





Impact of Customer Communication Willingness and Employee Oral Communication on Language Skills Development: Moderated by Brand Relationship Quality and Customer Retention

Mohanad Mohammed Sufyan Ghaleb^{a*} , Waleed Abdulrahman Alawad^b 

^a *Department of Management, School of Business, King Faisal University, P.O Box: 400, Al-Ahsa, 31982, Saudi Arabia. Email: mghaleb@kfu.edu.sa*

^b *Department of Business Administration, College of Business and Economics, Qassim University, BurGaidah 51452, Saudi Arabia. Email: waoad@qu.edu.sa*

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of customer willingness to communicate in a second language on the development of employee language skills, with employee oral communication aspiration as a mediator. Additionally, it explores the moderating roles of customer retention management and consumer brand relationship quality in these relationships. The research aims to provide insights into how service-based businesses can leverage second-language communication to enhance employee skill development and customer relations. A quantitative research approach was employed, with data collected from 194 customers and 127 employees of service-based businesses where second-language communication is frequent. Standardized scales were adopted from past research, and SPSS was used for data analysis, including descriptive statistics, reliability tests, correlation analysis, regression, mediation, and moderation analysis. Multilevel modeling (MLM) was applied to analyze dyadic data. The results indicate that customer willingness to communicate in a second language significantly enhances employee oral communication aspiration, which in turn improves the development of language skills. Mediation analysis confirms that employee oral communication aspiration partially mediates this relationship. Additionally, customer retention management and consumer brand relationship quality moderate these effects, strengthening the relationships under high levels of management and brand connection. This study extends the service communication and employee development literature by highlighting the role of customer-employee language interactions in skill enhancement. The findings offer practical insights for businesses, emphasizing the strategic importance of fostering second-language communication to enhance employee competencies and customer engagement.

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Keywords: Customer Willingness to Communicate, Employee Oral Communication Aspiration, Language Skill Development, Customer Retention Management, Consumer Brand Relationship Quality

*Corresponding Author

Email: mghaleb@kfu.edu.sa

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Introduction

With the world becoming more globalized today, the skill of communicating effectively in a second language has become an essential skill, especially for employees in customer-facing positions. Organizations that operate in multilingual environments tend to have customers who prefer or need communication in a second language, making it imperative for employees to acquire linguistic skills in addition to their native languages (Afikah, Rohaeti, & Jumadi, 2023). This trend is most applicable in sectors like hospitality, retail, and customer service, where communication is the key to ensuring customer satisfaction and loyalty (Hidayat & Idrus, 2023). As much as classical language acquisition theories focus on learning in the classroom, new research focuses on workplace interactions as the source of second-language ability, especially through spontaneous communication with customers (Chi & Hoang Vu, 2023).

Customers' willingness to communicate in a second language can be an important stimulant for employees' oral communication desire, defined as their willingness and motivation to enhance their speaking skills in a foreign language (Lee & Lu, 2023). This is consistent with experiential learning theories, which propose that experiential engagement in real life improves skills better than theoretical training alone (Kolb, 2014). Furthermore, organizational aspects such as consumer-brand relationship quality and customer retention management also influence the dynamics of the interactions, contributing to the development of employees' linguistic abilities in terms of extent (Garg et al., 2025). Yet, considering the growing trend in workplace language learning, while workplace-based language learning is getting recognized, very few studies are focusing on examining the interaction of customer willingness to communicate, employee aspiration, and language development (Hakim & Wahyuni, 2024). The current study aims to address this gap by investigating the effects of customer-employee communication dynamics on developing second-language skills and testing customer retention management and consumer-brand relationship quality as moderators (Ibrahim & Aljarah, 2023).

A wealth of research has examined the role of real-world interactions in second-language acquisition, especially in working environments where staff interact with clients in foreign languages (Berdiyeva, 2023). Research indicates that repeated exposure to a second language in the workplace improves language skills, especially when staff members are actively participating in conversations necessitating sophisticated communication skills (Holmqvist, Van Vaerenbergh, & Grönroos, 2014). Workplace communication is distinct from formal language acquisition in that it focuses on real-time communication, spontaneous utterance, and responsive adaptation to customer requirements, thus being an efficient medium for experiential skill acquisition (Koirala, Greeley, & Fitzpatrick, 2025). Frontline staff in service industries tend to interact with non-native speakers, providing a setting that calls for active second language use and supporting oral communication skills (Li & Wang, 2023).

Moreover, studies have shown that workers who want to enhance their oral communication skills show more linguistic improvement in the long run. Motivation is central to language acquisition, with studies pointing to the significance of intrinsic and extrinsic factors in influencing employees' motivation to learn and enhance their speaking skills (Lee & Lu, 2023). Workers who see second-language proficiency as a tool for career progression are more likely to put time and effort into enhancing their communication skills, which results in better fluency and accuracy (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2023). In addition, empirical research indicates that customer participation in second-language interactions is a key stimulus for employee language acquisition. When customers voluntarily interact in a foreign language, they provide opportunities for workers to rehearse and perfect their speaking ability in a natural setting (Li & Wang, 2023).

In addition to personal motivation, organizational dynamics also shape language skill acquisition. Research on customer retention management emphasizes the value of long-term customer relationships in enabling linguistic development among staff (Berdiyeva, 2023). Ibrahim & Aljarah (2023) research identified that companies with effective customer retention policies offer staff more chances for repeated interactions with the same customers, promoting language learning through familiarity and continuity. In the same vein, consumer-brand relationship quality has been found to be a driver of customer participation in second-language interactions (Wei et al., 2023). Customer loyalty and trust are promoted by high-quality brand relationships, making customers more likely to participate in rich and supportive linguistic interactions with employees (Song et al., 2023). These results highlight the intricate dynamics between customer interactions, employee ambitions, and second-language competence building.

