The sample size of this study was 440 undergraduates. The participants were 67.3% male (296) and 32.7% female (144), while their ages range from 18 to 27 years old.

3.2 Instruments

The WTC questionnaire consisted of 80 items with an overall alpha value of 0.97 ($\alpha = 0.97$) on a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire was adapted from Ali (2017), Cao and Philp (2006), de Saint Léger and Storch (2009), MacIntyre et al. (2001), Menzel and Carrell (1999), Pattapong (2010), Peng and Woodrow (2010), Riasati and Rahimi (2018) and Yashima et al. (2018). The questionnaire items in the studies were employed to measure the ESL undergraduates' WTC in 16 situations inside the classroom. The Cronbach's alpha for the overall reliability of the questionnaire for WTC in English was $\alpha = 0.97$.

The questionnaire on the students' language use in various domains outside the classroom consisted of 50 items ($\alpha = 0.91$) on a five-point frequency scale adapted from Anderson et al. (2018), Ahmed (2016), Leo and Abdullah (2013), Nofal and Dweik (2011), Qawar (2014), and Widad (2017) were employed to measure ESL undergraduates' language use outside the classroom in different domains. The Cronbach's alpha for the overall reliability of the language use questionnaire was $\alpha = 0.91$.

3.3 Data Collection

The permission to collect the data was obtained from the head of departments (HoDs) of the selected universities. Subsequently, a consent form was signed by the participants to indicate their voluntary participation in this study. Next, the participants were given clear instructions on how to fill in the questionnaire. The participants took approximately 30 to 35 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

3.4 Data Analysis

Based on the research objectives, a quantitative data analysis method was employed using questionnaires on WTC in English inside the classroom and language use in different domains outside the classroom. Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) and Pearson correlation were used to determine the relationship between undergraduates' WTC in English inside the classroom and language use outside the classroom. Previous researchers divided the mean score into three categories to determine high, medium, and low means of WTC. A mean score between 1.00 and 2.33 is low WTC, while 2.34 to 3.67 is moderate WTC and 3.68 to 5.00 is high WTC (Başöz & Erten, 2018; Kalra, 2017; Lian & Budin, 2014).

4. RESULTS

4.1 Undergraduates' WTC inside the Classroom

Table 1 shows that the self-reported levels of WTC in the 16 situations inside the classroom vary according to the situations. The undergraduates demonstrated high WTC in situations, such as grouping, grouping and activities, grouping with the same gender, grouping when prepared, grouping with preparation time, and grouping in front of the class, where the mean score was above 3.67. Nevertheless, the participants'

WTC was moderate. The mean score was 2.34 to 3.67 for WTC with the opposite gender and sitting positions in the classroom (middle, back, and in front).

Table 1. The undergraduates' self-reported WTC levels in sixteen situations inside the classroom.

WTC in different social interactions inside the classroom	Mean	Std. Deviation
WTC in groups	4.05	.44
WTC during activities	4.01	.40
WTC in groups WTC the same gender	4.18	.56
WTC in groups with the opposite gender	3.01	.90
WTC during activities with the same gender	3.97	.45
WTC during activities with the opposite gender	2.76	.73
WTC when prepared in groups	4.10	.32
WTC when prepared during activities	4.02	.39
WTC while sitting in groups in front of the class	3.38	.62
WTC while sitting during activities in front of the class	4.05	.33
WTC while sitting in groups in the middle of the class	3.51	1.06
WTC while sitting during activities in the middle of the class	3.54	.47
WTC while sitting in groups at the back of the class	3.28	.70
WTC while sitting during activities at the back of the class	3.43	.49
WTC in groups in front of the whole class	3.39	.78
WTC during activities in front of the whole class	3.56	.49
Overall	3.7675	.29882

4.2 Undergraduates' Language Use outside the Classroom

Table 2 demonstrates the results of undergraduates' language use outside the classroom. The results show that Pashto (the provincial language of Khyber Pukhtunkhwa) and Urdu (the national language) are the most used languages in the family, friendship and neighbourhood, religion, education, and transaction domains. However, the participants mostly used English in mass media and social media domains ($M = 4.09$ and $M = 4.30$). In addition, other languages (minor languages) were rarely used by the participants in all domains of daily life interactions.

Table 2. The domains of language use outside the classroom.

No.	Domain	Language Use	Mean	Std. Deviation
1.	Family	English	2.51	.72
		Urdu	2.94	.67
		Pashto	3.56	1.32
		Others	1.42	1.16
2.	Friendship and neighbourhood	English	2.66	.74
		Urdu	3.09	.82
		Pashto	3.50	1.33
		Others	1.37	1.04
3.	Education	English	3.73	.60
		Urdu	3.85	.63
		Pashto	3.41	1.21
		Others	1.32	.91
4.	Religion	English	2.06	.42
		Urdu	2.64	.57
		Pashto	3.07	1.05

Table 2 continued...

