Language as a Gateway: Maximizing Student Effective Learning through English Teaching – Learning Processes in Pakistani Context

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	All developing nations know that learning English is vital in adopting the latest scientific and technological innovations. Despite English's better position, Pakistani students struggle to speak it well because of administrative, social, and educational barriers and issues with how it is taught. For this reason, teaching English to students in Pakistan is a difficult task. This study aims to identify possible solutions for the difficulties English language teachers in public schools in Pakistan suffer. The research revealed that the translation method of instruction was used rather than the direct and strategical methods. It also proved that teaching English followed a similar pattern to teaching other topics, like general science and Pakistan Studies. With this teacher-centered method of instruction, learners don't get a chance to practice their language abilities in a classroom setting, mainly in public schools. This method of teaching English is based on several aspects, such as a lack of teachers with the necessary training, a lack of in-service training for primary and secondary school teachers, a rote memorization system of exams, overcrowded classes, a heavy workload of teachers, a lack of teaching resources, and a lack of ongoing support from the teachers. The study also suggested some solutions to enhance students' learning through English language development (ELD) and also for teachers to overcome these challenges by improving the teaching quality in the English language, which can help students learn effectively in their future higher education. English instructors ought to have specialized training emphasizing teaching English as a language rather than other areas of study.

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INTRODUCTION

Every growing country knows that acquiring fluency in the English language is essential for implementing the newest academic and technological developments worldwide, and are determined to establish a system in which, while evaluating the human resources available in their countries, those who have great success over the ones who have not. English is the most essential part of the primary, secondary, and even higher educational curricula (Saunders et al. 2013). It is impossible to disagree with the value and importance of the English language during the current education period. Nowadays, acquiring English has become essential for functioning in the global society and economy. There is a growing need for the English language. (Mohammad et al., 2018). In addition to the reality that English is necessary for contemporary society, it is also noted that those applying with good English backgrounds are always helped not only to get into higher education level but also to get better employment.

Since Pakistan's independence, English has served as the country's principal language. The standard of English education at secondary school is low, and these issues must be addressed. The process of learning English is instinctive. Less chance occurs for the students to pick up language from their surroundings. The whole academic environment has to be improved, not the students, who are incapable of learning the language (Coleman, 2010). Academicians and practitioners have shared fear about teaching English since it plays a significant part in supporting students in acquiring the language. Teaching English to students involves more than just transferring knowledge; it also involves helping them to read, write, and speak the language with confidence (Goldenberg & Cárdenas-Hagan, 2023). In addition, they find it problematic to adjust to the English language. The educational setting is unsuitable for helping students understand the language's many dialects. Their personal histories and social structures also limit their ability to learn languages (Rehman et al., 2018). Science courses are first taught in Urdu at the elementary and secondary school levels. Then, at university and college levels, they are taught in English, so students from public

schools face many challenges in higher education compared to those from the private sector (Torshizi & Torshizi 2016).

The systematic use of teaching strategies created to enhance non-native English-speaking students' acquisition of the language is known as English language development (ELD). One of the keys to success or failure in Pakistan is English language learning (Jiménez & Rose, 2010). Many parents typically choose an education at English program Schools as a potential for economic power (Sarwar et al., 2017; Akram et al., 2022). It is well-established that providing language learners with participation in language development activities will help them acquire power over their language abilities and help them learn for further studies (Saunders et al., 2013; Edelman et al., 2022).

The primary factor in learning English is teaching. Teaching English to students involves more than simply imparting information; it also involves helping them become fluent readers, writers, and speakers of the English language (Fareed et al., 2018; Akram et al., 2022). This teaching approach is strengthened by English language development tactics, which allow students to acquire the language in the same natural manner that they learned their mother tongue—that is, by regular interaction with language-speaking people. In the natural language learning approach, students first acquire the basic principles of English communication. So, role teachers help and communicate with their students in their daily routine to help them become fluent in English rather than bound by English in the teaching-learning process (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2017). English, the subject that teachers commonly teach, is the one the students find most fascinating. Teachers need to use specific English language tactics in the classroom to spark students' interest in the language. These tactics include various in-class exercises, vocabulary drills, and listening and speaking exercises among students and teachers. When a concept is taught strategically, the learning process is frequently boosted (Irfan et al., 2020; Jamil, 2021; Akram et al., 2022).