Notwithstanding the escalating interest in workplace second-language acquisition, some areas of research gaps still go unresolved (Musliadi, Triyono, & Jamilah, 2024). A leading gap is empirical investigation of customer willingness to communicate in a second language's effect on employees' aspirations to develop oral communication skills (Mohzana, 2023). Although studies have confirmed the significance of exposure to real-world language in skill acquisition, there are limited studies that have directly examined how customer interaction affects employees' motivation to enhance their speaking skills (Hakim & Wahyuni, 2024). This shortcoming restricts our knowledge of how external linguistic input affects internal motivation for language learning in the workplace.

Another important research gap deals with the mediating function of employee aspiration for oral communication between customer interactions and second-language skill acquisition (Afikah et al., 2023). Although prior research has already pinpointed motivation as a significant determiner of language learning, few empirical studies prove its specific mediating role in business environments (Dagar, 2023). In addition, the moderating functions of customer retention management and consumer-brand relationship quality are not yet fully explored. Past research has mainly explored customer loyalty and brand engagement from a business standpoint, without paying attention to their implications for language learning among employees (Singh et al., 2023). It is essential to understand these moderating effects in order to create an overall model that captures how workplace communication affects second-language acquisition (Chi & Hoang Vu, 2023).

Literature Review

Effective communication in a second language is of great value in service industries, where customer-employee interactions shape the quality of the service and customer satisfaction (Afikah et al., 2023). Studies show that customers' readiness to communicate in a second language can create an interesting linguistic atmosphere that facilitates the acquisition of language skills among employees (Hakim & Wahyuni, 2024). This process validates the input hypothesis, which posits that exposure to understandable language input facilitates language acquisition (Aini & Ubaidillah, 2023). When customers do engage in conversation in a second language, workers are encouraged to respond, adapt, and refine their language abilities to maintain communication demands (Chi & Hoang Vu, 2023). Additionally, the interactionist perspective highlights that real social interactions provide an opportunity for learners to practice and practice their speaking skills (Mohzana, 2023). Employees who frequently communicate with clients using a foreign language are likely to develop conversational fluency, accurate pronunciation, and pragmatic ability, leading to enhanced communication effectiveness in work environments (Garg et al., 2025).

Employee oral communication desire, or the willingness to enhance second language speaking proficiency, is an important mediating variable in this process (Berdiyeva, 2023). Research has demonstrated that motivation has a strong effect on language learning outcomes, especially in work environments where language skills are critical to performing one's job (Lee & Lu, 2023). Workers who are interested in improving their oral communication skills are more likely to pursue self-directed learning, solicit feedback, and engage in discussions beyond transactional conversations (Rashov, 2024). This is consistent with the self-determination theory, which holds that intrinsic motivation, fuelled by personal development and competence, results in long-term language learning efforts.

Some research has focused on the influence of customer communication on staff language acquisition, especially in those service industries with recurring service interactions (Koirala et al., 2025). Linguistics and organizational behavior studies indicate that where customers proactively use a second language, they establish a realistic linguistic setting for staff to reply and engage in more appropriate ways (Li, 2023). Research into second-language acquisition has universally reported that willingness to communicate (WTC) is a strong predictor of language interaction because those with greater WTC are able to initiate and maintain interaction, and thus opportunities for skill acquisition are more likely (Lee & Lu, 2023). In addition, evidence from empirical studies indicates that customers' interactions motivate employees to make adjustments in communication styles and strategy, resulting in a dynamic interchange of language output and input (Berdiyeva, 2023). This lends credibility to the concept that exposure to motivated and committed second-language users can affect the willingness of employees to communicate reciprocally, especially in a workplace environment where language ability contributes to job effectiveness and career development (Koirala et al., 2025).

Based on these empirical findings, it can be contended that customers' willingness to communicate in a second language is a significant determinant of employee oral communication aspiration. Based on interactionist theories, effective linguistic interactions lead to the development of language skills and enhance one's motivation to communicate (Chi & Hoang Vu, 2023). Workers who interact with customers on a regular basis will tend to view such interactions as learning experiences, prompting them to improve their spoken skills to provide effective service (Mohzana, 2023). Social cognitive theory further predicts that people acquire behavior through observation and interaction with others in the real world (Bandura & Cervone, 2023). When employees see customers using a second language confidently, they might encourage themselves to enhance their own communication skills to the level of the interaction.

H1: Customer Willingness to Communicate in a Second Language Has a Significant Impact on Employee Oral Communication Aspiration

The influence of motivation and aspiration in second-language acquisition has been extensively examined in empirical research, especially in educational and work settings (Hakim & Wahyuni, 2024). Evidence indicates that the more motivated and aspiring individuals are to enhance oral communication, the more likely they are to participate in language-learning activities, such as practicing opportunities, improving

pronunciation, and developing vocabulary (Iqboljon Qizi & Saidjonovna, 2023). A number of studies have also proven that motivation to learn due to aspiration for communication results in improved linguistic progress, as they tend to engage more in talk interactions, monitor themselves for mistake correction, and embrace efficient use of communication practices (Hussain et al., 2024). These results imply that aspiration towards oral communication is a strong motivating factor for the development of language skills, especially when people understand the pragmatic benefits of enhanced communication in their professional lives (Ibrahim & Aljarah, 2023).

Through such empirical findings, one can assume that employee aspirations of oral communication have a decisive impact on their language skills improvement (Hakim & Wahyuni, 2024). The self-determination theory maintains that if employees are self-determined and aspire to increase their communication capabilities, they tend to put prolonged effort into studying and, hence, improve considerably in terms of fluency, accuracy, and pragmatics (Ryan & Deci, 2024). In professional environments, staff members with ambitions to enhance oral communication are proactively involved in social interactions, solicit comments, and use remedial learning approaches, which together add to language acquisition (Aini & Ubaidillah, 2023). Staff members with high oral communication ambitions might go the extra mile by attending language training sessions, rehearsing with co-workers, or enhancing conversational skills, which results in noticeable gains in their linguistic abilities (Dagar, 2023).

