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# Conflict of Teaching Methods in English Language Teaching in Pakistan

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*Abstract*

***Introduction:*** *This study examines the conflict between traditional and modern teaching methods in Pakistan's English language education. Traditional methods emphasize grammar translation and rote learning, while modern methods focus on communicative and student-centered approaches. This tension disrupts effective language absorption.*

***Methodology:*** *Using a mixed-methods approach, this study involves classroom observations, teacher interviews, and surveys to investigate the practices and challenges faced by English language teachers in Pakistan.*

***Results/Findings:*** *The study finds that the mismatch between traditional and modern methods hinders effective language learning. Teachers struggle to balance rote memorization with communicative techniques, leading to suboptimal learning outcomes. Key factors include inadequate teacher training and outdated curricula.*

***Future Direction:*** *To improve language education, the study recommends comprehensive teacher training and*

*curriculum reforms. Integrating the strengths of both traditional and modern methods could foster a more effective, learner-centered approach to English language teaching in Pakistan.*

*Key words: English language teaching, traditional methods, modern methods, learners need and mixed-methods approach*

## Introduction

In Pakistan, English is recognized as an official language (Pennycook, 2017). Given its essential nature, it is mandated for students nationwide up to the point of graduation (Muhammad, 2013; Shoukat & Ghani, 2015; Zaidi & Zaki, 2017). On the other hand, due to inadequate English comprehension skills, students in Sindh province even at the undergraduate level—find it difficult to understand their own textbooks (Khan & Padian, 2014; Younus & Khan, 2017). Teachers view speaking, writing, grammar, and listening as the four main pillars of teaching English. Research indicates that even if students acquire the fundamentals of language during their early school years, they may still have difficulties reading written texts (Spencer, Quinn, & Wagner, 2017). As a result, this frequently produces a poor lot, who suffer academically every now and then. English language proficiency is becoming more and more important in the global setting. This is especially true for children in public schools, who have less opportunities to practice outside of the classroom.

The current situation draws attention to the problem among researchers. Opposition to the conditions in which English language instruction is carried out in Pakistan and the inadequate English literacy levels of pupils in Pakistani schools is a common occurrence (Fareed, Ashraf, & Mushtaque, 2019). Although the circumstances under which English is taught are questionable, it remains a required subject in Pakistan up to the degree level (Hassan, Afridi, & Khan, 2018). In most public school settings, it is taught using a traditional technique, which has an impact on students' language proficiency (Ahmad, et al., 2024). There are more than 77 different languages spoken in Pakistan, making it a cosmopolitan and multilingual nation. Together with Urdu, the national language, English is the language of bureaucracy, despite the fact that each province is associated with a certain ethnic community that has its own language and culture. Generally speaking, Urdu serves as a lingua franca and a medium of communication between many ethnic groups. It fosters national cohesion among Pakistanis, as it did for Muslims in the Indian subcontinent prior to the country's 1947 partition. Nonetheless, English continues to be the

language of Pakistan's elites and is utilized in both formal and casual contexts. It is now regarded as a very desirable language and has ingrained itself into Pakistani culture. It may be concluded that Pakistan's language policies have an impact on the country's development and educational system (Imran & Akhtar, 2023).

English is a natural language that can be studied as a second language (L2). Language and identity are linked through a process of development, strengthening, and dissolution that is influenced by both natural acquisition and learning. Formal instruction in schools can either increase or decrease this connection. For example, in Pakistan, where Urdu is the national tongue, English has largely overtaken Urdu as the language of choice for discussion. Our youth show up awkward when they utilize Urdu in open or anyplace else since our media has begun to uncover Western culture on a much bigger scale and has driven us to accept that our instructive framework, which empowers examining in Urdu, is futile. Future research must also address how educators and researchers can support second language learners in discovering their positional ties and identities in contexts where language learning is taking place, so that their voices are heard, and how they foster a genuine appreciation of the diverse backgrounds and identities of L2 learners. Finally, they must help participants avoid becoming stuck in identities that are imposed by institutions or society at large (Rehan, et al., 2024).

