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The Role of Self-Efficacy in Improving English Language among Low Proficiency Learners

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ABSTRACT

The variability in learning second language proficiency is an important area of inquiry in the study of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). This study adopted a social-psychological perspective on language acquisition that focused on the role of self-efficacy in learning. The study investigated the self-efficacy beliefs of low proficiency learners regarding the factors affecting self-efficacy beliefs and the role of self-efficacy beliefs in interaction with others in target language. The data was collected through open ended interviews of five low proficiency English language learners (ELLs) from English speaking class about their experiences and their self-efficacy beliefs about their ability to use their English. The accounts of their experiences regarding learning and using English were analyzed qualitatively. It was found out that the low proficiency learners of English language classroom remain positive with their targets, enjoy the multiple tasks, take challenges and participate, affected by the motivation given by the inside and outside environment of the classroom, the peers and the society.

Key Words: Self-efficacy, Low proficiency learners, Learners' beliefs, Language learning.

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1. Introduction

The difference in language proficiency is an important area of research in the study of second language proficiency. It is not easy to understand the process of mastering the language, if we do not understand why some students are successful, while others struggle or fail. To answer this question, many language acquisition models have been developed that try to include and take into account some or all of the interrelated variables that affect the final level of language proficiency. These variables include the age at which the student began to study L2, the amount and type of exposure to L2, the amount and type of formal training in L2, the motivation for learning L2, confidence in L2 abilities, the student's attitude to L2 speakers and culture, and the frequency of interaction with speakers of L2 (Moyer, 2004).

The social cognitive theory of human behavior developed by Bandura (1986) takes into account the influence of cognition, affective reactions, and the social learning environment in general. Social cognitive theory can give us an understanding of the variability in mastering a second language, because it introduces a new construction into the explanation of learning outcomes in terms of self-efficacy. Through a perception of self-efficacy, students become aware of their ability to use their abilities to succeed in a given learning context. Bandura defined self-efficacy as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (1997, p. 3).

According to Bandura (1995), "Seeing people similar to oneself succeed by sustained effort raises observers' beliefs that they too possess the capabilities master comparable activities to succeed." Thus, self-efficacy takes into account both internal and external influences on learning. It recognizes the ability of the student's social environment to shape his or her experience and results, without diminishing the student's ability in his/her own learning process.

At the same time, students must act in a social environment that also structures their lives and to a certain extent determines their capabilities. A key element of the social environment when it comes to learning a language is the learner's experience and interaction with L2 native speakers. In order to study the interaction between students and their social environment, as well as the relationship of these factors with the level of language proficiency, this study examined students' opinions about beliefs in self-efficacy and their experience when they speak their second language i.e., English.

The current study is focusing the theory of Self-Efficacy relevant to language learning scenario where the low proficiency learners are interviewed to judge their views regarding internal and external factors which either motivate or demotivate them to improve their learning experiences.

1.1. Problem Statement

The variables of age, language input, culture, motivation for language learning, exposure of target language, instructions and interaction are equally significant for Pakistani learners of English language. They start learning English from either grade one or grade six in villages and cities respectively but still they are unable to speak in English language. Within the same language learning class, the proficiency level is different as there are proficient speakers along with intermediate level speakers and low proficiency speakers. The study will investigate that how a group of low proficiency ESL students are accounted for their own learning process, especially

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with respect to the way they express perceptions of self-efficacy and to the English language interaction that they have outside of school or college.

1.2. Research Objectives

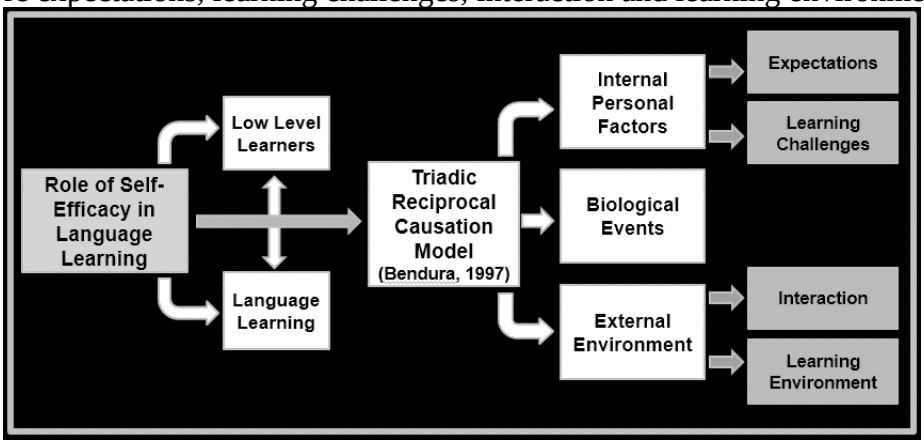
- To investigate factors influencing learners' self-efficacy beliefs in the process of English language learning
- To investigate the influence of self-efficacy beliefs while communicating with others in English language

1.3. Research Questions

- Which factors influence learners' self-efficacy beliefs in the process of English-language learning?
- How self-efficacy beliefs are influenced while interacting with others in English language?

1.4. Conceptual Framework

The role of self-efficacy in language learning in low proficiency learners is assessed through Triadic Reciprocal Causation Model (Bendura, 1997). This model is based on three features namely internal personal factors, biological events and external environment. The current study is focusing on two features i.e., internal personal factors and external environment. These features, further explore expectations, learning challenges, interaction and learning environment.



2. Methodology

This was an exploratory qualitative study based upon the constructivist view of knowledge creation. The views and explanations of the low proficiency English language learners were explored in terms of their expectations, learning challenges, learning environment and interaction. Data collection tool for this research was an open ended interview because it provided those experiences which were constructed and interpreted by the researcher (Richards, 2009). This approach was adopted in line with qualitative research goals so that multiple truths of the individuals were recorded instead of establishing the objective truths through a questionnaire (Bluementhal, 2014).

2.1. Sample

In this study, 5 participants were chosen as low proficiency learners of the English diploma class at National University of Modern Languages, Lahore Campus. It was purposive sampling as they were selected on the bases of their everyday performances in the classroom. The performances were assessed on the basis of fluency in English, correct use of grammar, appropriate vocabulary, and relevant contents. For ethical consideration, they were given pseudo names as Noman, Adnan, Majid, Ali and Ahmad.

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2.2. Data Collection

For the interviews, an open ended questionnaire was developed to focus the objectives and research questions. The idea of designing a questionnaire was taken from the questionnaire of Bluementhal's (2014) research on the self-efficacy beliefs of Spanish immigrants in United States of America. The interviews were conducted in Urdu language as the participants were not proficient speakers of English and it was not expected that they would provide the detailed and accurate account of their feelings, experiences and beliefs. The questions were about the frequency with which participants engage in English-language interactions with more proficient speakers in class, their self-ratings of their proficiency in English, the learning challenges of English language, their reasons for seeking out or avoiding interactions, learning environment and their self-appraisal of their English proficiency skills in comparison to their personal goals.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Expectations

Being educated and not able to speak in English is frustrating for the people in Pakistan. They study the subject of English for many years but remain less proficient in using the target language. English language is necessary for higher studies, getting a good job and better social status. The person who speaks English is considered efficient and competent. Due to this, either externally motivated or internally, the learners want to speak in English fluently which is a difficult task in one way or the other. When they join a language learning course it is believed that they will be successful now and this is a strong motivation for them to participate.

Ali was hopeful to learn something in the course although he was not confident and proficient speaker of English language. He did not have any idea about the course that what will be the outline or the proceedings.

> "My aim was to learn and gain a lot in this course and I had to present my good image in front of others."

