



RESEARCH ARTICLE

## Empowering Interpersonal Skills of Teachers and Students as an Interactional Tool for Enhancing Classroom Interaction

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**ABSTRACT**

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Interpersonal skills are considered the integral part of teaching and learning process given that such skills impact the relationships between individuals, in particular, the teachers and students. The aim of this article is to explain how interpersonal skills (self-awareness, teachers' empathy, and collaboration skills) are important to students' success. Unfortunately, these skills are often taken for granted and not reinforced in the class. This paper discusses the Pakistanis English teachers' and students' interpersonal skills as powerful interactional tools for enhancing classroom interaction. A qualitative approach was employed for this purpose which involved two EL teachers and their undergraduate students based on purposive sampling. Data was gathered through in-depth face-to-face interviews from teachers and students individually. Braun and Clark's (2006) thematic analysis technique were used to analyze the data. The results revealed although teachers and students relate well in EL classrooms, but there is a gap in practice and theory. There is a gap among teachers and students' relationships that directly affects the students' learning opportunities, sense of empowerment and academic career. But to me, empowering interpersonal skills of teachers and students as an interactional tool in EL classrooms is the solution of all crises. Using interpersonal skills in EL classrooms are the most effective tool for enhancing classroom interactions among teachers and students, and reducing EL learning anxiety. This paper also offers several implications and recommendations for future studies on the use of interpersonal skills and also offers the opportunities to the passive students to express their opinions confidently.

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## INTRODUCTION

Interpersonal skills have become a most popular research topic in the academic field. The professed need for strong interpersonal skills is valued in every field of life. Classroom interaction is a crucial element of education that significantly shapes learning outcomes and creates a positive emotional atmosphere in the learning environment. For academic achievement, interpersonal skills of both teachers and students that serve as the foundation for effective and empowering classroom interactions. Interpersonal skills such as active listening, empathy, respect, and effective communication are powerful tools that can significantly enhance student engagements and collaboration; students feel valued and respected which in turn strengthen their self-esteem, confidence and overall learning experiences.

Interpersonal skills (henceforth IPS) are the tactics and behaviors that assist a person to communicate, interact and collaborate with other people efficiently. Many researchers in the areas of health care (McConnell, 2018; Wasson, 2020; Deli et al., 2021; Waselewski, 2024), the military (Ma et al., 2020), nursing (Aydogdu, 2024), management (Modric et al., 2024), accounting (Lansdell et al., 2019; Herbert et al., 2024), engineering (Sultan et al., 2019; Almeida et al., 2023), pedagogical

practices (Rido, 2020), social work and collaboration in college classrooms and in the workplaces (Rice-Bailey & Chong 2023; Koprowska, 2020) noted the importance of keeping upright and good IPS. Those who have such positive attitude work well with others as team players to achieve a goal. Besides confirming the importance of IPS in the previous studies of every field, the current study demonstrated the complex interactions in the Pakistani English Language speaking classroom. Particularly, it established the fundamental role of IPS as an empowerment tool for enhancing classroom interaction.

In teacher-student classroom interaction, IPS are undeniably important to make the teaching and learning process effective (Misbah et al. 2015; Petani and Krajinović 2019; Salim and Joy 2016). In the same vein, IPS used by teachers make the classroom environment effective and students feel happy, comfortable, actively participate in discussions, seems enthusiastically involve in language learning and their engagement and competence are also encouraged (Brekelmans et al. 2011; Havik and Westergård 2019). McConnell (2018) defined interpersonal competence as a particular communication ability that helps a person to achieve certain aims and results by interacting with others effectively. IPS cannot be learned merely from a textbook, but these skills can be developed. In fact, some people have inborn capabilities, but the majority of people need to develop and improve IPS with practice, for instance, showing empathy, patience, collaboration, intimacy, active listening and speaking, praises and encouragements, emotional and social intelligence. Everybody has his/her own interpersonal communication style, personality and instinct but some are more successful than others. As posited by McConnell (2018), “interpersonal skills are those particular communication skills that are used when we are behaving in a manner intended to achieve certain results or objectives in face-to-face encounters” (p.358).