In Pakistan's English language teaching sector, a long-standing debate rages on between traditional and modern approaches. This dispute stems from fundamentally different beliefs about how language learning should be approached. Conventional methods in Pakistan have traditionally focused on grammar rules, translation, and memorization, prioritizing the recall of vocabulary and rules over practical communication skills and contextual understanding. Modern approaches On the other hand, accomplish a communicative approach to language instruction, asking students to engage in English language conversation. This student-centered method prioritizes practical communication and having hands on experience above theory, enabling learners to actively participate in their language learning process. The stark contrast between traditional and modern teaching methods in Pakistan's language classrooms leads to a significant gap between what's being taught and what students need to succeed in today's interconnected world. While traditional approaches provide a sense of structure and familiarity, they often fail to equip students with the practical communicative skills necessary to effectively engage in real life

situations, both globally and locally. The deeper understanding of this issue at teacher training needs to gets importance so that it could be solved (Imran, et al., 2023).

The aim of the research is to investigate the reason that why are the traditional teaching method continue in Pakistan's English language classrooms, and what are the obstacles that stops the acceptance of more communicative, effective and student-centered methods. Through an examination the understandings and practices of English language teachers, this study aims to reveal the hidden factors that perpetuate outdated methods and self-expression techniques for incorporating modern approaches. The objective is to process workable answers to overcome with this problem, for that we need to perform teacher training, set curriculum reforms and policy changes that can lead to a more consistent and effective English language teaching approach in Pakistan. Overall, this introduction lays groundwork for a thorough analysis of the ongoing struggle between the modern and traditional teaching approaches in English language instruction within the unique context of Pakistan. By illuminating this conflict, the study hopes to improve language practice and policies in Pakistan, which will ultimately benefit Pakistani leaner's linguistics development and communicative competence (Mohammad, et al., 2024).

Present study is crucial for addressing the educational challenges faced by English language learners in Pakistan, as it highlights the detrimental effects of the conflict between traditional and modern teaching methods. By examining how the focus on grammar and rote learning versus communicative and student-centered approaches affects language acquisition, the study provides valuable insights into improving teaching practices and curriculum design. Understanding these dynamics is essential for developing effective strategies that can bridge pedagogical gaps, enhance teacher training, and promote equitable resource distribution. Ultimately, this research supports efforts to create a more effective and inclusive English language education system, better preparing students for global communication and academic success.

**Objectives of the Study**

1. To analyze the conflict between traditional and modern teaching methods in Pakistan and its impact on language learning outcomes.

2. To identify factors affecting English language teaching, such as teacher training and

curricula, and recommend reforms for integrating modern pedagogical approaches.

**Literature Review**

The study surveys the teaching methods and practices used to teach English in Pakistan as foreign language in post method era. It primarily focuses on what English language teaching methods should be implemented and what strategies should be applied to classrooms in public and private educational institutions. This study demonstrates that "methods are not dead, nor will they ever be," in the public sector the teachers apply older strategies and techniques of GTM compared to the teachers in the private institutions as per the qualitative survey reported. This research reveals a significant knowledge gap in the field of English as a foreign language teaching methods in Pakistan, highlighting the urgent need for a standard shift in language education. The study's data emphasizes the necessity to reevaluate and redefine the goals of language education, leading to are design of teaching pedagogy that better addresses the needs of Pakistani learners in today's globalized world.

Another paper's purpose is to investigate the idea of the perfect method in L2 teaching which has become a confusing problem for many language teachers who teach TESOL, ESL or EFL and look for a best method which provide best learning outcomes in terms of learning a foreign (English).

The primary focus of this study was to examine the elements that influence the adoption of the communicative method in teaching and learning English as a second language at the tertiary level. CLT, or Communicative Language Teaching, is the predominant pedagogical method used for teaching foreign languages in developed nations. The objective of this study was to examine and illustrate the present condition of English instruction in both public and private educational establishments in Pakistan. Analyzing the reasons behind the unsuccessful implementation of CLT tactics, such as the presence of group-based work and other instructive activities in Pakistan, and proving that CLT is not universally applicable, are crucial elements in this process. Upon reviewing the papers, the prominent themes that emerged were poor proficiency, insufficient evaluation, and improper pedagogy, all of which indicate a skill gap. English language communication abilities are highly valued by both teachers and students. However, the absence of an evaluation system hinders the ability to focus more effectively,

and socioeconomic issues also hinder the development of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' skills (Oad, Zaidi, & Phulpoto, 2023).