		Others	1.30	.84
5.	Transaction	English	3.07	.76
		Urdu	3.98	.58
		Pashto	3.42	1.19
		Others	1.31	.89
6.	Mass Media	English	4.09	.69
		Urdu	3.81	.69
		Pashto	2.58	.99
		Others	1.18	.54
7.	Social Media	English	4.30	.69
		Urdu	3.73	.77
		Pashto	3.01	1.15
		Others	1.27	.78

4.3 The Relationship between WTC in English and Domains of Language Use

Table 3 shows the correlation between WTC in English inside the classroom and domains of language use outside the classroom. The results demonstrate a weak negative correlation between WTC and family domain ($r = -.61$). Nevertheless, neighbourhood and friendship ($r = .046$), education ($r = .021$), religion ($r = .029$), transaction ($r = .048$), mass media ($r = .083$) and social media domains had a weak positive correlation with WTC inside the classroom ($r = .090$), respectively.

Table 3. The relationship between WTC in English inside the classroom and language use in different domains outside the classroom.

No.	Domains		WTCs
1.	Family	Pearson Correlation	-.061**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.205
		N	440
2.	Neighbourhood and friendship	Pearson Correlation	.046**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.333
		N	440
3.	Education	Pearson Correlation	.021
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.653
		N	440
4.	Religion	Pearson Correlation	.029**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.542
		N	440
5.	Transaction	Pearson Correlation	.048**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.314
		N	440
6.	Mass Media	Pearson Correlation	.083**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.084
		N	440
7.	Social Media	Pearson Correlation	.090**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.060
		N	440
8.	WTC inside the classroom	Pearson Correlation	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	
		N	440

5. DISCUSSION

The study primarily examined how SCT (mediation) influenced learners' WTC by applying tasks in different social interactions in the ESL classroom. The study also examined the relationship between WTC inside the classroom and language use outside the classroom. First, the study findings revealed that learners demonstrated an increase in WTC inside the classroom in most tasks and social interactions. Previous research showed that tasks, such as role-play, could boost students' propensity to communicate in English (Cao, 2013; Cao & Philp, 2006; Eddy-U, 2015; MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011; Riasati & Rahimi, 2018). Moreover, the studies found that group dynamics shape learners' WTC with others inside the L2 classroom (Bernales, 2014; Cao, 2009, 2011, 2014; Cao & Philp, 2006; Riasati & Rahimi, 2018).

The participants' WTC was very high in situations, such as grouping (individually, pairs, and small groups), activities (role play, discussion, and presentations), and WTC with the same gender. The findings showed that mediation (speaking with others in social activities) enhanced learners' WTC. Riasati and Rahimi (2018) revealed similar findings where the respondents had more WTC in pairs and small groups. Moreover, Cao and Philp (2006) found that the participants' communicative behaviours fluctuated in pairs, small groups, and whole-class interactions. The respondents in this study had more WTC with the same gender than the opposite gender. Besides, Riasati and Rahimi (2018) revealed that the informants had more WTC with the same sex compared to the opposite sex. Conversely, Ali (2017) found no difference in participants' WTC with the same and opposite gender in the EFL context. The differences may occur due to the context. Ali's (2017) study context was EFL, while the current study context focused on ESL.

Learners' preparedness is another factor where the learners were highly WTC in groups and during activities. Arguably, the learners were highly prepared for a task when they had more WTC. Riasati and Rahimi (2018) obtained similar findings in their study as the participants were mainly willing to speak when they were prepared to talk. Moreover, mediation is argued to assist students to enhance their speaking skills when they are prepared to talk. Furthermore, topic familiarity increased learners' WTC inside the classroom (Cao & Philp, 2006; de Saint Leger & Storch, 2009).

Regarding the seating positions, learners were highly WTC in groups (individually, in pairs, and small groups) while sitting in front of the class. In addition, the participants' WTC was high in groups during activities (discussion, role play, and presentation). Conversely, their WTC was moderate when seated in the middle and at the back of the class. Riasati and Rahimi (2018) also found that their participants' WTC was high while sitting in front of the class for different reasons. First, sitting in front is more beneficial than sitting at the back. Second, one speaks more in front of the class because everyone in the class observes them.

