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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
ESL learners, speaking skills, family environment, peer relationships, BS level	This research article investigates the impact of family environment and peer relationships on the speaking skills of English as a Second Language (ESL) learners at the Bachelor of Studies (BS) level. Speaking is one of the most challenging language skills for ESL learners, particularly in contexts where exposure to English outside the classroom is limited. The study aims to explore how parental and family support and peer interaction influence learners' confidence, fluency, and willingness to speak English. A quantitative research design was adopted, and data were collected from 300 BS-level students through a structured questionnaire. The findings indicate that a supportive family environment plays a vital role in encouraging learners to practice English, while positive peer relationships significantly enhance speaking confidence and reduce anxiety. The study concludes that both family and peer environments are crucial social factors that contribute to the development of speaking skills among ESL learners at the undergraduate level.
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Introduction

English has gained immense importance as a global language and serves as a key medium of instruction in higher education in Pakistan. At the undergraduate level, students are expected to communicate effectively in English for academic presentations, classroom discussions, and future professional settings. Despite years of formal instruction, many ESL learners face difficulties in speaking English fluently and confidently. These difficulties are often associated with psychological barriers, limited exposure to English, and lack of supportive environments.

Speaking skills are not developed solely through classroom instruction; they are deeply influenced by learners' social surroundings. The family environment shapes learners' attitudes, motivation, and confidence toward language learning, while peer relationships provide opportunities for interaction and practice. In Pakistani society, where English is rarely used at home, family encouragement can play a decisive role in motivating learners to engage with the language. Similarly, peers act as immediate communication partners, and supportive peer interaction can help learners overcome fear and hesitation.

This study focuses on examining how family environment and peer relationships influence the speaking skills of ESL learners at the BS level. By identifying these social influences, the study aims to highlight factors beyond the classroom that contribute to effective oral communication in English.

Literature Review

The family environment is considered a foundational element in language development. Research suggests that families who value education and encourage language learning positively influence learners' academic performance. Parental involvement, emotional support, and positive attitudes toward English create a learning-friendly environment that boosts learners' confidence. Studies have shown that learners who receive encouragement at home are more motivated to practice speaking and are less afraid of making mistakes.

Peer relationships also play a significant role in second language acquisition. According to sociocultural theory, language learning is a social process that occurs through interaction. Peer interaction allows learners to practice English in informal and meaningful contexts. Positive peer support increases learners' willingness to speak, improves fluency, and reduces anxiety. On the other hand, negative peer attitudes, ridicule, or fear of judgment can discourage learners from participating in speaking activities.

Previous studies have largely focused on classroom strategies and teaching methods, while limited research has explored the combined influence of family and peer environments on speaking skills at the undergraduate level. This study addresses this gap by examining these factors in the context of Pakistani ESL learners.

Research Methodology

The study employed a quantitative research design to investigate the impact of family environment and peer relationships on ESL learners' speaking skills. The population of the study consisted of BS-level students enrolled in public sector institutions. A sample of 300 students was selected using simple random sampling to ensure equal representation.

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire containing close-ended items based on a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire focused on learners' perceptions of family support, peer interaction, confidence in speaking English, and opportunities for oral communication. The

collected data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, to interpret learners' responses.

Ethical considerations were maintained throughout the study. Participants were informed about the purpose of the research, and confidentiality of responses was ensured.

Results and Discussion

The findings reveal that family environment has a significant influence on the speaking skills of ESL learners. A large majority of respondents agreed that encouragement from parents and family members motivates them to speak English. Learners reported that families who appreciate English learning and avoid negative criticism help build confidence and reduce fear. The results also indicate that learners from supportive family backgrounds are more willing to practice speaking English, even if they make mistakes.

Peer relationships were found to have a strong positive impact on speaking proficiency. Most respondents agreed that interacting with friends in English improves fluency and confidence. Peer discussions, group activities, and informal conversations were reported as helpful in enhancing speaking skills. The findings also show that learners feel more comfortable speaking English with supportive peers, as this reduces anxiety and fear of embarrassment.

However, the study also highlights challenges related to negative peer pressure. Some learners reported hesitation in speaking English due to fear of being mocked by peers. This indicates that while peer relationships can facilitate speaking development, negative attitudes can hinder oral communication.