The additional study reports the absence of student participation in English as a second language (ESL) at a Pakistan University, by using cooperative education within the framework of engagement action research. This study aimed to uplift students' role in engaging in ESL classes at UOSJP through changes in classroom behavior. It identified cooperative learning as an effective strategy when revised to context by using structured teamwork with permanent groups and regular routines (Phulpoto, Oad, & Imran, 2024). This method was used to improve student participation compared to outdated methods and addressed previous challenges in using effective communication strategies. This finding suggests that it would be possible for broader application in similar educational situations particularly in the field of resource-constrained environments. However, further improvement would be needed to engage quieter and less proficient students (panhwar & Rajper,2023).

Another study focuses on the most critical issue to be addressed is the usage of outdated approaches by various educational institutions while teaching English. Grammar translation approach gives the students a wide range of vocabulary, but sadly, the pupils speaking performance is not enhanced. Certain educators may choose the direct approach, in which gestures and English words are used to illustrate concepts without the need for translation. Student's communication abilities are enhanced by this strategy, but it leaves room for uncertainty because not everything can be translated (Imran, Zaidi, & Khanzada, 2023). Filtering out different teaching approaches and choosing those that produce better results for teachers and students is one way to tackle this issue (Imran, Zaidi, & Rehan, 2024). The teachers' credentials are paired with the third process barrier. The majority of language instructors lack the necessary training and credentials to instruct English language learners effectively. This may be due to the Pakistani government lack of interest in the educational system, particularly in the area of language instruction. As a result, language instruction given in classrooms is less effective.

According to Bajrami (2020), a teacher who truly wants to help his students should not only present them to different learning methodologies but also provide them with hands- on practice. To address this issue, more teacher training programmers should be promoted within

Pakistan. According to Kelly, Grenfell, and Brett (2002), decision- makers, teacher trainers, and educationists should determine the larger societal demands and implement institutional and organizational frameworks that can address the needs of both teachers and students. Thus, many institutional actions can be implemented by determining the fundamental requirements of the students in the sphere of English language acquisition.

## Research methodology

A qualitative approach was most appropriate method for this research. An observational study comparing five matriculation and five O-level students revealed a huge difference in English pronunciation and grammatical accuracy. The Matriculation students lean more towards, pronouncing English words with greater influence from their native language, as for example of these two words "schedule" and "government" which they pronounce "gorment" and "shedule". Furthermore, when the ten of them were given a task to make simple sentences, Matriculation students showed a higher occurrence of grammatical errors, and O-level students produced grammatically correct sentence.

## Research findings

Grammar versus communication: this Research indicates that traditional matriculation teaching methods often give importance to grammar rules and memorization, neglecting communicative skills. This could be the reasons that are responsible for the errors and pronunciation observed in the research. Conversely, an o-level system often focuses on communicative competence, and of course this helps in better fluency and accuracy.

Teacher training and resources: studies have shown that teacher training and their access to resources vary substantially between matriculation and o-level system, and because of this inequality the difference in teaching quality and student outcomes could be observed.

Socioeconomic factors: research hints that socioeconomic factors play a role in language acquisition. Students from privileged backgrounds often have greater exposure to English outside the classroom, potentially explaining the better performance of o-level students, who tend to come from more affluent backgrounds.

Assessment methods: the assessment methods employed in matriculation and o-level system differ. Matriculation exams often focus on memorizing the syllabus rather than understanding it (rote learning) and grammar which is traditional method, while o-level exams focuses on communicative skills, real-world application and understanding the syllabus rather than just memorizing it, which is modern teaching methods. This difference in feedback could influence teaching practices and students learning.

The findings highlight the need for a more comprehensive approach to English language teaching in Pakistan, so taking grammar and communication skills, teacher training, resources allocation, and socioeconomic factors into account would make a great difference.

The following research findings offer a compelling analysis of the conflict between traditional and modern teaching methods in Pakistan. It's clear that the emphasis on grammar over communication in matriculation, coupled with potential disparities in teacher training and resources, could contribute to the observed difference in student outcomes. The socioeconomic is also important in building the person's character, as students from more benefitted backgrounds often have more recognition and exposure outside the classroom than the less benefitted students. The way the feedback is given in these two different systems affects how the teacher teaches and how the students learn.