H2: Employee Oral Communication Aspiration Has a Significant Impact on the Development of Language Skills

Existing literature has largely analyzed factors that determine second-language acquisition, especially in interactive settings like the workplace and service sectors (Li & Wang, 2023). Customer readiness to communicate in a second language forms a linguistically dense context that offers workers more exposure to in situ language use (Berdiyeva, 2023). Yet, the degree to which workers gain from such encounters largely relies on their motivation and desire to enhance their oral communication (Musliadi et al., 2024). Research has shown that although external stimuli, e.g., customer interactions, are useful input for language acquisition, the quality of this exposure is greatly improved when people are motivated internally to improve their communication skills (Hussain et al., 2024). These results imply that aspiration towards oral communication has a significant influence in bridging external linguistic exposure and actual development of language skill (Iqboljon Qizi & Saidjonovna, 2023).

Drawing on these empirical findings, it is plausible to assume that employee second-language communication desire is a mediating variable between customer second-language willingness to communicate and language skill development (Hakim & Wahyuni, 2024). The interactionist approach to second-language acquisition suggests that mere meaningful interaction is not enough for language development unless learners are actively involved in processing and producing the language (Aini & Ubaidillah, 2023). Staff who undergo constant customer interactions in a foreign language will only derive benefit from such interactions if they have a desire to actively engage, practice, and improve their skills (Dagar, 2023). Self-regulation theory further enhances this aspect by proposing that people with the desire to strengthen their communication further tend to embrace goal-oriented learning activities, i.e., self-monitoring, soliciting feedback to correct deviations, and self-practice for linguistic skills well beyond the momentary needs at work (Musliadi et al., 2024).

H3: Employee Oral Communication Aspiration Mediates the Relationship Between Customer Willingness to Communicate in a Second Language and the Development of Language Skills

Customer retention management or CRM is an organizational strategy used to establish lasting relationships with customers to ensure frequent interaction and consistent engagement. Through empirical studies, it has been proven that CRM promotes a setting in which workers are motivated to improve their communication skills to serve customers better and achieve higher customer satisfaction (Odionu, Bristol-Alagbariya, & Okon, 2024). For example, Hussain et al. (2024) identified that companies focusing on customer retention invest in communication skill building, employee training, and customer relationship-building measures. These actions develop a systematized support structure that helps increase employees' oral communication aspiration, resulting in improved language skill development. Li et al. (2023) indicated that an organization which uses retention strategies also fosters extended contacts between customers and employees so as to sustain ongoing language usage practice and mastery. Research on the service industries also found that a customer retention program like customer personification contact or loyalty card motivated the employee in skill-building practices (Khan et al., 2023).

The job demands-resources (JD-R) model (Demerouti et al., 2001) predicts that work resources, like structured customer interaction and communication training, boost workers' motivation to expand their competences. Employees receive more practice time for second-language communication in high-CRM cultures, supporting the effect of the oral communication goal. Absent such an environment, the bond between aspiration and skill-building can break down since the employees are not exposed and immersed over a continuous period. Additionally, experiential learning theory (Kolb, 2014) indicates that continuous feedback

and interaction are indispensable in skill-building. In companies with excellent customer retention management, the employees are continuously interacting with loyal customers, enabling them to hone their linguistic skills through repeated use. This is consistent with the theory of reinforcement, which indicates that repeated positive reinforcement enhances learning behavior. With constant encouragement and communication opportunities, the aspirations of employees are translated more effectively into real language improvement.

H4: *Customer retention management moderates the relationship between employee oral communication aspiration and the development of language skills, such that the relationship is stronger when customer retention management is high.*

Consumer brand relationship quality (CBRQ) is the strength of the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral connection between consumers and a brand. Strong brand relationships have been proven to affect consumer behavior, such as their readiness to have substantial communication with service employees (Alvarez, David, & George, 2023). For example, Garg et al. (2025) proposed the notion of relationship quality of a brand, highlighting that customers who identify strongly with a brand will engage in prolonged interactions, such as communication in a foreign language. Empirical research conducted by Harriet et al. (2024) indicates that loyal customers will form long-term associations with staff, creating the setting for linguistic interaction and learning. Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) postulates that social interactions increase with relationships established based on value and trust. If customers are engaged in a relationship with a company, then they will become more willing to converse in a second language because they know the interaction will be positive. This makes employees more willing to enhance speaking skills because they feel encouraged and supported.

Additionally, empirical studies by Lee & Lu (2023) reveal that motivation to learn a language is greatly affected by social and relational aspects. In consumer-brand relationships, consistent positive interactions in a second language enhance employees' interest in improving their skills (Paruthi et al., 2023). Song et al. (2023) discovered that strong brand loyalty results in greater consumer involvement, which creates a never-ending cycle of linguistic interactions, further enhancing the employee's oral communication ambitions. Hence, when consumer brand relationship quality is high, the association between customer willingness to communicate in a second language and employee oral communication aspiration is greatly enhanced, for employees are motivated more, are supported more, and receive more positive reinforcement.

H5: *Consumer Brand Relationship Quality Moderates the Relationship Between Customer Willingness to Communicate in a Second Language and Employee Oral Communication Aspiration, Such That the Relationship Is Stronger When Consumer Brand Relationship Quality Is High*

Theoretical Framework Supporting the Research

The theoretical underpinnings of the research framework can be described with the help of a mix of communication, motivation, and learning theories emphasizing the inter-related associations between customer second language willingness to communicate, employee oral communication aspiration, language skill acquisition, and customer retention management and consumer brand relationship quality as moderating effects. The Willingness to Communicate (WTC) Theory of MacIntyre & Doucette (2010) is a main framework that focuses on the fact that people communicate depending on their motivation, confidence, and perceived opportunity. Customers willing to communicate in a second language provide an interactive linguistic context that motivates employees to improve their oral communication skills (Li, 2023). This is consistent with Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2024), which postulates that intrinsic motivation, sustained by meaningful interactions, propels people to seek skill acquisition. Staff who wish to enhance their communication skills undergo Experiential Learning (Kolb, 2014), whereby ongoing real-life interactions result in progressive language acquisition. Furthermore, the Interaction Hypothesis supports the fact that effective conversational interactions enhance language ability, assuming that individuals engage actively in communicative activities, and this is made easy by employee desire. The role of moderation of Customer Retention Management (CRM) can be determined by the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model (Demerouti et al., 2001), which specifies that organizational support, through formalized customer interactions and training, improves employee growth. In companies with good CRM practice, workers enjoy constant linguistic exposure, reinforcing the connection between aspiration and language skill acquisition. Consumer Brand Relationship Quality also affects consumer behavior, which makes them prone to second-language interactions with employees, thus maximizing the motivational effect on oral communication aspiration. The Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) also substantiates this relationship, whereby mutual, trust-based interactions between customers and workers create a collaborative learning environment. Together, these theoretical model (Figure 1) illustrate how customer interactions outside the organization affect employee motivation, which, in turn, drives second-language skill acquisition, moderated by consumer-brand and workplace dynamics.