This was a common feeling of second language learners that they expect much before joining a course and same is with Ali. If they are motivated, then improvement is there which is of course slow. It was Ali's feeling that he can improve despite the fact that he was neither confident nor language proficient.

> "I had the feeling that I could do but my English was not good. Then I realized, I could learn and speak well and could also deal with others in nice way."

Ahmad was hopeful to learn much in the course although he was not confident and proficient speaker of English language. He thought that he will become a teacher of Islamic Studies after this course and as he is online tutor of Qur'an so he will talk to his students abroad. He expected to use English in long speeches.

> "There were a lot of expectations to speak English fluently and continuously and I gained more than my expectations."

Ahmad was quite aspirant regarding his improvement and he expected much from the course because becoming a teacher of O/A level and talking to students online both were very challenging goals which he set for himself. The phrase *"will talk in English continuously"* was a typical expectation of a language learner when he or she comes to learn to speak.

Noman was expecting a lot from this course. He tried to learn English on his own but was not that successful. He joined the course for guidance as nobody told him anything. He learnt many things which were helpful for him to improve his English speaking skills. He also came to know

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about some websites which were supportive to him. He wanted to be a confident speaker to create his better image in front of others.

Noman was quite desperate regarding his improvement and he expected much from the course because in the past he was unable to get any way to improve and somehow he was dejected due to no guidance. The statement *"I want to learn English to communicate with others and create good expressions during conversation"* was a typical expectation of a language learner when he or she comes to learn to speak.

Majid was expecting to be a fluent and confident speaker of English. He wanted to get to the level of understanding others easily and could convey his message to others. He did not want to have a very good accent because he thought it is not as much necessary as compare to be clear in expression.

Majid was concerned with fluency in English expression. He wanted to be communicative only so that others will consider him educated. He considered it as the need of the hour to speak in English to be impressive.

Adnan was expecting to be a confident speaker of English. He wanted to get to the level of understanding others easily and could convey his message to others. He tried to learn the pronunciation and different methods of language learning. He had a strong desire of speaking in English with good pronunciation to create impact on his class fellows.

3.2. Learning Challenges

Learning challenges of speaking skill are quite common as in the other parts of the world. The biggest challenge is facing the people who are good at speaking in English. To overcome the hesitation is another big challenge because of the fear of internal and external factors. Another challenge is the behavior of the other participants as they mock at or interrupt the low proficiency learners. A specific challenge is the type and level of difficulty of activities because teachers do not design separate activities either for low proficiency or high level or intermediate level learners.

There are many problems in learning English in Pakistani context. People have certain issues regarding challenges of speaking English, which are discussed by Ali. He talked about the background knowledge of the topic and the active vocabulary. He thought that if there is some knowledge of the issue and the related vocabulary then it could be easier to talk on the topic.

Another challenge is to satisfy the audience in the class. When low proficiency learners perform in the class the others do not motivate them through expressions or comments, which creates problem and demotivation. Ali said that if the class fellows seemed happy then I was satisfied with my performance.

It is important to note that a low proficiency learner is very keen on judging the expressions of the audience and he or she is motivated or demotivated because of that. To cope up this challenge Ali struggled to show confidence and hide the confusion and anxiety. It is the matter of esteem and respect for the low proficiency learner to control the emotions and present a balanced attitude.

The background of Ali was not encouraging factor for English language learning. He was not studious and had less interest in studies that is why he got frustrated in language learning. As a result, he was afraid of language learning environment.

> "The problem was that I wanted to study but when I found there were lots of problems in learning I used to get desperate and could not perform well in the class."

Talking about the reality based things was a good experience. The topic related to parents was liked by Ali because he was truthful that day. He took more interest in talking about his father

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because Ali thought he was talking from his heart and there was no need to be imaginative or critical.

Some of the classroom activities are not suitable for low proficiency learners. They feel difficulty in executing those activities and specially when the class fellows are smiling or even mocking at them. Same was with Ali when he was working on a website to improve listening skills.

Ahmad faced different challenges inside and outside the classroom. He was unable to understand the accent and pronunciation of his online students as they used to talk in native like accent and pronunciation. He used to be confused while talking to the students. Secondly, facing the audience for the first time was very difficult for him in the class. He got confused even to talk about himself on first day. Introducing himself in front of others was one of the most difficult activities for him which was conducted on the very first day.

Talking about the reality-based things was a good experience. The topic related to parents and friends was liked by Ahmad and Noman because they were feeling comfortable in talking about their father. This suggests that if learners have background knowledge, then they feel confident about speaking.

Some of the classroom activities were not suitable for low proficiency learners like Ahmad. He felt difficulty in debate among the class fellows because he did not have any experience of it. He was not speaking much in that activity as compare to others. Further, the lack of active and appropriate vocabulary confused him to speak effectively in front of class.

Contrary to Ali and Ahmad, Noman faced different challenges inside and outside the classroom. He used to be depressed because of his inability to speak. His effective filter was very high as he repeatedly said that he wanted to speak correct English with appropriate vocabulary and when he could not do so , he got frustrated due to his inability. He was apprehensive of public opinion or reaction against his poor performance.

There was a problem with Noman that he used to be confused when appeared in front of the audience. He used to prepare his speech before time but the moment he started speaking he forgot everything. Surprisingly the same happened when he talked about his father. He was well prepared but out of anxiety he could not deliver and got frustrated. This is notable that the same activity was very helpful for Ali and Ahmad but it was the most difficult activity for Noman. It shows that sometimes easier things may halt the capabilities of the speakers if they do not control their emotions and become conscious of their attempt.

Noman was comfortable with less challenging activities like picture description and had problem with high challenging activities like listening an English song and then singing in the class or watching an English movie and then share that with class fellows was difficult. Although, Ali and Ahmad were having poorer background than Noman, but they liked more challenging activities as compare to Noman. So, in this regard Noman was less daring in accepting the challenge.

Majid was the most confident learner among the low proficiency learners of the class. He was happy in different types of activities but group work was his most favourite. As he felt free to share his views in such activities and there was no pressure of the turns or of the audience. He enjoyed individual activities as well. He faced trouble whenever teacher called him for presentation in front of the class and that made him nervous.

Majid was much social as compared to other low proficiency learners and that is why he liked group work activities. He wanted to have group discussion everyday along with some other

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activities. He thought group discussion was more beneficial for him and he always enjoyed that. Among individual activities he liked to prepare an English song and perform that in the class. The other favourite activity was to introduce a friend in the class. He did not feel any activity difficult during the course.

Adnan had a good spirit of participation and that is why he liked group activities in the classroom. He considered that the best experience was talking with others in a group. Like all others , he also liked the song activity and picture description. The activity which he did not like was recording his own voice and then listening that in front of the class. He was a shy person so he was reluctant to play his voice in the class. For him it was good opportunity to improve pronunciation and grammar. He did not improve his listening skill much which he thought was very important. He thought that to be a better speaker one must have confidence to convey his message.

3.3. Interaction

A very significant theme is the interaction in English Language with class the fellows and outsiders. In side class, the student-teacher interaction and student-student interaction plays a vital role for the improvement in communication. On the other hand, the learners are expected to communicate with others like relatives or employers. Specially to improve qualification, English is compulsory in higher education. Secondly, for doing a job in well-established and professional environment, it is considered essential to communicate in English.

It was not easy for Ali to talk with someone in English especially if the opponent is educated and well versed in English. Interaction in English is not frequent outside the class because people are not so educated in the society. Even the educated people do not use English until required for official purpose or as a status symbol. Ali could talk to village people as they were unaware or equally non proficient in English but have hesitation in talking to educated people although he could communicate with them somehow or the other.