Using IPS in classrooms positively influence the teacher-student interaction by fostering open communication, trust, and collaboration. Teachers’ IPS significantly impact overall classroom environment and enhancing students’ morale, academic performance and career development (Ngo et al., 2024). In Pakistani EL classrooms, empowering IPS as an interactional tool encourages students to be creative, develop critical-thinking skills, leadership skills, management skills and also enhance communication and collaborative skills (Ali et al., 2018; Jamali & Krish 2021). With such needs, teachers and students must know the effective ways of interacting and communicating with each other appropriately in linguistically and culturally diverse English language classrooms. As a linguistically and culturally diverse country (Lewis 2009; Seifi 2015; Roofi & Alqama 2013), Pakistan upholds different values.

Here, the use of IPS seems to be less dominant and is not popularized in the academic field. Recently, even though many studies have been done on IPS in the field of education in Pakistan (Anjum & Mansoor, 2020; Khan et al., 2020; Labrague et al., 2020; Sultan et al., 2019; Yasmin & Naseem, 2019), none of the prior researches have focused on exploring the use of IPS as an interactional tool by teachers and students in English language (EL) classrooms. However, there is rather limited literature on the use of IPS in the Pakistani EL classrooms. Prior studies have emphasized the need for IPS including strong communication skills and self-directedness (Asif et al., 2018; Yasmin & Sohail, 2018). However, in the light of above discussion, it is assumed that the need for interpersonal competence also underscores the importance for communication ability, interpersonal behavior, classroom engagement attitude and building positive relationships among teachers and students in linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms.

Han and Son (2020) claimed that there is a need to explore and observe the students’ interpersonal competence and improve their personality traits. IPS are crucial in making teaching and learning meaningful for both parties. Although many studies have been done on interpersonal skills, the latter needs to be further explored with an attempt to have a more effective and meaningful rapport between teachers and students. Nowadays, the existence of positive relationships inside the classroom is considered one of the most influential factors in language learning, given that they may affect positively or negatively, students’ achievements and the willingness to work and improve their knowledge and social skills (Hagenauer et al., 2015).

Rice-Bailey and Chong (2023) emphasized on the importance of team collaboration and also claimed that trust and participative safety are the essential elements for enhancing team collaboration. When team members trust each other, openly share their ideas and feel safe, it

creates a conducive environment to productivity and success. Trust cultivates an environment where students feel confident, supported and comfortable by expressing their opinions, asking for help, and taking risks without the fear of being ignored, ridiculed or rejected. They confidently engage in effective communication, build strong relationships, and collaborate more efficiently that result in higher level creativity, productivity and overall success (Rice-Bailey & Chong, 2023).

Salim and Joy (2016) revealed that human beings need IPS to communicate and interact with others effectively. These skills are essential for people that enable them to interact and communicate with others confidently and smoothly at every level (individual or group). Importantly, the effective use of IPS can enhance classroom interaction and helps to create a good rapport between teachers and students (Frymier & Houser 2000). Moreover, IPS also assist diverse people equally, personally and professionally. Professionally, employers know the importance of such skills in teamwork and they always prefer to select those employees who have leadership qualities and also know the proper use of IPS. Through these skills, an employee can maintain his/her position and can communicate efficiently with his/her fellow peers, clients, and superiors in the workplace (Salim and Joy 2016). Hence, language is a medium of communication and through this medium people are capable of performing many tasks (Irfan, & Krishnasamy, 2024).

This paper discusses the empowerment of using IPS as an interactional tool by teachers and students in their interactions and their ways of relating to each other through their IPS in the English language classrooms. It also highlights a wider common problem that non-native English speakers face the complexities in achieving accuracy and fluency in English language speaking at the tertiary level. Despite having strong interpersonal communication skills, teachers and students face substantial challenges due to limited exposure to the language and a lack of opportunities for expressive speaking interrupt their ability to communicate competently. IPS are situation specific; the skills may be appropriate in one situation and inappropriate in another. The discussion should create awareness among teachers and students on the need for having effective IPS in their everyday interactions in EL classrooms. Moreover, the findings of this study will assist to enlighten the value of empowering IPS as an interactional tool not only in the Pakistani education system at tertiary level but also but also in broader contexts where English is spoken by non-native speakers.