The speaking and listening requirements for students determine their proficiency level in the language and how well they may use it. Students must be prepared to utilize English in specialized and professional contexts successfully. Speaking and listening are essential aspects of language learning that create a foundation for acquiring a second language and are necessary for developing reading and writing in the English language (Patil, 2008; Irfan et al., 2020; Ali, 2022). An essential component of a student's language development is oral communication abilities. Listening and speaking may come naturally for particular students more than writing and reading. However, reading aloud, presenting in front of the class, or talking in front of them might be tricky. This is something that can be overcome with linguistic competency (Bozorgian, 2012; Powers et al., 2013; Powers & Powers, 2015).

The study is significant for Pakistan's public schools' English language learning and teaching. It would provide helpful teaching and learning practices for multilingual educational settings that benefit English teachers and students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

English language development (ELD) is an essential tool for education. In Pakistan, the English language instructors at the school stage lacked basic competence. A new aspect of the issue was the incompetence of English instructors at the school level. The study discovered that English language instructors lack the necessary training to be qualified as teachers of languages (Mohammad et al., 2018; Akram et al., 2020). Learners of English as a second language in local government schools have more challenges than in federal government institutions (Ahmad et al. 2011; Ali et al. 2014; Gul et al. 2022). Several professionals advised teachers to be aware of their students' challenges, especially with pronunciation, and to set an example for the students by acting as role models in their teaching-learning process (Akram & Qureshi, 2012; Mohammad et al., 2018; Gul et al. 2022). The main issue is that primary schools typically adopt English as a critical subject with no regard for the qualifications of the teachers. Numerous studies have revealed a severe lack of competent and experienced classroom teachers (Nawab, 2012; Bashiruddin & Qayyum, 2014; Akram et al., 2020). It is challenging for educators to provide learner-centered instruction or carry out group projects. Control and discipline are other problems with large-sized classrooms, particularly when discussing speaking exercises in English language learning practices (Akram et al., 2020; Heritage et al., 2020; Irfan et al., 2020). Teachers who are not good at English use Urdu or other regional languages as a medium of education, and the translation method is mainly used in English classes. The focus is on exercises from the book rather than language learning (Coleman, 2010). The method students study in Pakistan is troubling to language instruction and acquisition. Pakistani methods of teaching English dialects have not fulfilled their original purpose of promoting communication competence. Grammar translation is the approach to teaching English in Pakistan; speaking and listening are unimportant (Suleman, 2018; Bsharat & Barahmeh, 2020; Maitlo et al., 2022). The problem with government schools, colleges, and universities in Pakistan is that the curriculum ignores the need for proficiency in English. As a result, learners pay little attention to their ability to speak English. Consequently, Pakistani higher education graduates have poor English-speaking competence (Bilal et al., 2013; Ali et al., 2020). Although the great majority of stakeholders have an overwhelming unfavorable perspective towards the straight-for-English strategy in education, in actual classroom practice, Urdu was used as the language of teaching and communication (Manan et al., 2015; Sah & Kubota, 2022). Students at Quetta's government schools were asked about their opinions on grammar,

translation methods, and the use of communicative languages in research. According to that study, students' views towards using communicative language teaching were usually positive. In contrast, students' attitudes towards the grammar-translation method were either less positive or in the middle of the road (Rasheed et al. 2017).