While talking to people there was a mixed response according to the caliber of the opponent. Ali faced no serious problem in talking in English. The difference was less proficient people appreciated more and proficient people accepted the effort but asked to improve speaking skill.

This also shows that Ali did not face any harsh reaction from the people and overall, it was encouraging for him to speak in English.

There were people who discouraged the learners through their harsh comments and demotivated them. Ali showed a different behaviour towards such demotivating people. He was not affected by the discouragement of such people rather he was optimistic and determined to continue his efforts.

While talking to people there was a mixed response according to the caliber of the opponent. Ahmad faced no serious problem in talking in English. Sometimes family members used to make fun of him because they were not so educated except one of his aunts who motivated him always.

This also shows that Ahmad did not face any harsh reaction from the people and overall, it was encouraging for him to speak in English.

There are people who discouraged the learner through their harsh comments and demotivated them. Like Ali, Ahmad also showed a positive behaviour towards such demotivating people. He was not affected by the discouragement of such people rather he was optimistic and determined to continue his efforts.

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One thing was exclusive with Noman that he felt comfortable in talking outside the classroom. He felt that strangers do not mind wrong English but the class fellows may interrupt for the mistakes. Normally students feel at ease inside the classroom and feel hesitation outside the classroom but in Noman's case it was vice versa.

In some particular situation like interview, Noman was positive in his approach. He thought that it is a matter of repute to talk in correct English and if he was unable to talk properly he will be rejected by the interviewers. On the other hand, he was optimistic that if he will be rejected then he could judge himself that which are the mistakes he has to correct and will take care of those by the next time.

Majid felt hesitation while talking to people because he lacks English vocabulary and sometimes he got confused when the opponent was a better speaker. So far Majid thought that vocabulary and speed created troubles for him otherwise there were not much problems.

Adnan was of the opinion that the educated people were better to talk in English because they used to encourage and motivate whereas less educated or uneducated people never like to listen English. The English language speakers react positively and Urdu speakers are negative in approach.

Interaction inside classroom was quite healthy for Adnan as well because he was appreciated by others. At times class fellows demotivated him but he was not affected by that and took that lightly.

3.4. Learning Environment

In Pakistan, English language has become phobia and those who can speak nicely are considered better than others. Mostly there is less encouraging environment for the low proficiency learners inside the classrooms as well as outside the classroom. The hostility of environment demotivates the low proficiency learners. The environment includes facilities, methodology, class fellows' behaviour and motivation.

Language learning environment plays a vital role in classroom. Ali was positive regarding peers' support and he mentioned about the supportive attitude of his class fellows that they encouraged and appreciated his every effort.

There were many types of activities during the course as some were individual, others were pair work and some were based on group work. Ali enjoyed the activities regardless of the ease or difficulty . Surprisingly his most favourite and the most difficult activity was listening an English song for a couple of days and singing that in the class. Although he did not rate his performance good but he was satisfied with his efforts.

This suggested about Ali that he was an efficacious learner and his self-efficacy extended across domains insofar as a success in a given activity which corresponds to his general self-regulatory skills. Bendura defined self-regulatory skills as "generic skills for diagnosing task demands, constructing and evaluating courses of action, setting proximal goals to guide one's efforts, and creating self-incentives to sustain engagement in taxing activities and to manage stress and debilitating intrusive thoughts" (1997, p. 51). Ali perceived himself as a successful learner because he developed certain strategies to control his emotions and increase his abilities from his experience in the supportive class. He was assertive of his future success based on his first interaction with English language in terms of speaking skills course.

These statements of self-efficacy beliefs are based on Bendura's model of "social comparative inference" (1997, p. 87). Bendura wrote that learners who observe peers who are

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succeeded "persuade themselves that if others can do, they too have the capabilities to raise their performance" (1997, p. 87).

Language learning environment plays a vital role in classroom. Ahmad was positive regarding peers' support and he mentioned the supportive attitude of his class fellows that they encouraged and appreciated his every effort. He was motivated due to the environment of the class as there was no hostile attitude of the class fellows. He also emphasized the value of conducive learning environment of the class in terms of friendly and helpful behaviour of the peers.

Surprisingly like Ali, Ahmad also found one activity very difficult and the same was the most favourite activity. It was the activity of debate which was liked by him and simultaneously it was difficult because he was experiencing that for the first time.

Developing successful communication strategies enhance self-efficacy because such strategies motivate the learner to cope up novel situation successfully (Bendura, 1997). Belief in one's ability to meet new challenges in turn raises one's willingness to take risks. It means, the knowledge of using those strategies successfully compensate for insufficient proficiency before his recent advancement leads to his consent and ability to accept the challenge in a situation.

So far out of the three participants, Noman was the most demotivated due to internal motivation and effective filter. He appreciated the positive attitude of the peers but he himself was afraid of their response towards his efforts of speaking in English. He was motivated due to the environment of the class as there was no hostile attitude of the class fellows.

Noman was very critical on public responses and valued a lot in terms of confidence building. He said if people positively appreciate or criticize then there is motivation to work hard and you do your efforts no matter it takes time to improve the performance.

Noman was very happy because of his class fellows' support. His motivation level was increased due to their clapping and positive remarks over his performance. If anyone pointed out some mistakes that was not taken seriously by him because overall environment was friendly and relaxed for language learning.

Noman believed that classroom environment plays an important role in developing communicative skills. If there was a friendly environment and learners help each other, then improvement is evident. Secondly, everyone should speak in English to create a better environment.

The optimistic sense of self-efficacy can be helpful for a person like Noman for being discouraged by initial failures. As a learner, he assessed his abilities as average or low, but strongly believed to improve those abilities. Noman's low sense of efficacy regarding people's comments in close circle was creating anxiety and that is why he was avoiding interaction with those people.

Majid was not so affected due to the environment of learning English. Inside the class he did not find any hostility and outside the class he thought others were not good at using English. Due to his positivity in learning, he accepted the educated people's criticism. He thought that the course was short and in that period we did not develop friendly relationship to generate discussions. There could be more opportunity to know each other which was helpful for a better learning environment. One exclusive point regarding environment was that there was lack of loudness among the participants. It could have been better if there were mics for the speakers so that everyone was loud and clear.

Against the positive or negative response of the people, Majid had natural opinion that if there was appreciation then he became happy and if someone discouraged then it was

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disappointing that for the last sixteen or seventeen years, he was studying English language but even then, not a good user of it.

Overall Majid was a confident learner but limitations of hesitation and less exposure of English language made him low proficiency speaker of English. His beliefs motivated him to improve and by the end of the course he was successful to some extent.

Like Ali and Majid, Adnan was also encouraged with positive reaction of people and on the other hand he was disheartened because of negative remarks of others. He liked the motivating environment of the class. On the other hand, if any of the class fellows tried to demotivate him, Adnan did not pay attention to him.

For the improvement of English language learning environment, Adnan thought that teacher's methodology, language teaching methods and a lot of practice is necessary. He disagreed that his classroom environment was good because some of the students were misbehaving and using local language during the class. He said if learners had good relationship and they obeyed the teacher then there might be a better environment of language learning.

4. Discussion

As far as *expectations* were concerned all of them were well aware of the need of speaking in English for their image and status. As Gardener (1985) suggested integrative motivation in terms of desire to join the community and Clement stated it as attitude toward the second language group and learner's willingness to become like valued member of the group. Ali, Ahmad, Noman and Adnan were eager to impress others by good accent and pronunciation but Majid was interested in correct expression. He thought that accent is not that important to convey the message. They all wanted to be proficient enough that others could understand their English. Being the second language learners , they were conscious of the language learning methods but had no guidelines to improve themselves. That is why they joined the language learning course. Bluementhal (2014) is of the opinion that people with high estimations of their own capabilities are more likely to take on new challenges because they believe that they will be able to successfully meet them.