### **Understanding interpersonal skills (IPS)**

Klein, DeRouin, and Salas (2006) labelled interpersonal skills as an umbrella term that denotes an extensive variety of ideas. They consolidated these ideas as “societal skills, social competence, people skills, face-to-face skills, human skills, and soft skills” (Klein et al., 2006, p.81). IPS are well-defined as “goal-directed behaviors, including communication and relationship-building competencies, employed in interpersonal interaction episodes characterized by complex perceptual and cognitive processes, dynamic verbal and non-verbal interaction exchanges, diverse roles, motivations, and expectancies” (Klein et al. 2006, p. 81).

Similarly, Hayes (2002) defined IPS as “goal-directed behaviours used in face-to-face interactions in order to bring about a desired state of affairs” (p.3). He considers IPS as social behaviors that support people to achieve the goals, encourage them to interact with others confidently and assist individuals to become active listeners by focusing on what the speaker is saying. Spitzberg and Cupach (2011) emphasized the importance of IPS in social life. IPS are absolutely necessary to the development of human relationships and vital to personal well-being. Through these skills, relationships are originated, exchanged, upheld and ended as well as conflicts are resolved, collaboration and empathy are promoted and problems are managed successfully. In short, these skills are essential to manage good and positive relationships among teachers and students in EL classrooms.

Petani and Krajinović (2019) highlighted the scales of the teacher’s IPS to make the classroom environment better. Using IPS help the teacher and students how to share their feeling including warmth, closeness, care, cooperation and empathy. They supposed that teachers often use IPS such as supporting student, control, empathy, motivating student, and cooperation with parents. For the purpose of this study, they examined hundred teachers (eighty female and twenty male) and found that mostly teachers use these dimensions as affiliation and control. Affiliation is considered to reflect empathy, care, cooperation and encouragement and control is associated with authority, personal influence and keeps engage students in the class. Petani and Krajinović (2019) have also observed

that female teachers have less control over the classes than male. Moreover, these dimensions are noted in skilled and successful teachers who prepare their students for learning. However, the teachers who have the absence of these conditions are unsuccessful teachers.

HersHKovitz (2018) revealed that strong interpersonal student-teacher relationships play a key role in students' academic, emotional and social development and also enhance their abilities. This strong relationship enables the students to participate in classroom activities and discussions confidently and also lead them to achieve their goals. However, a conflict in relationships leaves a bad impact on students' mind and they do not feel comfortable that might affect the students' academic career (Hamre and Pianta 2006). Similarly, conflict among teachers and students' relations also disturb teachers' comfort and professional development (Hamre et al. 2008; Spilt et al. 2011). The study concludes that IPS are crucial for effective teaching and learning, as they foster better team dynamics, improve organizational behavior, develop strong relationships and lead to the successful achievement of academic goals (Modric et al., 2024).

### **The current study**

The purpose of the current study was to explore how empowering IPS as an interactional tool in EL classrooms assist the teachers and students to identify the issues in teaching and learning process and engage to rectify those problems which slow down the interaction process. These skills can help the teachers and students to establish and enhance not only the interpersonal and communication skills but also good social relations. In this regard, the use of IPS by teachers and students is considered a significant part of teaching and learning process and is practiced at every level of human life. Communication skill is the most essential component of IPS and also needed not only for the teachers and students for effective learning outcomes but also uphold a strong place in today's trade/job market. Hence, this paper discusses the study which explores the interpersonal interaction skills of the English language teachers and their undergraduate students using a qualitative approach based on the research question:

**RQ. 1:** How do teachers and students use interpersonal skills in classroom interactions?

**RQ. 2:** How are interpersonal skills effective interactional tool in EL classrooms?

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research design**

The current study is based on a qualitative research design, which allowed the researcher to find answers to the research questions and investigate complex phenomena such as IPS used by teachers and students in their interpersonal interaction in EL classrooms (Zappa-Hollman and Duff 2019). For this purpose, semi-structured face-to-face interviews were directed in the natural setting to obtain data from the respondents about the use of IPS in teacher-student classroom interactions. The interview protocol was established from the literature review and was verified by experts. The researcher encouraged the selected respondents to articulate their experience, teaching and learning problems, and also obtained their respondents' opinions through an interview about the teaching and learning process to understand how and what type of IPS are practiced in the natural setting.