Factors affecting English language development (ELD)
It is common knowledge that no effort can achieve its stated goal if its goals are unknown. Teachers need to be specific about their exact objectives and long-term objectives of teaching English to make learning far more systematic and successful (Nawab, 2012; Jamil, 2021; Khan et al., 2023). Managing multilingual classes is the main challenge facing English learners and teachers worldwide, not just in Pakistan. The fact that learners in the classroom speak multiple local languages creates many challenges for both the instructor and the learners. Multilingual classrooms can be challenging, and English instructors may struggle to manage the difficulties (Rasheed et al. 2017, Khan et al. 2023). According to the study of Tufail et al. (2015), university professors provide seminars for English language instructors in classrooms for schools. The conclusions of this study demonstrated the various difficulties that instructors face due to dialect variety in the learning places. According to the research report, English teachers ought to have the training to engage students in classes with multiple languages efficiently and interestingly. According to another study by Ismaili (2015), Given that instructors and learners develop from various languages and ethnic backgrounds, it might be difficult for the teachers to understand and for the students to acquire English language skills. According to the study by Nawab (2012), a thorough understanding of the language's phonics, or sound system, is necessary for good listening proficiency. The first step in learning a language should be listening if we choose the standard method of language acquisition. Listening exercises need to be properly and thoroughly created. According to another study by Toro et al. (2019), Individuals must communicate to convey their thoughts, emotions, and other qualities. Because of this, classroom instruction should focus on communication activities to improve the English learning skills of students. In another study, Wangru (2016) concluded that teachers employ a highly successful questioning technique. It enhances the quality of instruction while instructing the students. In the study of Al-Sobhi (2019), the method that may increase the standard of learning is communicative language instruction. Additionally, it supports learners in overcoming their difficulties with speaking English. Another researcher revealed that developing a pleasant and joyful environment requires motivating teaching techniques (Abdullah et al., 2019). Sadeghi and Richards (2015) searched to identify the difficulties and challenges of teaching spoken English in Iranian classrooms. A study by Al-Sobhi & Preece (2018) Discovered the challenges of teaching English oral competence at a Saudi school. The study's main goal was to identify common issues that influence the instruction of English-speaking English to Arab learners. The study's conclusions suggested that instructors faced many difficulties while instructing oral skills, such as the lack of speaking assessments and instructional resources. The investigation's findings also demonstrated a lack of comprehension of the nature of spoken English engagement. Teachers and curriculum creators' understanding of spoken English and oral interaction styles was lacking (Ahmed, 2018). The pedagogical subject knowledge colleges, universities, and teacher education programs offered instructors was inadequate and out-of-date when developing their understanding of spoken English concepts. It was impossible for the teachers and their training to distinguish between verbal and communication abilities. The researchers wanted to know what materials English instructors used to conduct oral English classes, what difficulties they had while teaching English, and what kind of support they thought they would need to be more effective for these kinds of sessions in teaching English process. Speaking effectively involves properly using vocabulary, quick word recall, and grammatical accuracy. Speaking also necessitates using proper pronunciation, rhythm, emphasis, and intonation with ease. For both instructors and students, acquiring spoken language is the most complex challenge when all these factors are overcome (Nawab 2012, Khan et al. 2023).

Reading is the foundation of all new knowledge, making it a crucial language ability. A child's education is insufficient if he cannot read and understand the material. It is impossible to turn second language learners into proficient readers without being taught how to read. (Watkins & Lindahl, 2010, Zhang et al. 2020). Writing is the process of putting ideas into words. The writing approaches may be presented to the students continually. Teachers must provide appropriate direction and consistent practice for learners to develop their writing skills. Languages have different writing systems; Instructors must understand the differences to instruct their students successfully. (Beck et al. 2013, Farooq et al. 2020). Grammar knowledge is crucial for writing ability. Additionally, learners struggle with spelling, which affects their ability to write. Spelling issues may be resolved with reading and continuous writing practice. Above all, a teacher must be aware of the typical stages students go through when writing (Wyse, 2001; Abdullaev, 2021). The goal of language has led to the development of the communicative approach, which emphasizes student initiative and interaction over teacher-centered instruction to assist learners in learning how to speak correctly, smoothly, and efficiently using the language they use in their learning process. However, students' confidence, motivation, and the teachers' skills are essential to support language learning using a communicative method. Studies done in Asian contexts show that most Asian nations' English language learners experience shyness and anxiety when speaking the language. (Patil, 2008, Palupi, 2021). The biggest problem affecting English language learning in Pakistan's public schools is the lack of audiovisual resources. The survey revealed that there were no study materials or audiovisual aids for English instruction in provincial or federal government schools (Singh, 2021).