The factors affecting self-efficacy were investigated under the themes of *learning challenges and learning environment*. As far as *learning challenges* are concerned the most difficult speaking task was considered the best experience by Adnan and Majid but not by Noman. The task was to prepare an English song and sing it in the class. Nobody said that he did that nicely but they declared that it was the most enjoyable activity. Normally , it is believed that low proficiency learners prefer simple and easy to do activities but the study shows that low proficiency learners like to take the challenge. Bendura rightly said that whenever there are any threatening situations learners try to have a control over them. This efficacious outlook develops the sense of accomplishment and minimizes stress. Ali and Ahmed felt comfortable with the activity of describing their fathers. The problem occurred when the learners did not have practice or skill of that activity. Ali got confused while working on a website to improve listening because he was not skillful computer operator. Ahmad got trouble in debating because it was his first experience of debate in English with people. Noman was different in this regard as he failed to talk about his father because he lost his confidence and became conscious of vocabulary although no specific vocabulary was required. Adnan faced trouble in the activity of elocution and he was under pressure that others will listen his voice. Only Majid was of the view that there was no difficult activity throughout the course. In overall view , none of the learners faced challenges beyond their capacity. In fact, they were comfortable with all the language learning activities, which was a healthy sign to strengthen their self-efficacy beliefs.

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The second factor covering self-efficacy beliefs was *learning environment*. Normally it is considered that language learning environment plays a vital role in encouraging or discouraging the low proficiency learners. Almost all of them were committed to face any kind of environment for the sake of improvement and that is why they ignored any type of criticism by their class fellows if there was any. Norton (2009) suggested that environment does has it impact on the learners whether it is encouraging or discouraging. In both conditions the learners improve their proficiency. Generally, they were happy by the support of their class fellows. They expected that classroom environment should be friendly and supportive. Other class fellows should help them and there should be socially relaxed environment. Majid was particular about it and he criticized the socializing factor. He believed that if the course might be of longer duration then there could be a chance of better socializing and that could be beneficial for them. Noman was the only one who was disturbed because of the criticism of others. He had a strong feeling of demotivation if someone interrupted him and he used to become extra conscious of his efforts of speaking in English.

The theme of *interaction* was focusing the second research question. Everyone was comfortable to talk in English with a person who was low proficiency learner like him. With more proficient people they were reluctant to communicate. Here the sense of low proficiency and inferiority were affecting the learners. Norton (2000) & Cervatiuc (2009) believed that instead of being willing partners in negotiation for meaning, the proficient speakers often avoid interaction with low-proficiency learners. Some learners like Ahmad and Adnan valued the educated and proficient speakers' company. They thought uneducated or low proficient people discourage and they mock at if we try to speak in English in front of them. Appreciation from the people while interacting in English is highly recommended by the low proficiency learners. Long (1996) claimed that interaction with proficient speakers lead to better understanding of target language and the low proficiency learners may develop confidence and accuracy. They became motivated whenever somebody supported their effort of speaking. Noman was having different feelings related to interaction in English. He was reluctant to speak in classroom because he did not want to face the comments of the class. He felt comfortable outside the class as there was no restriction in speaking. According to Clement (1980), the negative attitude of the proficient speakers may have inhibiting effects on low proficiency learners' motivation to engage in communication with proficient speakers. This attitude shows that low proficiency learners take initiative of speaking in target language with strangers instead of acquaintances because in this way they can retain self-respect.

5. Conclusion

Self-efficacy beliefs play a vital role in shaping the outcomes of learners' learning. It is significant for second-language instructors to include strategies in their environment that establish learners' sense of self-efficacy. The current study favours three suggestions : by including strong connection for interaction in the process of learning, by helping the language learners to set their goals and be aware of their progress, and by establishing methods and approaches to deal with difficulties in learning as they arise. The social cognitive approach to learning emphasizes the significance of making learners aware that they have capacity as learners, and are capable to control and shape their learning process (Bandura, 1997). To recognize this capacity is a central element of self-efficacy building, as learners must believe that they are capable of achieving successful outcomes in learning.

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The feedback and attitudes of class fellows, friends and family members toward learners' language use is likely to impact learners more strongly than that of strangers, and learners may have more ability to alter the social environment within their circle of communication than they have to alter their interactions with strangers. Learners should find some friend or family member who can speak with better proficiency than the learner, and such speakers must help the learner to succeed instead of discouraging.

Instructors should focus on the need for learners to enhance their abilities in problematic areas by aiding them improve plans for controlling challenges when they begin a course of study. Instructors can also nurture self-efficacy in learners' ability to focus on self-regulating schemes by assisting in discussions of what strategies students have used, and mainly what approaches have been effective for them. Learners believe that a strategy will be effective for them if the same has been effective for someone who is a class fellow (Bandura, 1997). In the challenging activities for low proficiency learners, there should be extra support in terms of time, resources and evaluation. They should not be discouraged to attempt the difficult tasks or there should not be separate tasks for different level learners within the same class. The study proved that low proficiency learners tried as well as enjoyed the difficult activities like preparing a song or participating in a debate in English.

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FORM FOR BLIND REVIEW (FOREIGN / LOCAL EXPERTS)

Critical Review of Social Sciences and Humanities (CRSSH)
Government Graduate College Township
Higher Education Department
Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan

Reviewer	Dr. Nadeem Chohan
Title of the paper	**The Role of Self-Efficacy in Low Level Learners to Improve English Language**
Dispatch / e-mail date	

Reviewer's Comments and Recommendation:
(Please provide comprehensive feedback on the following sections of the Article under Review)

Title & Abstract:
Ttile seems vague. I suggest "Role of Self-Efficacy in Improving English Language Skills in Struggling English Language Learners" (Just a Suggestion). Abstract looks OK.

Introduction:
Introduction is lengthy and repetitive. Make it more focused and concise.

Literature Review:
Includes both international and Pakistani research perspectives. If possible search for some recent body of research to make more convincing.

Methodology:
The Methodology is appropriate.

Results:
Nice analysis and result extraction. It could be improved if some generalised patterns can be identified.

Discussion:
It has nice flow and relate all previous sections

Conclusion/recommendation:
Effective and practical suggestions for the stakeholders.

Final comments: Recommended for publication after minor revisions.

Reviewers Recommendation: (Please tick the appropriate box)

Sections	Adequate	Minor Changes Required	Major Changes Required	Unacceptable
Title & Abstract		√		
Introduction		√		
Literature review		√		
Methodology	√			
Results	X			
Discussion		√		
Conclusion/recommendation		√		

Recommendation to Editor (Please mark "X" for appropriate option)
( ) Strongly recommended without any changes (X) Recommended with minor revisions ( ) Recommended with major revisions ( ) Recommended to decline the submission



Signature (Reviewer)

FORM FOR BLIND REVIEW (FOREIGN / LOCAL EXPERTS)

Critical Review of Social Sciences and Humanities (CRSSH)
Government Graduate College Township
Higher Education Department
Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan

Reviewer	Dr. Umara Shaheen
Title of the paper	**The Role of Self-Efficacy in Low Level Learners to Improve English Language**
Dispatch / e-mail date	

Reviewer's Comments and Recommendation:
(Please provide comprehensive feedback on the following sections of the Article under Review)

Title & Abstract:
The title clearly reflects the central construct (self-efficacy) and the target population (low-level English learners). The abstract is fine and encapsulate; the theoretical grounding in social-cognitive theory, the qualitative nature of the study, the data source (open-ended interviews), the general findings regarding learner positivity, motivation, and participation.
Revise the title for clarity and academic style (e.g., "The Role of Self-Efficacy in Improving English Proficiency among Low-Proficiency Learners"). Improve language accuracy and conciseness.