### **Participants and sampling organized**

The present study was conducted at Islamia University Bahawalpur, located in the Southern Punjab (Pakistan). The participants were selected based on a purposive sampling which includes several criteria: i) they were EL teachers with more than ten years of teaching experience at the university; (ii) their linguistically diverse undergraduate students who have been in the campus for at least two semesters; (iii) all the participants were from English department (IUB); (iv) all were non-native English speakers but could speak English well and shared their experiences freely.

Based on these criteria, two English teachers (male and female) of first year class of two different classes were selected and each teacher had at least fifty-five students in his/her class. Out of a pool of one hundred and ten students, twelve students (six from each class) were selected for the interview. These students willingly participated in this study and could speak English with clear accent. The qualitative study sample was considered sufficient to elucidate rigorous analysis of the

interview data (Creswell, 2014). The following table (table 1 and table 2) provides the profile of the respondents including gender, age, status, mother tongue and mode of work.

### The teacher-respondents

The researcher selected the respondents (teachers) through their resumes (CVs) available at the faculty. Therefore, all the respondents (teachers) who participated in this study were those who had been teaching for the last ten years and had experiences about teaching and learning in the university required for language (Chomsky 1957). Two EL teachers were selected of first year class (one from semester 1, one from semester 2). The following table (table 1) presents the profile of the main respondents (teachers).

**Table 1: The profile of teacher-respondents**

No	Respondents	Academic Qualification	Gender	Age	Years of teaching experience	Mother Tongue	Mode of work
1	Teacher A	PhD	Male	40	12	Saraiki	Full time
2	Teacher B	M.phil	Female	37	10	Punjabi	Full time

Source: Researcher's data (2021)

In qualitative research, it is suggested that two to six cases can be enough for gathering in-depth data and inferring important patterns/ themes which can be difficult in case of a big number of informants (Silverman 2013).

### The student-respondent

For the in-depth interviews, the researcher selected twelve first year EL undergraduate students from two semesters (semester 1 and semester 2). The age ranges between nineteen to twenty-one years old with six students (male and female) from each classroom of the selected teacher (respondent). The researcher allowed the respondents to choose their preferred language (Urdu or English) for answering the questions. Table 2 shows the profile of the first-year students-respondents.

**Table 2: The profile of student-respondents**

Respondents	Gender	Age	Semester	Language Group
R1	Male	19	First	Saraiki
R2	Male	20	First	Punjabi
R3	Male	19	First	Urdu
R4	Female	19	First	Punjabi
R5	Female	19	First	Punjabi
R6	Female	20	First	Saraiki
R7	Male	21	Second	Urdu
R8	Male	21	Second	Urdu
R9	Male	20	Second	Saraiki
R10	Female	20	Second	Saraiki
R11	Female	21	Second	Punjabi
R12	Female	21	Second	Punjabi

Source: Researcher's data (2022)

### Data collection procedure

To conduct this study, the researcher first attained the permission from English Department for data collection. The selected respondents (teachers and students) were informed about the entire research procedure and their voluntarily involvement. All the respondents were also informed that they are free to leave the study if they ever feel any discomfort with the queries or feel anxious with the procedure. Data was collected from the respondents through face-to-face interviews and these interviews took approximately twenty-five to thirty minutes for each participant. Teachers' interview was taken at their respective offices and the venue was chosen for students' interview according to their choice. The entire process of interview was conducted in English language because all participants can speak English well. The respondents narrated their experiences in the class and spoke either Urdu or English. The researcher recorded the interview using the audio and video camera of mobile upon the participants' consent. All the recorded data was later transcribed.

### DATA ANALYSIS

The recorded data were carefully transcribed verbatim and analyzed based on the thematic analysis by Braun and Clark (2006). In the analytical process of the data, the researcher coded, categorized and put the main themes of the data from the transcriptions. This analysis approach was characterized into six main stages. Firstly, the researcher studied the factual data thoroughly. Secondly, codes were generated based on the collected data. The researcher constructed primary codes to provide a better understanding of the data. Thirdly, at this stage, the researcher identified the themes after establishing codes. These codes are combined and cross referenced to develop meaningful themes. At the fourth stage, the researcher reviewed the themes based on the preliminary works searching for themes from other literary works. At the fifth stage, the themes were completed with given tags. At the sixth and last stage, a comprehensive and final report was formed based on the results of coding and themes.