Overall, the results suggest that family and peer environments collectively influence ESL learners' speaking skills. A supportive family encourages motivation, while positive peer interaction provides practical opportunities for speaking practice.

Table 1 Q1. I feel confident while speaking English in front of peers.

Learners	Agree		Strongly Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
300	171	57%	47	15.7%	72	24%	8	2.7%	2	0.7%

Table 1 shows that 57% of learners agreed with the statement that they feel confident while speaking English in front of peers, 15.7% of learners strongly agreed with this statement, and 24% of learners expressed a neutral stance. Additionally, 2.7% of learners disagreed, while only 0.7% of learners strongly disagreed with this announcement. This indicates that a majority of learners possess a positive attitude towards communicating in English among classmates. The small percentage of disagreement suggests that only a few students experience anxiety or hesitation while speaking. Overall, these findings highlight a generally encouraging classroom environment that supports English communication.

Table 2 Q 2. My family encourages me to speak English at home.

Learners	Agree		Strongly Agree		Neutral		Disagree		SA	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
300	108	36%	68	22.7%	68	22.7%	42	14%	14	4.7%

Table 2 shows that 36% of learners agreed and 22.7% strongly agreed that their family encourages them to speak English at home, indicating moderate support. An equal 22.7% remained neutral, while 14% disagreed and 4.7% strongly disagreed, showing that some learners lack encouragement for practising English at home. These results reveal that family involvement plays a significant role in shaping learners' confidence and motivation to use English. The mixed responses suggest that not all households prioritise English communication. Promoting an English-speaking environment at home could further enhance learners' fluency and comfort with the language.

Table 3 Q 3. I feel nervous while communicating in English with others.

Learners	Agree		Strongly Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
300	80	26.7%	44	14.7%	91	30.3%	58	19.3%	27	9%

Table 3 shows that 26.7% of learners agreed and 14.7% strongly agreed that they feel nervous while communicating in English with others. Meanwhile, 30.3% remained neutral, 19.3% disagreed, and 9% strongly disagreed, indicating that while some learners experience nervousness, many do not perceive it as a major issue. This suggests that a considerable number of students still face communication anxiety, which may affect their fluency and confidence. However, the higher percentage of neutral and disagreeing responses indicates growing ease in using English. Encouraging interactive speaking activities and supportive feedback may further reduce learners' nervousness.

Table 4 Q 4. I practice speaking English with my friends regularly.

Learners	Agree		Strongly Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
300	160	53.3%	36	12%	34	11.3%	28	9.3%	42	14%

Table 4 shows that 53.3% of learners agreed and 12% strongly agreed that they practice speaking English with their friends regularly. Meanwhile, 11.3% remained neutral, 9.3% disagreed, and 14% strongly disagreed, indicating that most learners practice English with friends, though a considerable portion either remain uncertain or do not engage in this practice. This suggests that peer interaction serves as an important platform for improving speaking skills. Regular communication in English among friends helps learners gain fluency and confidence. However, the

presence of non-participating learners highlights the need for more structured peer-speaking opportunities.

Table 5 Q5. My parents support my efforts to improve English speaking skills.

Learners	Agree		Strongly Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
300	115	38.3%	83	27.7%	68	22.7%	24	8%	10	3.3%

Table 5 shows that 38.3% of learners agreed and 27.7% strongly agreed that their parents support their efforts to improve English speaking skills. Meanwhile, 22.7% remained neutral, 8% disagreed, and 3.3% strongly disagreed, indicating that a majority of learners receive parental support, though some expressed uncertainty or lack of support. These findings highlight the vital role of parents in encouraging language learning and creating a supportive home environment. When parents show interest in their children's progress, it positively influences motivation and confidence. Strengthening parental involvement could further enhance learners' performance and engagement in speaking English.

Table 6 Q6. My siblings help me in speaking English confidently.