Jamalvandi et al. (2020) claimed that SCT gives special attention to negotiation, interaction, and collaboration among learners to enhance L2. In addition, while sitting in the middle and at the back of the classroom, in groups and during activities, the participants were less WTC. Riasati and Rahimi (2018) also observed that participants who sat at the back of the class were less WTC. Syed (2016) obtained similar findings by proving that the participants' WTC was high when sitting at the front rows because they felt privileged to sit in the front benches. Conversely, the WTC was low among the backbenchers as the participants felt that they could not gain the teacher's attention.

For the whole class interaction, learners were less WTC in groups and during tasks in front of the whole class. [De Saint Leger and Storch \(2009\)](#) found that whole class interaction was the most challenging task, decreasing learners' confidence. Furthermore, the participants were afraid to be negatively evaluated by other classmates. In line with the current findings, [Cao \(2011\)](#) also discovered that whole class interactions resulted in anxiety and embarrassment due to peer pressure.

The domain of language use is the sociocultural construct ([Fishman, 1972](#)). Seven language use domains were investigated in this study, such as family, neighbourhood and friendship, education, religion, transaction, mass media, and social media. The participants were found to use Pashto (provincial language) in most of the domains. For example, in a multilingual society, such as Pakistan, the mixed-use of Pashto, Urdu, English, and other languages (minor languages) were found in the family domain. Pashto is the most used language, followed by Urdu (the national language) as the second most used language, while the undergraduates rarely use other languages.

[Dweik and Qawar \(2015\)](#) found that 99.9% of participants used the Arabic language in the home and family domains among Arabs of Quebec-Canada. Home and family domains play a significant role in daily social interactions ([Dweik & Qawar, 2015](#)). The results aligned with [Granhemat and Abdullah \(2017\)](#), who found that most Malaysian multilingual youths in Malaysia used Malay in the family domain. Similarly, in this study, Pashto is the dominant language used by participants in the neighbourhood and friendship domain compared to Urdu and English.

The findings of [Leo and Abdullah \(2013\)](#) found that the majority of the informants used the Malay language in the friendship domain in Malaysia. Conversely, the participants in this study used Urdu and English in the education domain, whereas Pashto and other languages were the least used languages. The findings agree with [Mei et al. \(2016\)](#); they asserted that the English and Malay languages were used by the Chinese, Indian and Malay respondents in Malaysia in the education domain. Simultaneously, some Chinese informants reported that they would like to use Chinese in the education domain.

In the religion domain, the respondents also mostly used Pashto, followed by Urdu as the second most used language, whereas English and minor languages were rarely used. Conversely, [Leo and Abdullah \(2013\)](#) found that their respondents used English predominantly in the religious domain, which may vary due to the religion and context differences. The participants in their study were mainly Christians, and the study was conducted in Malaysia. In contrast, the current study context is in Pakistan, and the participants were all Muslims.

Moreover, in the transactional domain, Urdu and Pashto were used by most participants, whereas English was the second most used language. Similar findings were obtained by [Granhemat et al. \(2015\)](#), who discovered that the Malay language was used by the majority (49.6%) of the participants in the transactional domain.

Conversely, most participants used English in the mass media domain while Urdu is the second most used language. English and Urdu are both the official languages of Pakistan, and most newspapers, news channels, and sports channels are either in English or Urdu. Similarly, the participants used English besides Urdu when commenting, posting, and chatting in the social media domain. The wide use of English on social media globally is due to its diversity and multilingualism. Pashto and other languages were the least used languages in both mass media and social media.

As for WTC concerning other influential variables, WTC was positively correlated with motivation (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000; Hashimoto, 2002; Ma et al., 2019; Peng & Woodrow, 2010; Yashima, 2002; Yu, 2009). Perceived communication competence has a strong connection in enhancing WTC (Kim, 2004; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; MacIntyre et al., 1999; Onwuegbuzie et al., 2000; Sparks & Ganschow, 2001). Meanwhile, language anxiety was negatively correlated with WTC in an L2 (Cetinkaya, 2005; Hashimoto, 2002; Kim, 2004; Knell & Chi, 2012; Wu & Lin, 2014).

Nonetheless, the relationship of WTC inside the classroom and language use in different domains outside the classroom was investigated for the first time in this study. The results of the family domain were negatively correlated with WTC, which seemed to negatively influence the participants' WTC in English inside the classroom. Family plays a vital role in the Pakistani students' daily life conversations. The findings may explain the cultural values and family system of Pakistan, where learners are encouraged to talk in their mother tongue in daily life conversation since childhood. The study data proved that the current study's participants belonged to different family backgrounds with different mother tongues. Therefore, they were fluent in their own languages by the time they entered university. The findings are in line with previous research. For instance, Kalsoom et al. (2020) found that the participants in her study received more social support from their friends, whereas the support from mothers and siblings was negligible for communicating in English in class. The informants were not encouraged by mothers and siblings on WTC in English. In another study, MacIntyre et al. (2001) found that social support from French immersion students' best friends was higher than from their teachers and mothers when talking in L2 in the class.