### FINDINGS

The current study has explored the viewpoints of teachers and their students on the challenges they met in the EL classroom. Consequently, the data revealed five major themes by using thematic analysis approach (Braun and Clarke, 2006). According to the students' perspectives, following themes are emerged; 1) Lack of speaking ability, 2) Gap in practicing of IPS in EL classroom, and 3) Lack of motivation and appreciation. However, the lack of structural support was the main challenge that was faced by the teachers. Besides, a major theme was identified from the mutual challenges faced by both parties is a good rapport; there is dire need to establish a good relationship among teachers and students. The above themes illuminate the participants' experiences about IPS in EL classroom. But to me, empowering IPS of teachers and students as an interactional tool in EL classrooms is the solution of all crises. The following diagram represents the five major themes that were emerged from the data. Figure 1 represents the emerging themes of the study.

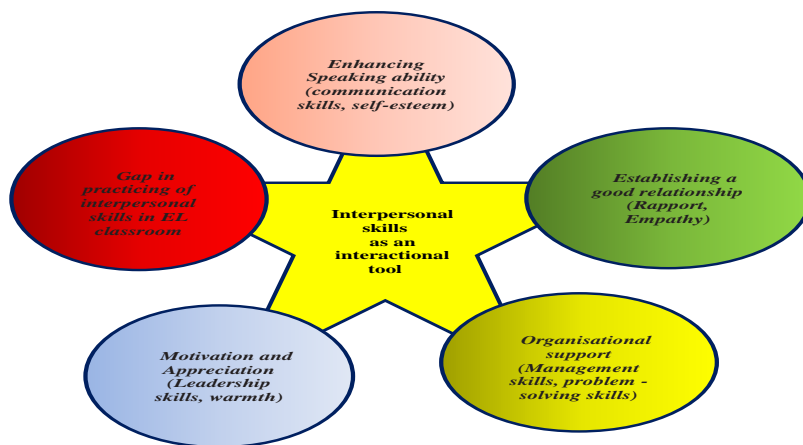


Figure 1: Themes of the study

**RQ. 1:** How do teachers and students use interpersonal skills in classroom interactions?

### **Theme 1: Gap in practicing of interpersonal skills in EL classroom**

The major challenge was identified from the teachers and students' viewpoints is that the interpersonal skills are not constantly practiced in EL classrooms. Interpersonal skills are undeniable important for creating a confident, deep and friendly teacher-student relationships that make the classroom environment effective.

**PT1:** *"I have adequate knowledge about interpersonal skill. But I am confused how can I apply it? Due to limited time we cannot focus on every student individually. I teach everything in theory. Theoretical knowledge is more structured than practice".*

**PT2:** *"I think empowering interpersonal skills as an interactional tool in EL classrooms create strong interpersonal student-teacher relationships that play a key role in students' academic, emotional and social development. But it is difficult to practice these skills regularly in the large classrooms.*

**SP2:** *"I am a student and I don't know how to practice these skills in classroom. It is the duty of teachers to initiate."*

**SP5:** *"There is no practice of interpersonal skills in EL classrooms. Due to this lack of practice teachers and students have conflict relationships that leave a bad impact on students' mind and they do not feel comfortable that may lead them to failure."*

**SP9:** *I believe that teachers empathy can slow down the students' anxiety and allow the students to feel comfortable and confident when speaking English."*

**RQ. 2:** How are interpersonal skills effective interactional tool in EL classrooms?

### **Theme 2: Enhancing speaking ability**

Speaking is considered the most important one among all the four communication skills. Teachers' interpersonal skills strengthen the students' self-esteem and confidence that positively enhance the speaking ability among students. Teacher participants claimed that there is a need to improve speaking ability among students in English language classrooms. They also claimed that students belong to different language and social groups. They can write English but cannot speak. So, there is an assertive need to promote speaking skill. In the same vein, students' participant also emphasized on the importance of speaking ability. They claimed that being a non-native speaker we feel fear when speak English. I realized that enhancing speaking ability is the solution to all crises in the language learning process. Effective speaking ability builds confidence and wins the hearts of thousands of people. Students also stressed on the need to enhance speaking ability because there is a huge demand for speaking skills in the present job market. Participants shared their feelings and experiences and I quoted their experiences their own words.