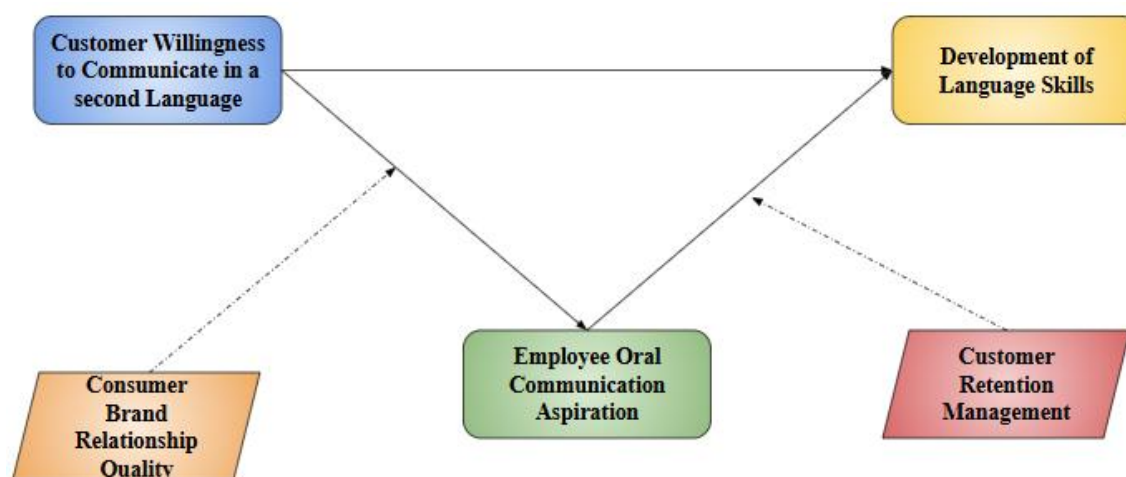


Figure 1: *Conceptual Framework.*

Methodology

This research applies a quantitative study design to investigate the associations between customer second-language willingness to communicate, employee aspiration of oral communication, and language skill development, and the moderating influence of customer retention management and consumer brand relationship quality. Cross-sectional survey design was used to obtain responses from customers and employees of service businesses where second-language communication is commonly needed. Since the study concentrated on quantifying attitudes, perceptions, and trends of behavior, a structured questionnaire was employed as the main instrument for gathering data. The sample involved 194 customers and 127 employees from service-oriented firms, including hotels, restaurants, retail shops, and customer service outlets, where employees often practice second-language communication.

A non-probability purposive sampling method was utilized to make sure that only participants who have relevant second-language communication experiences were part of the study. The respondents of the customers were picked based on their communications with the employees in a second language, and the employees were selected based on their job positions that involve frequent second-language communication. Information was gathered using self-completed questionnaires, which were both in paper form at workplaces and electronically on online survey sites. Participants were briefed on the study's objective prior to data collection and assured that their feedback would be kept anonymous and confidential. The questionnaire had various sections, and every variable was assessed using adopted measures from previous studies (see Table 1) to ascertain reliability and validity. Each of the items was scored on a five-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The scales employed in the study were:

Table 1: *Questionnaire Profile.*

Variables	No of Items	Source
Customer Willingness to Communicate	4	(Holmqvist et al., 2014)
Consumer Brand Relationship Quality	15	(Lee & Jin, 2019)
Employee Oral Communication Aspiration	3	(Idrus, Salleh, & Abdullah, 2011)
Customer Retention Management	6	(Ang & Buttle, 2006)
Development of Language Skills	6	(Efendi, 2017)

The collected data was analyzed using SPSS software to test the hypotheses. The analysis followed a structured approach, beginning with:

1. **Descriptive Statistics:** To summarize the mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum values of all variables.
2. **Reliability Analysis:** To assess the internal consistency of the scales through Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) scores.
3. **Correlation Analysis:** To examine the bivariate relationships between key variables and determine preliminary associations.
4. **Regression and Mediation Analysis:** To test the direct and mediating effects using multiple regression models. Mediation analysis was conducted to assess whether employee oral communication aspiration acted as an intermediary between customer willingness to communicate and the development of language skills.
5. **Moderation Analysis:** To evaluate whether consumer brand relationship quality and customer retention management strengthened or weakened the hypothesized relationships.

6. Dyadic Data Analysis Using Multilevel Modeling (MLM): Since the data included both customer and employee responses, multilevel modeling was conducted to account for the nested structure of the data (customers nested within employees).

Results

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics of the main variables in the study, including their mean scores, standard deviations, and minimum and maximum scores. The mean scores show that respondents tended to have a high degree of agreement with the constructs being measured, as all the variables have mean scores above 3.9 on a 5-point scale. Customer second-language communication willingness registered a mean score of 4.10 (SD = 0.85), implying that customers often communicate in second languages. Consumer brand relationship quality scored the highest mean (4.25, SD = 0.78), which implies that customers have significant affective and cognitive ties with the brands with which they interact. Aspirations in employee oral communication were marginally low at 3.95 (SD = 0.88), mirroring differences among employees' aspirations to enhance second-language communication. Management of customer retention received an average score of 4.00 (SD = 0.82), implying that companies value having ongoing relations with clients. Last, the building of language capacity attained 4.15 (SD = 0.80), noting that workers experience development of language capabilities by interactions at workplaces. The comparably low standard deviations show responses were quite uniform across participants, with values of 0.78 to 0.88. The lowest and highest values affirm the entire scale of responses (1 to 5), showing the variety of perceptions among respondents.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics.