The relationship between neighbourhood and friendship domain with WTC in English was weak and positive. The participants used less English language with their neighbours and friends. Nevertheless, previous research showed that friends play an essential role in engendering learners' WTC (Ali, 2017; Jung, 2011; Kalsoom et al., 2020; MacIntyre et al., 2001; Mari et al., 2011). Ali (2017) found that Pakistani learners had more WTC with their friends than with acquaintances and strangers. Similarly, in a study in the Korean EFL context, Jung (2011) found that students showed more WTC with close friends than with strangers in small groups. Mari et al. (2011) obtained similar results in another study where the informants had more WTC with friends than with strangers.

The education domain was positively correlated with WTC, possibly because English is the medium of instruction in Pakistani universities. The results proved that the use of Urdu and English is much higher in the education domain than in Pashto and other languages. Widad (2017) also found that the Malaysian participants used English and Bahasa Melayu at universities. The participants were found to use English with friends and lecturers from different races and states. In contrast, Nofal and Dweik (2011) found that Yemeni informants predominantly used Arabic in universities. Some participants responded that they use the Indian language besides Arabic when talking to friends.

The religion domain had a weak positive correlation with WTC, which can be observed in the results that the Pashto language is predominantly used in the religious domain. The results align with that of Nofal and Dweik (2011). They proved that their respondents from Yemen used Arabic (the national language of Yemen) in the religious domain. The respondents mainly used Arabic with an *imam* (celebrant), friends, and meetings outside the place of worship. Qawar (2014) also found that the

Quebec Arabic informants in Canada used Arabic when talking to the *imam* and asking for religious information. Conversely, [Leo and Abdullah \(2013\)](#) revealed that the Tamil Christian youths mostly used English, while Tamil and Bahasa Malayu were the least used languages in the religious domain in Malaysia.

The transactional domain was found to have a moderate positive correlation with WTC because the participants used less English than Urdu and Pashto. Firstly, the participants would use English mostly in restaurants, banks, and markets because English is considered the language of dominance, elites, corporate sector, modernisation, and empowerment in Pakistan ([Ali, 2017](#); [Pathan et al., 2010](#); [Shamim, 2008, 2011](#); [Syed, 2016](#)). The findings align with [Granhemat et al. \(2015\)](#), who found that Malaysian respondents mostly used Bahasa Melayu in the transactional domain.

The mass media domain was found to have a strong positive correlation with WTC. The reason could be because students like to read English newspapers and watch English news and movies. Besides, English is considered as the gateway to highly-paid jobs ([Shamim, 2011](#)). Thus, learners strive hard to learn English by using media. Second, most of the sports are presented in English in Pakistan due to the dominance of English. Third, almost all people use English for browsing the internet in Pakistan. Similarly, the social media domain was correlated with WTC in English. In the modern era, social media is widely used. The results proved that participants used English predominantly when chatting, commenting, and posting on social media.

6. CONCLUSION

The study aimed to investigate WTC in English inside the classroom in relation to language use outside the classroom from students of eight universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province in Pakistan. The learners were highly WTC to communicate in most situations inside the classroom. In contrast, the learners used Pashto frequently in several domains outside the classroom, such as family, neighbourhood and friendship, and religion. Conversely, in other domains, such as transactional, mass media, and social media domains, they used English and Urdu most of the time. The study confirmed that L2 learning is a sociocultural phenomenon because learners were found WTC highly in English in most social interactions inside the classroom.

Moreover, WTC in English was positively correlated with the language use domains, where the participants used a considerable amount of English outside the classroom. The WTC was negatively correlated with domains where the learners predominantly used Pashto outside the classroom. Additionally, similar to other research studies, this study also has several limitations. First, the current study focused on oral communication; thus, future studies should focus on other communicative skills, such as reading, writing, and listening. Second, the current study's participants were all undergraduates. Similar studies should also be conducted on students at the school and college levels. Third, the present study focused on the undergraduates' WTC in English; hence, future researchers should also examine the teachers' views about the undergraduates' WTC in English inside the classroom. Finally, to determine the relationship between WTC in English inside the classroom and language outside the classroom, the number of items for both questionnaires was different. Future studies thus may use the same number of items to determine the correlation between these two variables.

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