**TP1:** *"I know speaking is an essential part of English language classroom. But students belong to different language groups and their cultural background affects on their speaking. I think students should practice with peers because it cannot be regularly practice individually due to limited time".*

**TP2:** *"Speaking English language is not an easy task... it is necessary to promote the speaking ability because speaking is an art that enhances a person's character and behavior in society."*

**SP1:** *"Being a non-native speaker, I feel reluctant in speaking English. My voice trembles when I speak English in front of class. I realized that it is necessary to promote speaking ability in classroom."*

**SP3:** *"Speaking the English language is compulsory. But I cannot speak English because become anxious in my teacher presence. In fact, there is a huge demand for speaking skills in the present job market and built self-esteem among students."*

**SP4:** *"The English language has become the secret of successful professional life in Pakistan.*

*Unfortunately, I feel fear in speaking English. As I start to speak English my heartbeat running fatly, voice, hands and legs trmbles."*

### **Theme 3: Motivation and appreciation**

Another significant challenge was identified from students' perspectives that there is a dire need to enhance motivation and appreciation by the teachers. Teachers must have leadership and problem-solving skills to deal with the students' emotions. Positive attitude of a good leader (teacher) motivate the students to go ahead and achieve their goals. Students claimed that teachers like only those students who have strong family and educational background. These students are appreciated everywhere and also motivated to go ahead. Due to the linguistic and cultural diversity, students belong to the different background. They feel reluctant in speaking English and do not participate in classroom discussion. In this critical situation, encouragement, empathy and positive feedback by the teachers build self-esteem among students. Students also claimed that only those students are motivated who can speak English well.

**SP7:** *"I believe that students' motivation, appreciation and receiving feedback from the teachers make the teaching and learning process effective and enhance the classroom interaction process".*

**SP10:** *"Teachers do not appreciate students' efforts in speaking English. Being a non-native speaker, everyone cannot speak well. When we participate in classroom discussion, cannot speak English properly. At that time our fellows laugh at us and we feel embarrassment in front of the class. That's why majority of students feel reluctant in speaking English. I think motivation and receiving feedback from the teachers assist the students to participate in classroom discussion and make the classroom environment and learning process effective."*

**SP12:** *"Throughout my study period I found that students cannot achieve their academic goals without teacher's appreciation and motivation."*

### **Theme 4: Organizational support**

The utmost significant challenge was identified from the teachers' perceptions is the need of organizational support in large classes. The teachers believe that the implementation of interpersonal skills would have made to be more effective through this organizational support. Some teachers have voiced their anxiety over the implementation of interpersonal skills and also voiced their concern on structural challenges faced when implementing interpersonal skills. Teacher A said,

*"Many academicians are reluctant to conduct interpersonal skills as it takes a lot of time in planning and delivering the lesson. Although using interpersonal skills in EL classrooms is an effective interactional tool in building and polishing students' academic career but due to limited time we do not use these skills regularly"*

Furthermore, the teachers found it difficult to incorporate interpersonal skills in scheduled EL classrooms due to the involvement of the external communities. Teacher B illustrated this issue:

*"Due to widespread pandemic covid situation, education system has totally disturbed. It is not easy to incorporate interpersonal skills in online classes. We have to finish the syllabus and students have a tight schedule. There is a need to manage the suitability of the use of interpersonal skills in large classes so that it will not affect the class time."*

Besides, both teachers also claimed that it is difficult to implement the interpersonal skills in the large classes in a limited time. We have also a covered a long syllabus in a short time period.