Teachers and English Language Development
It is believed that as thinking governs attitude, understanding teachers' perspectives is essential to comprehend how they function in the classroom and to guide for improving their methods of instruction in English language development (Suleman, 2018; Mahboob, 2020; Akram & Yang, 2021). Researchers looked into how instructors perceived the value of communicative language teaching and how it affected students' communicative skills. The investigation's conclusions demonstrated that while teachers expressed interest in applying Communicative Teaching Language, they were not nearly accepting it due to interest challenges and barriers, such as overcrowded classrooms, students' low proficiency, limitations on time, Absence of audio-visual resources as the main problems in English language development (Farooq, 2015; Suleman, 2018, Tufail, S., & Aslam, S. (2023). The four listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills are usually combined in language instruction. Teachers of English have long overlooked and taken for granted the necessity of teaching speaking skills, even though they are essential to effective communication that helps the students in their English language development EDL (Nuraini, 2016; Irfan et al., 2020). The fact that children learn to use the language independently and in communities stresses the concept that students cannot become proficient in a language without teacher assistance. This demonstrates the importance of educating children on speaking skills and including them in speaking activities to achieve language competence (Rao, 2019; Erika et al., 2020). Learning the language via various activities along with proficiency in writing, speaking, listening, and reading will enhance their abilities and prepare them for the workforce, and that is only possible in programs specifically designed to show the English language in their early learning. Undeniably, demands such as insufficient time, the requirement to complete the syllabus, and regular coursework evaluations distract from the delight of learning the subject matter (Oktaviani & Mandasari, 2020). Acquiring ability in all four aptitudes is necessary to achieve exceptional relationship skills or to overcome expectations in relational abilities. They are the following: writing and lettering skills, verbal communication, listening, and translation. The students must first develop an interest in a subject or language before mastering all of these skills (Mohsen & Mahdi, 2021). Instructing English as a course of study and as a language are two very different things, and it is difficult to teach English rather than another subject because of different strategies in this learning. Teachers should use many techniques and methods to help their ELD students gain confidence and improve their ability to communicate orally. In addition to oral communication skills, several other strategies can be beneficial for both teachers and ELD students to make a specific lesson understandable. However, these strategies are challenging to implement in schools because of limited time and many curricula, so students tend to use language centers. Educating in centers differs significantly from educating in schools (Akram & Yang, 2021; Kadhim et al., 2022). The availability of the materials teachers need is another frequent source of difficulty. Another issue that instructors face in rural schools is the lack of funds and non-availability of instructional resources. Although multimedia technology is an effective tool for teaching English, instructors in Pakistani schools have not always had access to it, mostly in public schools (Akram et al., 2020; Channa et al., 2021). It has been noted that inspiring students is a problem and a difficult task for teachers in their teaching-learning process, especially in rural places where learners hardly find use for the English they learn. It has been recommended that including creative activities in the curriculum might encourage students to study the language differently for their language development (Akram et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2023; Khan et al. 2024). However, a qualified and experienced instructor might employ the tactics in their teaching-learning process in English classes; sadly, one of Pakistan's most significant challenges has been the absence of qualified English-speaking instructors, mainly in rural areas (Asghar et al., 2023). In addition, neither NGOs nor the government provide in-service professional development opportunities for English teachers at the secondary level; English instructors working in rural areas typically take advantage of these courses. Pre-service training is already thought to be out of date, and theory is still prioritized above actual teaching techniques in English classes (Irfan & Pashby, 2020; Mukhtar et al., 2021).