Introduction:
The introduction establishes the importance of individual differences in SLA. Strong theoretical anchoring in Bandura's social cognitive theory. To improve the quality reduce redundancy and focus the discussion. Clearly articulate the research gap at the end of the introduction.

Literature Review:
Demonstrates solid familiarity with key SLA and self-efficacy literature (Bandura, Gardner, Dörnyei, Norton, etc.). The literature review is largely descriptive, offering limited critical comparison. Some cited studies are not clearly connected to the present research focus.

Methodology:
Qualitative exploratory design is appropriate for investigating beliefs and experiences. Clear justification for using open-ended interviews. For improvement address credibility measures (triangulation, member checking, peer debriefing) and explicitly acknowledge methodological limitations.

Results:
Findings are organized around clear thematic categories. Rich participant quotations enhance authenticity. For improvement reduce repetition and condense learner narratives and focus on patterns across participants rather than individual storytelling.

Discussion:
Good

Conclusion/recommendation:
Clearly emphasizes the importance of self-efficacy in language learning. Provides practical recommendations for instructors and learners.

Final comments: Can be published after careful and thorough revision of language and recommended parts.

Reviewers Recommendation: (Please tick the appropriate box)

Sections	Adequate	Minor Changes Required	Major Changes Required	Unacceptable
Title & Abstract		X		
Introduction			X	
Literature review		X		
Methodology		X		
Results	X			
Discussion		X		
Conclusion/recommendation		X		

Recommendation to Editor (Please mark "X" for appropriate option)
( ) Strongly recommended without any changes (X) Recommended with minor revisions ( ) Recommended with major revisions ( ) Recommended to decline the submission

Reviewer
Dr. Umara Shaheen
Assistant Professor
Comsats University Islamabad, Lahore Campus

The Role of Self-Efficacy in Low Level Learners to Improve English Language

Abstract

The variability in learning second language proficiency is an important area of inquiry in the study of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). This study adopted a social-psychological perspective on language acquisition that focused on the role of self-efficacy in learning. The study investigated the self-efficacy beliefs of low level learners regarding the factors affecting self-efficacy beliefs and the role of self-efficacy beliefs in interaction with others in target language. The data was collected through open ended interviews of five low-level English language learners (ELLs) from English speaking class about their experiences and their self-efficacy beliefs about their ability to use their English. The accounts of their experiences regarding learning and using English were analyzed qualitatively. It was found out that the low level learners of English language classroom remain positive with their targets, enjoy the multiple tasks, take challenges and participate, affected by the motivation given by the inside and outside environment of the classroom, the peers and the society.

Key Terms: Self-efficacy, Low-level learners, Learners' beliefs, Language learning.

Introduction

The difference in language proficiency is an important area of research in the study of second language proficiency (SLA). It is not easy to understand the process of mastering the language, if we do not understand why some students are successful, while others struggle or fail. To answer this question, many language acquisition models have been developed that try to include and take into account some or all of the interrelated variables that affect the final level of language proficiency. These variables include the age at which the student began to study L2, the amount and type of exposure to L2, the amount and type of formal training in L2, the motivation for learning L2, confidence in L2 abilities, the student's attitude to L2 speakers and culture, and the frequency of interaction with speakers of L2 (Moyer, 2004).

The social cognitive theory of human behavior developed by Bandura (1986) takes into account the influence of cognition, affective reactions, and the social learning environment in general. Social cognitive theory can give us an understanding of the variability in mastering a second language, because it introduces a new construction into the explanation of learning outcomes in terms of self-efficacy. Through a perception of self-efficacy, students become aware of their ability to use their abilities to succeed in a given learning context. Bandura defined self-efficacy as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (1997, p. 3).

According to Bandura (1995), "Seeing people similar to oneself succeed by sustained effort raises observers' beliefs that they too possess the capabilities master comparable activities to succeed." Thus, self-efficacy takes into account both internal and external influences on learning. It recognizes the ability of the student's social environment to shape his or her experience and results, without diminishing the student's ability in their own learning process.

At the same time, students must act in a social environment that also structures their lives and to a certain extent determines their capabilities. A key element of the social environment when it comes to learning a language is the learner's experience and interaction with L2 native speakers. In order to study the interaction between students and their social environment, as well as the relationship of these factors with the level of language proficiency, this study examined students' opinions about beliefs in self-efficacy and their experience when they speak their second language i.e., English.

Problem Statement

The variables of age, language input, culture, motivation for language learning, exposure of target language, instructions and interaction are equally significant for Pakistani learners of English language. They start learning English from either grade one or grade six in cities and villages respectively but still they are unable to speak in English language. Within the same language learning class, the proficiency level is different as there are proficient speakers along with intermediate level speakers and low level speakers. The study will investigate that how a group of low proficiency ESL students are accounted for their own learning process, especially with respect to the way they express perceptions of self-efficacy and to the English language interaction that they have outside of school or college.

Research Objectives

1- To investigate factors influencing learners' self-efficacy beliefs in the process of English language learning
2- To investigate the influence of self-efficacy beliefs while communicating with others in English language

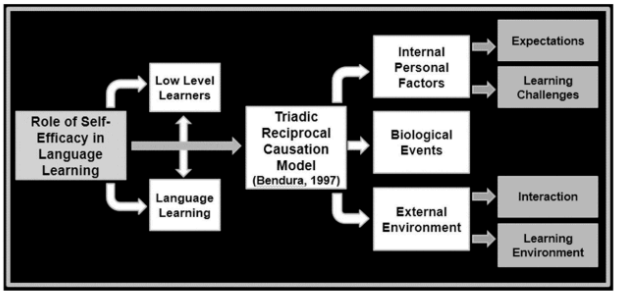
Research Questions

1. Which factors influence learners' self-efficacy beliefs in the process of English-language learning?
2. How self-efficacy beliefs are influenced while interacting with others in English language?

Conceptual Framework

The role of self-efficacy in language learning in low-level learners is assessed through Triadic Reciprocal Causation Model (Bendura, 1997). This model is based on three features namely internal personal factors, biological events and external environment. The current study is focusing

on two features i.e., internal personal factors and external environment. Through these features, further explore expectations, learning challenges, interaction and learning environment.



Methodology

This was an exploratory qualitative study based upon the constructivist view of knowledge creation. The views and explanations of the low level English language learners were explored in terms of their expectations, learning challenges, learning environment and interaction. Data collection tool for this research was an open ended interview because it provided those experiences which were constructed and interpreted by the researcher (Richards, 2009). This approach was adopted in line with qualitative research goals so that multiple truths of the individuals were recorded instead of establishing the objective truths through a questionnaire (Bluementhal, 2014).

Sample

In this study, 5 participants were chosen as low-level learners of the English diploma class at National University of Modern Languages, Lahore Campus. It was purposive sampling as they were selected on the bases of their everyday performances in the classroom. The performances were assessed on the basis of fluency in English, correct use of grammar, appropriate vocabulary, and relevant contents. For ethical consideration, they were given pseudo names as Noman, Adnan, Majid, Ali and Ahmad.