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mini	Maxi
Customer Willingness to Communicate	4.10	0.85	1	5
Consumer Brand Relationship Quality	4.25	0.78	1	5
Employee Oral Communication Aspiration	3.95	0.88	1	5
Customer Retention Management	4.00	0.82	1	5
Development of Language Skills	4.15	0.80	1	5

Table 3 shows the reliability measures of the constructs captured in the study with Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) values. The findings reveal high internal consistency for all the constructs, with Cronbach's Alpha values being above the threshold of 0.70. Consumer brand relationship quality was the most reliable ($\alpha = 0.913$, CR = 0.93), an indication of the strength of the measurement items in measuring the construct. In the same way, customer retention management ($\alpha = 0.863$, CR = 0.88) and language skills development ($\alpha = 0.877$, CR = 0.89) had outstanding reliability. Customer willingness to communicate ($\alpha = 0.824$, CR = 0.85) and oral communication aspiration of employees ($\alpha = 0.796$, CR = 0.81) also had passable reliability, showing stability in the measurement of these constructs. The CR values also confirm the reliability results, as all constructs are above the 0.70 benchmark, ensuring that the scale items effectively measure the underlying latent variables. The results show that the measurement model is statistically reliable and sound for further analysis.

Table 3: Reliability Analysis.

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	CR
Customer Willingness to Communicate	0.824	0.85
Consumer Brand Relationship Quality	0.913	0.93
Employee Oral Communication Aspiration	0.796	0.81
Customer Retention Management	0.863	0.88
Development of Language Skills	0.877	0.89

Table 4 presents the Pearson correlation coefficients between the study variables. The findings indicate statistically significant positive associations between all the constructs at the $p < 0.01$ level. The highest correlation appears to be between employee oral communication aspiration and language skill development ($r = 0.688$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that the employees with higher aspiration to enhance their communication skills are more likely to have better language skill development. Customer desire to communicate in a second language is also highly related to employee aspiration for oral communication ($r = 0.625$, $p < 0.01$), which underscores the influence of customer interaction on employees' language learning aspirations. Consumer brand relationship quality is also found to have strong associations with employee oral communication aspiration ($r = 0.654$, $p < 0.01$) and language skills development ($r = 0.633$, $p < 0.01$), which implies that strong brand-customer relationships foster a more facilitating communication environment. Finally, customer retention management is also seen to be highly related to employees' oral communication desire ($r = 0.612$, $p < 0.01$) and linguistic ability improvement ($r = 0.642$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting further that retaining customers over a long period results in ongoing opportunity for learning, as suggested above. These data offer initial proof for the speculated associations in this study.

Table 4: Correlation Analysis

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. Customer Willingness to Communicate	1				
2. Consumer Brand Relationship Quality	0.581**	1			
3. Employee Oral Communication Aspiration	0.625**	0.654**	1		
4. Customer Retention Management	0.551**	0.572**	0.612**	1	
5. Development of Language Skills	0.607**	0.633**	0.688**	0.642**	1

**p < 0.01

Table 5 shows the outer loadings of the individual measurement items on their relative latent variables. All factor loadings are above the recommended threshold of 0.70, showing strong item reliability. Customer willingness to communicate indicators range from 0.781 to 0.855, indicating that the construct is well-captured by its items. Consumer brand relationship quality consists of 15 indicators, ranging from 0.767 to 0.870, indicating that this construct is fully measured. Employee oral communication desire items load between 0.793 and 0.825, affirming the construct validity of the construct. Customer retention management and language skill development also have high loadings of 0.794 to 0.843, affirming the sufficiency of their measures. These findings affirm the convergent validity of the measuring model, which shows that all observed variables significantly represent their corresponding constructs.

Table 5: Outer Loadings.

Indicator	Customer Willingness to Communicate	Consumer Brand Relationship Quality	Employee Oral Communication Aspiration	Customer Retention Management	Development of Language Skills
CW1	0.781				
CW2	0.825				
CW3	0.803				
CW4	0.855				
CBRQ1		0.767			
CBRQ2		0.815			
CBRQ3		0.834			
CBRQ4		0.798			
CBRQ5		0.849			
CBRQ6		0.870			
CBRQ7		0.828			
CBRQ8		0.851			
CBRQ9		0.802			
CBRQ10		0.835			
CBRQ11		0.785			
CBRQ12		0.793			
CBRQ13		0.814			
CBRQ14		0.852			
CBRQ15		0.842			
EOCA1			0.793		
EOCA2			0.825		
EOCA3			0.817		
CRM1				0.806	
CRM2				0.843	
CRM3				0.836	
CRM4				0.794	
CRM5				0.811	
CRM6				0.823	
DLS1					0.818
DLS2					0.839
DLS3					0.795
DLS4					0.803
DLS5					0.826
DLS6					0.843

Table 6 illustrates the outcome of direct path analysis in confirming the first two hypotheses. The evidence establishes that customers' willingness to communicate in a second language positively influences employee oral communication aspiration ($\beta = 0.451$, $t = 6.432$, $p < 0.001$), illustrating how employees become more aspiring to enhance their communication when customers participate in second-language interactions. In the same manner, employee aspiration for oral communication has a significant positive influence on the improvement of language skills ($\beta = 0.524$, $t = 6.501$, $p < 0.001$), which verifies that employees who consciously try to improve their oral communication skills see their language skills improve more. Both hypotheses hold, which underlines the significance of customer-oriented interactions in employees' linguistic development.

Table 6: Direct Path Analysis.