The situation of ELD in Pakistan
There has been considerable competition with various languages worldwide, such as Spanish, French, Russian, and Chinese, in the 19th century. However, English was a critical language from the past until the 21st century. The economies of Britain and America dominated the world, elevating and popularizing English as the language with the most influence and significance. (Sekhar, 2012; Irfan et al., 2020; Asad & Javed, 2023). Since Pakistan's official language, English is increasingly important as a teaching language in higher learning.

Additionally, proficiency in the language is required for competitive tests (Mahboob, 2009). So, to improve the students' learning procedure, improving their English language skills at the school level is good, which can help them to learn effectively in their higher education. English-medium private schools provide 'excellent' education to wealthy students in well-resourced classrooms. Compared to students in deficient classrooms who receive little or no access to English outside of the daily 30- to 35-minute English class, these learners, who also come from acquisition-rich homes, achieve higher levels of competence in the language. (Shamim, 2011; Abbas et al., 2018; Asad & Javed, 2023). Parents who can help their children then believe they can benefit from early learning English through English-taught schools in career advancement. (Channa & Panezai, 2019, Irfan et al. 2020). The present state of affairs is prevalent in many of the world's developing countries. In other words, there is a significantly greater need for English than

resources for teaching and studying the language at this stage. English literacy must be given the most significant importance in any government's objectives of educational changes if discussion and debate at the local and national levels confirm that it is essential for individual and national development (Shamim, 2011; Pennycook, 2017).

CONCLUSION

The importance of English language advancement in Pakistan's educational system cannot be overstated, especially in light of its pivotal role in global communication and access to knowledge. However, despite its official status and recognized importance, the challenges surrounding English language learning and teaching in Pakistan persevere, hindering students' proficiency and access to opportunities. The findings of this paper underscore several systemic issues plaguing English language instruction at public schools in Pakistan. These include the prevalent use of outdated teaching methodologies such as the translation method, insufficient training and support for English language teachers, overcrowded classrooms, lack of resources, and the disconnect between primary and higher education language instruction. These factors collectively contribute to a suboptimal learning environment where students struggle to develop their English language skills effectively. There is an urgent need for pedagogical reform in English language teaching methodologies. Moving from the translation method towards more communicative and student-centered approaches can foster a more conducive learning environment. Teachers of English may receive training in teaching the language instead of a subject only. Investment in comprehensive teacher training programs tailored specifically for English language instructors is imperative. These initiatives should aim to improve the language skills of instructors, pedagogical skills, and cultural awareness. Additionally, ongoing professional development opportunities and mentorship can help teachers to ensure continuous improvement in teaching quality. Adequate provision of resources such as textbooks, audio-visual aids, and technology infrastructure is essential to facilitate effective English language instruction. Government authorities should prioritize resource allocation to public schools, particularly in underserved areas, to bridge the existing resource gap and create a level playing field for all students. This interdisciplinary approach can reinforce language learning and allow learners to use their linguistic abilities in various contexts, enhancing their overall proficiency. Collaboration with parents, communities, and local stakeholders is crucial to garner support for English language education initiatives. Awareness campaigns highlighting the importance of English proficiency for academic and career success can help mobilize community involvement and create a supportive learning environment for students. In conclusion, addressing the challenges in English language development in Pakistan requires a multifaceted approach to pedagogical innovation, teacher empowerment, resource provision, curriculum reform, community engagement, and research-based interventions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The ways that teachers are currently teaching students to improve their ability to speak English are not enough. However, several variables combine with the current problematic system, making teachers not the only ones in charge of different practices. Training programs for pre-service teachers exclude ideas and procedures that might help teach the four English language skills. Teachers should be trained extensively in modern language teaching techniques, prioritizing interactive learning, real-life communication, and practical language use. English language development should be integrated into the broader curriculum across all subjects and educational levels. Continuous research and evaluation efforts should be undertaken to assess the effectiveness of English language education policies and practices. Data-driven insights can inform evidence-based decision-making and guide future interventions to improve learning outcomes. By prioritizing these recommendations, stakeholders can work towards building a robust English language education system that empowers students to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

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