It's important to note that the summary of these findings need more comprehensive approach to English language teaching in Pakistan, one that should consider all these factors such as, grammar and communication skills, teacher training, resource allocation, and socioeconomic factors, also I belief that the most visible problem with the practice of English in Pakistan is the reluctance that most people and students exhibit when studying this language. They regard it as an alien language and devote less effort to studying or comprehending it. Most learners experience demotivation as a result of this behavior. According to research findings, motivation is one of the most important variables in an individual success when learning a second or foreign language. This ignorance can be reduced if the Pakistani government allocates more funds to organizing awareness workshops about the importance of the English language for the country however, this initiative may be effective to some extent.

**Conclusion**

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Through this study I've found a big difference between these two teaching methods, one traditional methods and the second modern teaching methods, so the second methods focus more on communication and student-centered learning while it contradicts a lot with the traditional teaching methods as it focuses on the rote learning and only grammar translation. This not only reflects variety of teaching beliefs but also results in notable differences in in language acquisition outcomes and ability of real world communication.

The important effect that instructional strategies have on students' English language competency is one of the study's main findings. Students with Traditional methods approaches frequently have competency gaps in conversational skills because of their emphasis on grammar rules and memorization. This is notably evident in comparison to students who are more use to modern approaches, where emphasis is put on practical language use and contextual understanding. The difference in outcomes between students in matriculation and O-level systems focuses on the critical role of pedagogical choices in shaping educational outcomes.

Additionally, the research has identified a number of contributing factors to continued use of traditional methods in Pakistani classrooms. Institutional inertia, lack of teacher training in modern approaches, unequal distribution of resources, and socio-economic variables affecting access to English language exposure outside of the classroom. Together these factors stop the adoption of more effective teaching methods that helps meet the changing demands of learners in a globalized society.

To have a control on these challenges a different strategy is needed. so the first is that the questionable need for teacher training programs which provide the students with experienced and knowledge of modern student-centered teaching methods effectively, and the other is including communicative language teaching methods into formal educational system, which helps in prioritizing language instruction in practical communication alongside grammatical competence.

Moreover, to bridge the divide between different educational systems and socio-economic backgrounds, we need to show some efforts to equalize the access to educational resources and opportunities. So including extracurricular activities outside classrooms helps in

English language proficiency.

Last but not least, government initiatives at the national level are very important for supporting these reforms and to guarantee their lasting implementation across different educational contexts in Pakistan. By fostering a more conducive environment for the adoption of modern teaching methodologies, policymakers can facilitate a transformative shift towards more effective English language education practices that empower learners to succeed in an interconnected world.

Concluding this, the conflict between these methods, traditional and modern teaching in Pakistan's English language classrooms continues so there is a chance to have a positive change, if these efforts are made such as, teacher training, curriculum reform, resource allocation, and policy development. Dealing with these challenges fully, Pakistan can enhance its educational landscape and better prepare students for linguistic competence and global engagement. This conclusion aims to encapsulate the key findings of my research while suggesting actionable recommendations for improving English language teaching practices in Pakistan.

**Implications of the Study**

The study highlights significant implications for English language education in Pakistan, emphasizing the need to address the conflict between traditional and modern teaching methods. The reliance on grammar and rote memorization in traditional approaches results in gaps in communicative competence, while modern methods foster better fluency and practical language use. The disparity in teacher training and resources further exacerbates these issues, influencing student outcomes and perpetuating socio-economic inequalities. To bridge these gaps, it is crucial to integrate communicative skills into the curriculum, enhance teacher training programs, and ensure equitable resource distribution. Additionally, acknowledging the socio-economic factors that impact language acquisition can help tailor interventions to support students from diverse backgrounds.

**Future Direction**

Future efforts should focus on reforming English language education in Pakistan to

create a balanced approach that incorporates both traditional and modern methodologies. This includes revising curricula to emphasize communicative competence alongside grammatical accuracy, expanding teacher training to cover modern pedagogical strategies, and improving resource allocation across educational systems. Policymakers should also address socio-economic disparities by promoting initiatives that enhance language exposure and motivation among students from underprivileged backgrounds. National-level support and awareness campaigns can further drive these reforms, fostering a more effective and inclusive English language education system that prepares students for global communication and engagement.

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