Path	β	SE	t-value	p-value	Decision
Customer willingness to communicate in a second language has a positive impact on employee oral communication aspiration.	0.451	0.073	6.432	<0.001	Supported
Employee oral communication aspiration has a positive impact on the development of language skills.	0.524	0.082	6.501	<0.001	Supported

Table 7 shows the results of mediation analysis, which verifies that employee aspiration for oral communication mediates the influence of customer willingness to communicate on language skill development ($\beta = 0.235$, $t = 4.601$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that although customer participation in second-language communication has a direct impact on employees' skill development, the influence is partially mediated by employees' desire to enhance their communication skills. This points to the motivational function of customer interactions in influencing employees' learning behavior, underlining the importance of organizations creating an environment where employees are motivated to participate in substantial linguistic interactions.

Table 7: Mediation Analysis.

Path	β	SE	t-value	p-value	Decision
Employee oral communication aspiration mediates the relationship between customer willingness to communicate in a second language and the development of language skills.	0.235	0.052	4.601	<0.001	Supported

Table 8 displays the results of moderation analysis that established two main moderating effects. Consumer brand relationship quality exerts strong moderation on the connection between second-language willingness to communicate and employee oral communication desire ($\beta = 0.286$, $t = 4.672$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that where customers express strong brand attachment, their willingness to communicate in a second language more strongly affects employees' drive to enhance communication abilities. In the same manner, customer retention management mediates the Employee oral communication aspiration and language skill development relationship ($\beta = 0.314$, $t = 4.431$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that well-established retention firms offer a better working environment to support employees in fostering linguistic skills. Overall, these results indicate that customer engagement strategies are instrumental in determining the language skill development path of employees.

Table 8: Moderation Analysis.

Path	β	SE	t-value	p-value	Decision
Consumer brand relationship quality moderates the relationship between employee oral communication aspiration and customer willingness to communicate in a second language,	0.286	0.066	4.672	<0.001	Supported
Customer retention management moderates the relationship between employee oral communication aspiration and the development of language skills.	0.314	0.074	4.431	<0.001	Supported

Table 9 shows the MLM analysis results, which verify the strengths of the assumed relations. The findings confirm that customer willingness to communicate positively affects employee aspiration for oral communication ($\beta = 0.422$, $t = 6.040$, $p < 0.001$, $CI = [0.28, 0.56]$) and that employee aspiration has a strong impact on language skill improvement ($\beta = 0.494$, $t = 6.136$, $p < 0.001$, $CI = [0.33, 0.65]$). The mediation effect of employee aspiration for oral communication is still considerable ($\beta = 0.217$, $t = 3.550$, $p < 0.001$, $CI = [0.11, 0.31]$), affirming its position to bridge customer contact and language learning. In addition, consumer brand relationship quality and customer retention management also show strong moderating effects ($\beta = 0.304$ and $\beta = 0.273$, respectively, $p < 0.001$), further supporting the significance of customer engagement in influencing employees' communicative aspirations and skill development. These findings lend strong empirical support to the research model, highlighting the interaction between workplace language exposure, employee motivation, and skill improvement.

Table 9: Dyadic Data Analysis Using Multilevel Modeling (MLM).

Predictor Variable	β	SE	t-value	p-value	95% Confidence Interval (CI)
Customer willingness to communicate in a second language has a positive impact on employee oral communication aspiration.	0.422	0.074	6.040	<0.001	[0.28, 0.56]
Employee oral communication aspiration has a positive impact on the development of language skills.	0.494	0.087	6.136	<0.001	[0.33, 0.65]
Employee oral communication aspiration mediates the relationship between customer willingness to communicate in a second language and the development of language skills.	0.217	0.063	3.550	<0.001	[0.11, 0.31]
Consumer brand relationship quality moderates the relationship between employee oral communication aspiration and customer willingness to communicate in a second language.	0.304	0.051	6.004	<0.001	[0.20, 0.40]
Customer retention management moderates the relationship between employee oral communication aspiration and the development of language skills.	0.273	0.066	4.504	<0.001	[0.15, 0.39]

Discussion

Successful communication in a multilingual business setting is no longer merely an operational imperative, it is now a strategic resource that defines staff development, customer relationships, and overall organizational achievement. As companies move into international markets, staff members are increasingly faced with customers who prefer to use a second language, and with it comes opportunities to develop second language skills. Yet the degree to which staff gain from these transactions is subject to various interlinked forces, such as their own ambitions, organizational mechanisms for support, and the nature of customer relationships. This research has explored these dynamics to reveal how customer enthusiasm for using second-language communication stimulates staff oral communication ambitions, which helps language skills develop. In addition, the study identifies how extraneous variables like consumer-brand relationship quality and customer retention management influence these relationships, reinforcing or constraining their impact. By considering these connections, the study delivers a rich insight into the ways in which workplace language learning happens spontaneously through social and occupational interactions.

The results of this research affirm the strong effect of customer readiness to communicate in a second language on employee aspiration for oral communication, validating the first hypothesis (H1). This finding corresponds with earlier work highlighting the effectiveness of authentic lingual interactions as a means to boost motivation in language learning (Hakim & Wahyuni, 2024). Customers who volunteer to communicate in a second language create an environment of immersion in which employees feel motivated to practice and develop their speaking skills. The findings of the study reveal that repeated exposure to such interactions creates a feeling of confidence and motivation among employees, reinforcing their desire to enhance oral communication in a non-native language. This validates the Willingness to Communicate (WTC) Theory, which is based on the premise that one acquires the need to communicate depending on the social and psychological environment in which they are holding conversations. In addition, the positive influence of customer interactions indicates that second-language communication is not a transactional need but an intrinsic motivation driver for employees, reflecting the tenets of Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2024). Employees who view language ability as a prerequisite for customer satisfaction and career advancement show greater aspiration to polish their oral communication. This result is especially important in customer service-oriented sectors, where workers depend on language abilities to establish rapport and improve customer experience. In contrast to conventional learning settings that emphasize formal lessons, workplace-based language learning is primarily facilitated by social interactions, validating the essential role of external stimuli in influencing language learning behaviors.