Data Collection

For the interviews, an open ended questionnaire was developed to focus the objectives and research questions. The idea of designing the questionnaire was taken from the questionnaire of Bluementhal's (2014) research on the self-efficacy beliefs of Spanish immigrants in United States of America. The interviews were conducted in Urdu language as the participants were not proficient speakers of English and it was not expected that they would provide the detailed and accurate account of their feelings, experiences and beliefs. The questions were about the frequency with which participants engage in English-language interactions with more proficient speakers in class, their self-ratings of their proficiency in English, the learning challenges of English language,

their reasons for seeking out or avoiding interactions, learning environment and their self-appraisal of their English proficiency skills in comparison to their personal goals.

Results and Discussion

Expectations

Being educated and not able to speak in English is frustrating for the people in Pakistan. They study the subject of English for many years but remain less proficient in using the target language. English language is necessary for higher studies, getting good job and better social status. The person who speaks English is considered efficient and competent. Due to this, either externally motivated or internally, the learners want to speak in English fluently which is a difficult task in one way or the other. When they join a language learning course it is believed that they will be successful now and this is a strong motivation for them to participate.

Ali was hopeful to learn something in the course although he was not confident and proficient speaker of English language. He did not have any idea about the course that what will be the outline or the proceedings.

> "My aim was to learn and gain a lot in this course and I had to present my good image in front of others."

This was a common feeling of second language learners that they expect much before joining a course and same is with Ali. If they are motivated, then improvement is there which is of course slow. It was Ali's feeling that he can improve despite the fact that he was neither confident nor language proficient.

> "I had the feeling that I could do but my English was not good. Then I realized, I could learn and speak well and could also deal with others in nice way."

Ahmad was hopeful to learn much in the course although he was not confident and proficient speaker of English language. He thought that he will become a teacher of Islamic Studies after this course and as he is online tutor of Qur'an so he will talk to his students abroad. He expected to use English in long speeches.

> "There were a lot of expectations to speak English fluently and continuously and I gained more than my expectations."

Ahmad was quite aspirant regarding his improvement and he expected much from the course because becoming a teacher of O/A level and talking to students online both were very challenging tasks which he set for himself. The phrase *"will talk in English continuously"* was a typical expectation of a language learner when he or she comes to learn to speak.

Noman was expecting a lot from this course. He tried to learn English on his own but was not that successful. He joined the course for guidance as nobody told him anything. He learnt many things which were helpful for him to improve his speaking in English. He also came to know about

some websites which were supportive to him. He wanted to be confident speaker to create his better image in front of others.

Noman was quite desperate regarding his improvement and he expected much from the course because in the past he was unable to get any way to improve and somehow he was dejected due to no guidance. The statement *"I want to learn English to communicate with others and create good expressions during conversation"* was a typical expectation of a language learner when he or she comes to learn to speak.

Majid was expecting to be a fluent and confident speaker of English. He wanted to get to the level of understanding others easily and could convey his message to others. He did not want to have a very good accent because he thought it is not as much necessary as compare to be clear in expression.

Majid was concerned with fluency in English expression. He wanted to be communicative only so that others will consider him educated. He considered it the need of the hour to speak in English to be impressive.

Adnan was expecting to be a confident speaker of English. He wanted to get to the level of understanding others easily and could convey his message to others. He tried to learn the pronunciation and different methods of language learning. He had a strong desire of speaking in English with good pronunciation to create impact on his class fellows.

Learning Challenges

Learning challenges of speaking skill are quite common as in the other parts of the world. The biggest challenge is facing the people who are good at speaking in English. To overcome the hesitation is another big challenge because of the fear of internal and external factors. Another challenge is the behavior of the other participants as they mock at or interrupt the low level learners. A specific challenge is the type and level of difficulty of activities because teachers do not design separate activities either for low level or high level or intermediate level learners.

There are many problems in learning English in Pakistani context. People have certain issues regarding challenges of speaking English, which are discussed by Ali. He talked about the background knowledge of the topic and the active vocabulary. He thought that if there is some knowledge of the issue and the related vocabulary then it could be easier to talk on the topic.

Another challenge is to satisfy the audience in the class. When low level learners perform in the class the others do not motivate through expressions or comments, which creates problem and demotivation. Ali said that if the class fellows seemed happy then I was satisfied with my performance.

It is important to note that a low-level learner is very keen on judging the expressions of the audience and he or she is motivated or demotivated because of that. To cope up this challenge

Ali struggled to show confidence and hide the confusion and anxiety. It is the matter of esteem and respect for the low-level learner to control the emotions and present a balanced attitude.

The background of Ali was not encouraging factor for English language learning. He was not studious and had less interest in studies that is why he got frustrated in language learning. In result, he was afraid of language learning environment.

> "The problem was that I wanted to study but when I found there were lots of problems in learning I used to get desperate and could not perform well in the class."

Talking about the reality based things was a good experience. The topic related to parents was liked by Ali because he was truthful that day. He took more interest in talking about his father because Ali thought he was talking from his heart and there was no need to be imaginative or critical.

Some of the classroom activities are not suitable for low level learners. They feel difficulty in executing those activities and specially when the class fellows are smiling or even mocking at them. Same was with Ali when he was working on a website to improve listening skills.

Ahmad faced different challenges inside and outside the classroom. He was unable to understand the accent and pronunciation of his online students as they used to talk in native like accent and pronunciation. He used to be confused while talking to the students. Secondly, facing the audience for the first time was very difficult for him in the class. He got confused even to talk about himself on first day. Introducing himself in front of others was one of the most difficult activities for him which was conducted on the very first day.

Talking about the reality based things was a good experience. The topic related to parents was liked by Ahmad because he was feeling comfortable in talking about his father. This suggests that if learners like Ahmad have background knowledge then they feel confident about speaking.

Some of the classroom activities were not suitable for low level learners like Ahmad. He felt difficulty in debate among the class fellows because he did not have any experience of it. He was not speaking much in that activity as compare to others. Further, the lack of active and appropriate vocabulary confused him to speak effectively in front of class.

Contrary to Ali and Ahmad, Noman faced different challenges inside and outside the classroom. He used to be depressed because of his inability to speak. His effective filter was very high as he repeatedly said that he wanted to speak correct English with appropriate vocabulary and if he could not do so then he got frustrated due to his inability. He was apprehensive of public opinion or reaction against his poor performance.

Talking about the reality based things was a good experience. The topic related to his friend was liked by Noman because he was feeling comfortable in talking about his

friend. This suggests that if learners like Noman have background knowledge then they feel confident about speaking.

There was a problem with Noman that he used to be confused when appeared in front of the audience. He used to prepare his speech before time but the moment he started speaking he forgot everything. Surprisingly the same happened when he talked about his father. He was well prepared but out of anxiety he could not deliver and got frustrated. This is notable that the same activity was very helpful for Ali and Ahmad but it was the most difficult activity for Noman. It shows that sometimes easier things may halt the capabilities of the speakers if they do not control their emotions and become conscious of their attempt.

Noman was comfortable with less challenging activities like picture description and had problem with high challenging activities like listening an English song and then sing in the class or watching an English movie and then share that with class fellows was difficult. Although, Ali and Ahmad were having poorer background than Noman, but they liked more challenging activities as compare to Noman. So, in this regard Noman was less daring in accepting the challenge.

Majid was the most confident learner among the low level learners of the class. He was happy in different types of activities but group work was his most favourite. As he felt free to share his views in such activities and there was no pressure of the turns or of the audience. He enjoyed individual activities as well. He faced trouble whenever teacher called him for presentation in front of the class and that made him nervous.

Majid was much social as compare to other low-level learners and that is why he liked group work activities. He wanted to have group discussion everyday along with some other activity. He thought group discussion was more beneficial for him and he always enjoyed that. Among individual activities he liked to prepare an English song and perform that in the class. The other favourite activity was to introduce a friend in the class. He did not feel any activity difficult during the course.