Learners	Agree		Strongly Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
300	135	45%	97	32.3%	18	6%	46	15.3%	4	1.3%

Table 6 shows that 45% of learners agreed and 32.3% strongly agreed that their siblings help them in speaking English confidently. Meanwhile, 6% remained neutral, 15.3% disagreed, and 1.3% strongly disagreed, indicating that the majority receive positive support from their siblings, though a smaller portion reported little or no such help. This demonstrates that sibling interaction can play a meaningful role in improving English-speaking confidence. Encouragement from siblings may provide a relaxed and comfortable space for practising language skills. Such supportive family dynamics can greatly enhance learners' overall communication abilities.

Table 7 Q7. Peer discussions in English improve my speaking ability.

Learners	Agree		Strongly Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
300	129	43%	109	36.3%	44	14.7%	16	5.3%	2	0.7%

Table 7 shows that 43% of learners agreed and 36.3% strongly agreed that peer discussions in English improve their speaking ability. Meanwhile, 14.7% remained neutral, 5.3% disagreed, and only 0.7% strongly disagreed, indicating that most learners view peer discussions as beneficial for enhancing their speaking skills. This highlights the importance of interactive learning and collaboration amongst college students. carrying out English discussions with peers facilitates

newbies expand fluency, vocabulary, and self belief. consequently, selling organization conversations and school room discussions can further reinforce their communication competence.

Table 8 Q 8. I feel hesitant to speak English due to fear of making mistakes.

Learners	Agree		Strongly Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
300	128	42.7%	79	26.3%	34	11.3%	45	15%	14	4.7%

Table 8 shows that 42.7% of learners agreed and 26.3% strongly agreed that they feel hesitant to speak English due to fear of making mistakes. Meanwhile, 11.3% remained neutral, 15% disagreed, and 4.7% strongly disagreed, indicating that fear of mistakes is a common barrier for many learners, though not universal. This suggests that anxiety about errors continues to hinder learners' confidence in communication. Such fear may stem from peer judgment or lack of exposure to supportive speaking environments. Encouraging a positive attitude toward mistakes can help learners view them as opportunities for improvement rather than failure.

Table 9 Q 9. I receive positive feedback from family when I speak English.

Learners	Agree		Strongly Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
300	91	30.3%	101	33.7%	66	22%	32	10.7%	10	3.3%

Table 9 shows that 30.3% of learners agreed and 33.7% strongly agreed that they receive positive feedback from their family when they speak English. Meanwhile, 22% remained neutral, 10.7% disagreed, and 3.3% strongly disagreed, indicating that most learners experience encouragement, though some do not receive such feedback. This finding emphasises the optimistic function of circle of relatives appreciation in boosting newbies' motivation and self-belief. positive reinforcement allows college students feel extra relaxed using English in normal interactions. families that actively well known their youngsters's efforts make a contribution notably to their linguistic boom and exuberance for learning.

Table 10 Q 10. I feel more comfortable speaking English with friends than family.

Learners	Agree		Strongly Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
300	113	37.7%	113	37.7%	34	11.3%	28	9.3%	12	4%

Table 10 shows that 37.7% of learners agreed and another 37.7% strongly agreed that they feel more comfortable speaking English with friends than family. Meanwhile, 11.3% remained neutral, 9.3% disagreed, and 4% strongly disagreed, indicating that the majority of learners prefer practicing English with friends rather than with family members. This suggests that peer interaction provides a greater comfy and supportive environment for practicing language abilities. friends may

additionally offer encouragement and reduce the fear of creating mistakes, improving novices' self assurance.

Conclusion

The study concludes that family environment and peer relationships play a crucial role in the development of speaking skills among ESL learners at the BS level. Speaking proficiency is not only shaped by classroom instruction but also by learners' social interactions at home and with peers. Supportive families foster confidence and motivation, while positive peer relationships create opportunities for meaningful communication and practice.

The findings highlight the need for a holistic approach to language learning that considers social factors alongside instructional methods. Addressing these factors can significantly improve learners' speaking abilities and overall language competence.

Recommendations

Educational institutions should encourage collaborative learning activities that promote positive peer interaction and reduce fear of speaking. Teachers should create supportive classroom environments where mistakes are treated as part of the learning process. Parents should be made aware of their role in supporting English language learning by motivating learners and providing opportunities for practice at home. Future research may explore these variables across different educational levels or regions to gain broader insights.

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