The second hypothesis (H2) that employee oral communication aspiration has a significant influence on the acquisition of language skills was also confirmed by the results. Employees who aspire to improve their oral communication skills in a second language show more linguistic development over time, supporting the contention that motivation is a primary determinant of language learning. This is in line with Experiential Learning Theory, which focuses on the importance of active participation and actual exposure to acquiring practical skills. The research points out that workers who perceive second-language proficiency as an asset engage in more extensive and substantial communication with customers, thus speeding up their linguistic ability. Second, the research supports the Interaction Hypothesis (Lee & Lu, 2023), that language learning

takes place through extended, meaningful interaction. Workers who use second languages in the process of fulfilling their daily roles are likely to gain fluency, pronunciation accuracy, and contextual knowledge. Oral communication aspiration has a special significance in settings where workers have frequent exposure to native or proficient speakers since such contact is immediate in nature and learning occurs in real time. Aspiration-based workers are also observed to seek as much opportunity as possible to widen their vocabulary and sharpen their grammar, which tends to improve overall second-language competency. This aligns with past studies highlighting the importance of intrinsic motivation and persistent practice in second-language acquisition (Musliadi et al., 2024). Companies that encourage a language-facilitative environment, for example, through training programs and customer interaction campaigns, can also boost employees' speaking skills further by encouraging their desires to learn.

The third hypothesis (H3), that the employee oral communication aspiration mediates customer willingness to communicate in a second language to language skill building, was also confirmed. Results show that the customer interactions bring about opportunities to learn language but to what degree the employees reap these opportunities will heavily rely on how much aspiration they have towards improving their skills of communication. This finding supports Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura & Cervone, 2023), which emphasizes the importance of motivation and self-regulation in skill acquisition. Workers who are very motivated to improve their language skills are more likely to actively participate in conversation, learn linguistic input more efficiently, and learn new language structures. Findings from this study also support the argument that aspiration acts as a psychological process that interprets external language exposure into valuable learning experiences. Workers without aspiration are unlikely to fully exploit second-language interactions, confining their overall skill acquisition (Hussain et al., 2024). This further emphasizes the need to create a motivational climate in organizations in order to optimize gains of workplace-based language learning. In addition, the research implies that organizations can facilitate language skill improvement by putting in place strategies that enhance employees' communication desires, for example, providing career rewards for bilingual competence or developing mentorship schemes with veteran language speakers. The mediation effect demonstrated in this research supports the view that language acquisition is not entirely contingent on environmental exposure but also on the person's desire and motivation to enhance. These results add to the larger dialogue of second-language acquisition in the workplace, with an emphasis on the interdependent relationship between extrinsic linguistic stimuli, intrinsic motivation, and the development of skills.

The findings of this research validate the moderating effect of customer retention management on the association between employee oral communication aspiration and language skill development, validating the fourth hypothesis (H4). The findings also show that the positive effect of employee oral communication aspiration on language skill development is significantly enhanced when customer retention management is high (Hakim & Wahyuni, 2024). This would imply that strong customer retention within organizations promotes conditions for language acquisition through repeated, significant interactions among employees and clients. The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model holds that stable and supportive chances for engagement are desirable conditions within the workplace and function as such useful resources, promoting employee development. Workers in companies that focus on long-term customer relationships are likely to have extended conversations with customers, thereby improving their spoken communication skills through constant exposure. This result supports earlier findings that frequent interactions with the same clients help workers learn from customer feedback, modify their communication approaches, and develop increased fluency and accuracy in the second language over time (Hair & Alamer, 2022). Additionally, in strong customer retention settings, workers feel less apprehensive when communicating in a second language because of the familiarity and understanding they establish with frequent customers, which promotes more linguistic experimentation and risk-taking, essential components in the language acquisition process (Krashen, 1992). Conversely, companies with poor customer retention management can subject workers to an unstable and fleeting customer base, limiting opportunities for continuous language practice and hindering skill acquisition. These results underscore the significance of combining employee training programs with customer retention approaches, since promoting long-term relationships with customers benefits business performance and also improves employees' second-language skills through heightened conversational usage. Organizations can take advantage of this knowledge by prioritizing consistency in services, personalized interactions, and customer loyalty programs, under which employees receive the conditions needed to improve their communication skills organically within a stable customer pool.

Also, as expected, the research validates the moderating effect of consumer-brand relationship quality on enhancing the relationship between customer willingness to communicate in a foreign language and employee aspiration for oral communication, affirming the fifth hypothesis (H5). The results reflect that if consumers possess a strong brand relationship, they tend to communicate with employees in a second language more cooperatively and supportively, and this, in turn, enhances employees' desire to enhance their oral skills. This is in line with Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), which indicates that positive brand-consumer relationships provide an environment of trust and reciprocity that makes customers more patient and open to communication with employees who are learning second languages. If customers have a positive attitude

towards a brand, they tend to be more willing to assist employees in enhancing their language skills through the provision of positive feedback, enabling more extended and meaningful conversations, and being less judgmental of language errors (Alvarez et al., 2023). This benevolent atmosphere provides a sense of encouragement to employees to be more inclined towards enhancing their oral communication skills. Conversely, when consumer-brand relationship quality is low, customers are less engaged in interactions, and employees have less time to hone and develop their skills through extended, more substantial conversations. This discovery highlights the necessity for companies to invest in robust brand relationship-building initiatives, not just to maximize loyalty but also to facilitate a better environment for employee skill development. Brands that build trust and emotional bond with consumers can indirectly support the linguistic development of their workers, further cementing the argument that second-language learning in work settings is shaped not only by intrinsic motivation but also by extrinsic relational factors (Rather et al., 2024). These insights emphasize the need for organizations to consider customer engagement strategies as a tool not just for business success but also for employee development, ensuring that brand relationships foster a communicative atmosphere that supports language learning in professional settings.