Adnan had a good spirit of participation and that is why he liked group activities in the classroom. He considered that the best experience was when talking with others in a group. Like all others he also liked the song activity and picture description. The activity which he did not like was recording his own voice and then listening that in front of the class. He was shy person so he was reluctant to play his voice in the class. For him it was good opportunity to improve pronunciation and grammar. He did not improve his listening skill as much which he thought was very important. He thought that to be a better speaker one must have confidence to convey his message.

Interaction

A very significant theme is the interaction in English Language with class fellows and the outsiders. In side class, the student-teacher interaction and student-student interaction plays a vital

role for the improvement in communication. On the other hand, the learners are expected to communicate with others like relatives or employers. Specially to improve qualification, English is compulsory in higher education. Secondly, for doing job in well-established and professional environment, it is considered essential to communicate in English.

It was not easy for Ali to talk with someone in English especially if the opponent is educated and well versed in English. Interaction in English is not frequent outside the class because people are not so educated in the society. Even the educated people do not use English until required for official purpose or as a status symbol. Ali could talk to village people as they were unaware or equally non proficient in English but have hesitation in talking to educated people although he could communicate with them somehow or the other.

While talking to people there was a mixed response according to the caliber of the opponent. Ali faced no serious problem in talking in English. The difference was less proficient people appreciated more and proficient people accepted the effort but asked to improve speaking skill.

This also shows that Ali did not face any harsh reaction from the people and overall it was encouraging for him to speak in English.

There are people who discourage the learner through their harsh comments and demotivate them. Ali showed a different behavior towards such demotivating people. He was not affected by the discouragement of such people rather he was optimistic and determined to continue his efforts.

Ahamd was required to talk with kids living in America or Europe for teaching the Nazra Qur'an and he had a very limited interaction with them or their parents in English. Due to specific usage he was not required to speak in English in detail so, he felt comfortable with his job.

While talking to people there was a mixed response according to the caliber of the opponent. Ahmad faced no serious problem in talking in English. Sometimes family members used to make fun of him because they were not so educated except one of his aunts who motivated him always.

This also shows that Ahmad did not face any harsh reaction from the people and overall, it was encouraging for him to speak in English.

There are people who discourage the learner through their harsh comments and demotivate them. Like Ali, Ahmad also showed a positive behavior towards such demotivating people. He was not affected by the discouragement of such people rather he was optimistic and determined to continue his efforts.

Noman was not required to talk with many people outside the classroom. He was comfortable in talking with uneducated people or those who were not well versed in speaking in English. He was reluctant to speak with those who used to interrupt upon his mistakes. Noman

was satisfied with those who were like him in English and he concentrated on conveying the message.

One thing was exclusive with Noman that he felt comfortable in talking outside the classroom. He felt that strangers do not mind wrong English but the class fellows may interrupt for the mistakes. Normally students feel at ease inside the classroom and feel hesitation outside the classroom but in Noman's case it was vice versa.

This also shows that Ahmad did not face any harsh reaction from the people outside the classroom and overall it was encouraging for him to speak in English in society.

In some particular situation like interview, Noman was positive in his approach. He thought that it is a matter of repute to talk in correct English and if he was unable to talk properly he will be rejected by the interviewers. On the other hand, he was optimistic that if he will be rejected then he could judge himself that which are the mistakes he has to correct and will take care of those by the next time.

Majid was not required to talk with many people outside the classroom. His main concern was to take interview as he had finished his master degree. He thought that the employers are normally very educated people and they speak English very fluenty so there will be a lot of problem for him to understand them. Majid was apprehensive that because of their speedy conversation he will not catch some words. He preferred to talk with those who communicate at normal speed which is not so fast that Majid would feel trouble to understand.

Majid felt hesitation while talking to people because he lacks English vocabulary and sometimes he got confused when the opponent was a better speaker. So far Majid thought that vocabulary and speed created troubles for him otherwise there were not much problems.

Interaction inside classroom was quite healthy for Majid as he was appreciated by them. At times class fellows demotivated him but he was not affected by that and took that lightly.

Adnan needed to speak in English during the lecture because all of the class fellows used to speak in English. At that time talking in English was the only medium and afterwards everyone used to speak in local language. He did not have a company of friends where he could use English language that is why he felt uncomfortable among his friends.

Adnan was of the opinion that the educated people were better to talk in English because they used to encourage and motivate whereas less educated or uneducated people never like to listen English. The English language speakers react positively and Urdu speakers are negative in approach.

Interaction inside classroom was quite healthy for Adnan as well because he was appreciated by others. At times class fellows demotivated him but he was not affected by that and took that lightly.

Learning Environment

In Pakistan, English language has become phobia and those who can speak nicely are considered better than others. Mostly there is less encouraging environment for the low level learners inside the classrooms as well as outside the classroom. The hostility of environment demotivates the low level learners. The environment includes facilities, methodology, class fellows' behavior and motivation.

Language learning environment plays a vital role in classroom. Ali was positive regarding peers' support and he mentioned about the supportive attitude of his class fellows that they encouraged and appreciated his every effort.

There were many types of activities during the course as some were individual, others were pair work and some in groups. Ali enjoyed the activities regardless of the easy or the difficult ones. Surprisingly his most favourite and the most difficult activity was listening an English song for a couple of days and singing that in the class. Although he did not rate his performance good but he was satisfied with his effort.

This suggested about Ali that he was an efficacious learner and his self-efficacy extended across domains insofar as success in a given activity which corresponds to his general self-regulatory skills. Bendura defined self-regulatory skills as "generic skills for diagnosing task demands, constructing and evaluating courses of action, setting proximal goals to guide one's efforts, and creating self-incentives to sustain engagement in taxing activities and to manage stress and debilitating intrusive thoughts" (1997, p. 51). Ali perceived himself as a successful learner because he developed certain strategies to control his emotions and increase his abilities from his experience in the supportive class. He was assertive of his future success based on his first interaction with English language in terms of speaking skill course.

These statements of self-efficacy beliefs based on Bendura's model of "social comparative inference" (1997, p. 87). Bendura wrote that learners who observe peers who are succeeded "persuade themselves that if others can do, they too have the capabilities to raise their performance" (1997, p. 87).

Language learning environment plays a vital role in classroom. Ahmad was positive regarding peers' support and he mentioned about the supportive attitude of his class fellows that they encouraged and appreciated his every effort. He was motivated due to the environment of the class as there was no hostile attitude of the class fellows. He also emphasized the value of conducive learning environment of the class in terms of friendly and helpful behavior of the peers.

Surprisingly like Ali, Ahmad also found one activity very difficult and the same was the most favourite activity. It was the activity of debate which was liked by him and simultaneously it was difficult because he was experiencing that for the first time.

Developing successful communication strategies enhances self-efficacy because such strategies motivate the learner to cope up novel situation successfully (Bendura, 1997). Belief in one's ability to meet new challenges in turn raises one's willingness to take risks. It means, the knowledge of using those strategies successfully compensate for insufficient proficiency before his recent advancement leads to his consent and ability to accept the challenge in a situation.

So far out of the three participants, Noman was the most demotivated due to internal motivation and effective filter. He appreciated the positive attitude of the peers but he himself was afraid of their response towards his effort of speaking in English. He was motivated due to the environment of the class as there was no hostile attitude of the class fellows.

Noman was very critical on public response and valued a lot in terms of confidence building. He said if people positively appreciate or criticize then there is motivation to work hard and you do your effort no matter it takes time to improve the performance.