*"It is not easy to use interpersonal skills in large classes. Maximum students in each class exist at least 65students only. Students have many ideas regarding the topic but we cannot discuss in the class due to limited time because we have to cover the syllabus. We do not take presentation from each student due to limited time and log syllabus that we have to cover in time."*

This research study has explored the teachers' opinion about students' inability to participate in classroom discussion. They claimed that students extremely depend on their teachers in classrooms, for instance, Teacher A stated,



*"In EL classrooms, students 100% depend on their teachers. They do not ask any question from teachers. Students are passive learners in EL classrooms."*

Teacher 2 said,

*"Students do not take interest to participate in classroom discussion. They listen the entire lecture silently. Due to limited time, we cannot focus on each student separately. Students must initiate and participate in classroom discussion."*

### **Theme: 5 Establishing a good rapport**

Another most significant and final theme was emerged from the data that there is a need to establish a good relationship among teachers and students. Interpersonal skills assist to build a good rapport among teachers and students in English language classrooms. Based on the participants' experiences, the study shows that there is a dire need to establish good relationships among teachers and students by using interpersonal skills. Participants viewed interpersonal skills as fundamental tools to build a good rapport and provides a better understanding among teacher and student. English is spoken as a second language in Pakistan and teachers frequently used EL in classrooms. Some participants (students) claimed that they have limited interaction with teachers in EL classrooms because they feel reluctant in speaking English. Being a non-native English speaker, they do not have command in speaking English. For example, participant 6 and participant 8 shared their experiences in EL classrooms.

**SP6:** *"It is compulsory to build a friendly relationship with students to overcome this problem. [Speak confidently Speaking English is very problematic at the initial stage for students... they cannot express themselves properly in English... belong to different social backgrounds, so, interaction is limited. I think providing a flexible environment and establishing a good rapport is the better solution to all crises."*

**P8:** *"Teacher's empathy with students raises the sense of belongingness and students feel respected and valued. It also builds good and strong relationship among teachers and students."*

**SP9:** *"I believe that establishing a good relation among teachers and students essential for enhancing classroom interaction."*

The analysis shows that there is a need to promote interpersonal relationship among teachers and students. It will assist to make the interaction process strong and build confidence among students to speak English well.

### **CONCLUSION**

In the light of above all discussions and results of the participants' experiences, teachers and students view the teacher's use of interpersonal skills through the same lens that strongly shapes the current understanding on interpersonal competence. This study strongly emphasizes on empowering the interpersonal skills as an interactional tool in English language classrooms. The findings of this study have revealed the explicit issues that teachers and students met in the EL classrooms without implementing the interpersonal skills in classrooms. Considering both teachers' and students' viewpoints in the effort to know the ways to empower the effective interpersonal skills assist the students to fully gain the assistances from such learning. Empowering interpersonal skills as classroom interactional tool can help to generate leadership skills among students.

The results of this study not only contribute in the Pakistani context but can also be useful for those multilingual regions where English is spoken as a foreign language and commonly is not spoken by people of its country. Some endorsements can be considered for future researchers to observe real interpersonal situations. For instance, how do we use interpersonal skills in critical situation/dispute? How do we enhance students' hidden abilities by using interpersonal skills? How can we eliminate the conflicts among the teacher-student relationship? How can teachers instill interpersonal skills among students? Results from such research would be helpful to explain competent interpersonal behaviors amongst multicultural and multilingual presenters.

This study has focused on using interpersonal skills in face-to-face interaction inside the

classroom. For future researchers, it is recommended to study the use of interpersonal skills outside the classroom, in online learning programs and interaction through WhatsApp, Facebook and other social media. Future research can be conducted on other educational levels such as secondary level and postgraduate level. The development of interpersonal communication competence is essential in all levels of learning institutions. Hopefully, this study will bring positive change among teachers and students as well as will promote more efforts in developing interpersonal communication competence among students in Pakistan. The implication of this study highlights the idea that empowering interpersonal skills of teachers and students as classroom interactional tool is a most effective tool for enhancing speaking ability among students, build confidence (self-esteem) among students to participate in classroom interaction, fill the gap in practicing these skills in classrooms, and promote to establish a good relationship among teachers and students and make them to be more interpersonal competent.

In short, teachers and students valued the learning experience and perceived the interpersonal skills as a powerful interactional tool for achieving better learning outcomes as well as beneficial in facilitating English language learning. Empowering interpersonal skills as an interactional tool in EL classrooms are an inclusive venue for teachers and students in establishing a good relationship, empathy, respect, immediacy, developing critical thinking, problem-solving and leadership skills; warmth and students' ability to develop communication skills. Thus, empowering interpersonal skills among teachers and students is the solution to all crises.

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