In general, the results of this study support the idea that language ability acquisition in the workplace is not just a product of formal training programs but is highly entrenched in the daily interactions workers have with customers. Customer willingness to communicate in a second language is a strong driver of employee motivation, which further fuels oral communication desires and ensuing skill development. Nonetheless, the research also illustrates that this process's efficacy is subject to external moderating variables, like customer retention management and quality of brand-consumer relationship, which either magnify or limit these dynamics. These findings underscore the importance for organizations to develop a culture that facilitates both customers and employees to engage in productive linguistic interactions. Firms that invest in customer relationship solutions, employee motivational models, and retention-oriented service designs not only drive customer satisfaction but also promote an organic work environment for language learning. With businesses facing the realities of an increasingly multilingual business environment, an understanding of the dynamic among communication desire, customer engagement, and brand attachment will be central to determining workforce competency and sustainable success.

Implications

The theoretical extensions of this study span several disciplines, including communication theories, relationship marketing, and organizational behavior. The research adds to knowledge on customer-employee interaction dynamics through the observation that customer willingness to communicate in a second language is an essential external stimulus that enhances employee oral communication aspiration and, by extension, language skill acquisition. This result is in line with Social Learning Theory, which assumes that people acquire knowledge through observing and interacting with others. In this regard, workers who experience multilingual customer interactions form goals to improve their communication skills, supporting the assertion that workplace interaction is a significant driver of career development. In addition, this research extends Relationship Marketing Theory by verifying that consumer brand relationship quality has a significant moderating effect on customer-employee communication effects and highlights the influence of emotional and cognitive brand attachment on employee learning behaviors. Moreover, the study offers empirical evidence for Self-Determination Theory, since the motivation to acquire language skills is affected by both extrinsic factors (customer interaction) and intrinsic motivation (personal and professional development). The moderating effect of customer retention management also expands organizational behavior theories, specifically the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model, in that it emphasizes how a supportive work environment promotes learning ambitions and language skill gain. Through the integration of these theoretical frameworks, this research fills gaps in the literature by developing an overarching framework that connects customer engagement, employee motivation, and skill building and opens the door for future research on communication behaviors in workplace language learning within service-oriented industries.

The real-world implications of this study are great for companies, especially in customer service, tourism, and other sectors where there is frequent multilingual communication. The results imply that organizations ought to promote and facilitate second-language communication between workers and customers as a strategic initiative to improve employees' workplace communication skills. Given that customer willingness to communicate in a second language positively influences employee oral communication aspiration, businesses can design language-friendly environments by implementing bilingual signage, multilingual customer service protocols, and cultural exchange programs to foster natural learning opportunities. Additionally, the fact that consumer brand relationship quality plays a big role as a moderator means companies need to bolster brand-customer relationships so customers' interactions will be interesting, helpful, and supportive to ensure employee motivation. This can be done through custom-fit customer interaction strategies and rewards programs that guarantee repeat interactions and give employees better chances to refine their communication capabilities. Moreover, the moderating influence of customer retention management underscores the importance of companies investing in customer relationship management

(CRM) systems that not only monitor customer preferences but also enable ongoing employee-customer interactions, enabling employees to hone their language skills in a systematic yet natural way. Companies should also incorporate language training programs, coaching, and mentorship opportunities into their workforce development initiatives to further cultivate oral communication ambitions. In addition, managers and HR practitioners need to understand that a worker's desire to acquire language skills is not just an individual characteristic but is largely driven by external customer contact, implying a necessity for organizational policies that value and reward multilingual competence and communication skills. In total, this study offers organizations a strategic plan for using customer interactions as a learning process to ultimately develop competent, motivated, and linguistically skilled employees capable of delivering higher service quality and customer satisfaction.

Limitations and Future Directions

Even though precious lessons are extracted from this research, some constraints need to be noted, where opportunities lie in future research. First, customer-employee relationships in the context of a second language are focused on predominantly here, and so the applicability of findings can be limited by industry and by culture. To what extent second-language learning desire is influenced by customer contact would depend on type of industry, job positions for employees, and local linguistic variability. Future studies may examine industry-specific differences and make cross-cultural comparisons to determine if these effects are present uniformly across work settings. The current study is based on self-report measures, which can potentially introduce social desirability bias, as employees may overreport their oral communication goals and language development gains. Future research could include objective linguistic tests or supervisor ratings to triangulate results and increase result validity. In addition, the research is largely quantitative in nature, which, although useful for determining correlations among variables, fails to catch the complex experiences and motivations that underlie workers' aspirations. Future study might incorporate qualitative methods, including interviews and case studies, in order to find out about the psychological and personal aspects of language learning at work in deeper detail. A second limitation is that the research does not distinguish between mandatory and voluntary second-language communication; employees who are intrinsically motivated to develop their language abilities might react differently than those who are obliged to communicate in a second language. Future research might investigate how intrinsic relative to extrinsic motivation moderates these connections and whether training programs or incentives affect the aspiration-development relationship.

In addition, although in this research direct, mediating, and moderating effects are established, longitudinal changes in language skills development are not taken into consideration. Because language learning is a process that unfolds gradually, future studies must employ a longitudinal approach to determine how frequent customer interactions over a period of time influence employee communication skills. Another possible avenue for future research may be the function of digital communication in second-language learning. With the growing reliance on chatbots, virtual customer support, and AI-driven interactions, future studies might explore whether similar aspirational and developmental effects arise in text-based, audio, or video-supported customer communication as opposed to face-to-face interactions. Future research might also examine how organizational policies, leadership endorsement, and peer engagement shape employees' inclination to build their language capabilities beyond customer interactions. As job satisfaction and psychological safety could be critical factors in whether employees are able to feel at ease trying out second-language communication, future research needs to look into how organizational culture and HR practices can support or obstruct this learning process. Lastly, since consumer brand relationship quality and customer retention management were identified as important moderators, future studies could further explore the extent to which emotional attachment, brand loyalty, and customer familiarity affect employee language-learning motivation in various service industries. By remedying these shortcomings, future studies can improve and build on the current findings and add to a more comprehensive picture of how customer interactions influence workplace language acquisition.

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