Noman was very happy because of his class fellows' support. His motivation level was increased due to their clapping and positive remarks over his performance. If anyone pointed out some mistake that was not taken seriously by him because overall environment was friendly and relaxed for language learning.

Noman believed that classroom environment plays an important role in developing communicative skills. If there was a friendly environment and learners help each other, then improvement is evident. Secondly, everyone should speak in English to create a better environment.

The optimistic sense of self-efficacy can be helpful for a person like Noman for being discouraged by initial failures. As a learner, he assessed his abilities as average or low, but strongly believed to improve those abilities. Noman's low sense of efficacy regarding people's comments in close circle was creating anxiety and that is why he was avoiding interaction with those people.

Majid was not so affected due to the environment of learning English. Inside the class he did not find any hostility and outside the class he thought others were not good at using English. Due to his positivity in learning he accepted the educated people criticism. He thought that the course was short and in that period we did not have friendly relationship to generate discussions. There could be more opportunity to know each other which was helpful for a better learning environment. One exclusive point regarding environment was that there was lack of loudness among the participants. It could have been better if there were mics for the speakers so that everyone was loud and clear.

Against the positive or negative response of the people, Majid had natural opinion that if there was appreciation then he became happy and if someone discouraged then it was disappointing that for the last sixteen or seventeen years he was studying English language but even then not a good user of it.

Overall Majid was a confident learner but limitations of hesitation and less exposure of English language made him low level speaker of English. His beliefs motivated him to improve and by the end of the course he was successful to some extent.

Like Ali and Majid, Adnan was also encouraged with positive reaction of people and on the other hand he was disheartened because of negative remarks of others. He liked the motivating environment of the class. On the other hand, if any of the class fellows tried to demotivate him, Adnan did not pay attention to him.

For the improvement of English language learning environment, Adnan thought that teacher's methodology, language teaching methods and a lot of practice is necessary. He disagreed that his classroom environment was good because some of the students were misbehaving and using local language during the class. He said if learners had good relationship and they obeyed the teacher then there might be a better environment of language learning.

Discussion

As far as *expectations* were concerned all of them were well aware of the need of speaking in English for their image and status. As Gardener (1985) suggested integrative motivation in terms of desire to join the community and Clement stated it as attitude toward the second language group and learner's willingness to become like valued member of the group. Ali, Ahmad, Noman and Adnan were eager to impress others by good accent and pronunciation but Majid was interested in correct expression. He thought that accent is not that important to convey the message. They all wanted to be proficient enough that others could understand their English. Being the second language learners they were conscious of the language learning methods but had no guide line to improve themselves. That is why they joined the language learning course. Bluementhal (2014) is of the opinion that people with high estimations of their own capabilities are more likely to take on new challenges because they believe that they will be able to successfully meet them.

The factors affecting self-efficacy were investigated under the themes of *learning challenges and learning environment*. As far as *learning challenges* are concerned the most difficult speaking task was considered the best experience by Adnan and Majid but not by Noman. The task was to prepare an English song and sing in the class. Nobody said that he did that nicely but they declared that it was the most enjoyable activity. Normally it is believed that low level learners prefer simple and easy to do activities but the study shows that low level learners like to take the challenge. Bendura rightly said that whenever there are any threatening situations learners try to control over them. This efficacious outlook develops the sense of accomplishment and minimizes stress. Ali and Ahmed felt comfortable with the activity of describing their fathers. The problem occurred when the learners did not have practice or skill of that activity. Ali got confused while working on a website to improve listening because he was not skillful computer operator. Ahmad got trouble in debating because it was his first experience of debate in English with people. Noman was different in this regard as he failed to talk about his father because he lost his confidence and became conscious of vocabulary although no specific vocabulary was required.

Adnan faced trouble in the activity of elocution and he was under pressure that others will listen his voice. Only Majid was of the view that there was no difficult activity throughout the course. In overall view none of the learners faced challenges beyond their capacity. In fact, they were comfortable with all the language learning activities, which was a healthy sign to strengthen their self-efficacy beliefs.

The second factor covering self-efficacy belief was *learning environment*. Normally it is considered that language learning environment plays a vital role in encouraging or discouraging the low level learners. Almost all of them were committed to face any kind of environment for the sake of improvement and that is why they ignored any type of criticism by their class fellows if there was any. Norton (2009) suggested that environment does has it impact on the learners whether it is encouraging or discouraging. In both conditions the learners improve their proficiency. Generally, they were happy by the support of their class fellows. They expected that classroom environment should be friendly and supportive. Other class fellows should help them and there should be socially relaxed environment. Majid was particular about it and he criticized the socializing factor. He believed that if the course might be of longer duration then there could be a chance of better socializing and that could be beneficial for them. Noman was the only one who was disturbed because of the criticism of others. He had a strong feeling of demotivation if someone interrupted him and he used to become extra conscious of his effort of speaking in English.

The theme of *interaction* was focusing the second research question. Everyone was comfortable to talk in English with a person who was low level learner like him. With more proficient people they were reluctant to communicate. Here the sense of low proficiency and inferiority were affecting the learners. Norton (2000) & Cervatiuc (2009) believed that instead of being willing partners in negotiation for meaning, the proficient speakers often avoid interaction with low-proficiency learners. Some learners like Ahmad and Adnan valued the educated and proficient speakers' company. They thought uneducated or low proficient people discourage and they mock at if we try to speak in English in front of them. Appreciation from the people while interacting in English is highly recommended by the low level learners. Long (1996) claimed that interaction with proficient speakers lead to better understanding of target language and the low-level learners may develop confidence and accuracy. They became motivated whenever some body supported their effort of speaking. Noman was having different feeling related to interaction in English. He was reluctant to speak in classroom because he did not want to face the comments of the class. He felt comfortable outside the class as there was no restriction in speaking. According to Clement (1980), the negative attitude of the proficient speakers may have inhibiting effects on low-level learners' motivation to engage in communication with proficient speakers. This attitude shows that low level learners take initiative of speaking in target language with strangers instead of acquaintances because in this way they can retain self-respect.

Conclusion

Self-efficacy beliefs play a vital role in shaping the outcomes of learners' learning. It is significant for second-language instructors to include strategies in their environment that establish learners' sense of self-efficacy. The current study favours three suggestions for the: by including strong connection for interaction in the process of learning, by helping the language learners to set their goals and be aware of their progress, and by establishing methods and approaches to deal with difficulties in learning as they arise. The social cognitive approach to learning emphasizes the significance of making learners aware that they have capacity as learners, and are capable to control and shape their learning process (Bandura, 1997). To recognize this capacity is a central element of self-efficacy building, as learners must believe that they are capable of achieving successful outcomes in learning.

The feedback and attitudes of class fellows, friends and family members toward learners' language use is likely to impact learners more strongly than that of strangers, and learners may have more ability to alter the social environment within their circle of communication than they have to alter their interactions with strangers. Learners should find some friend or family member who can speak with better proficiency than the learner, and such speakers must help the learner to succeed instead of discouraging.

Instructors should focus on the need for learners to enhance their abilities in problematic areas by aiding them improve plans for controlling challenges when they begin a course of study. Instructors can also nurture self-efficacy in learners' ability to focus on self-regulating schemes by assisting in discussions of what strategies students have used, and mainly what approaches have been effective for them. Learners believe that a strategy will be effective for them if the same has been effective for someone who is a class fellow (Bandura, 1997). In the challenging activities for low level learners, there should be extra support in terms of time, resources and evaluation. They should not be discouraged to attempt the difficult tasks or there should not be separate tasks for different level learners within the same class. The study proved that low level learners tried as well as enjoyed the difficult activities like preparing a song or participating in a debate in English.

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