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# FACTORS AFFECTING QUALITY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTIONS IN PAKISTAN: A STUDY AT UNIVERSITY LEVEL IN SOUTHERN PUNJAB

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#### **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this research was to identify the factors contributing to the deteriorating input quality of English in universities. It was a poll of higher educational institutions in Punjab's southern province. There were 112 English teachers from public sector universities that participated in the survey. A survey with a Likert scale of five options was used to compile the information. Statistics were utilized to describe the data, primarily using averages and percentages. The results showed that the quality of instruction was diminished due to the following factors: the appointment of teachers on merit, the absence of co-curricular activities and teaching aids, the reliance on the traditional grammar translation method, the writing of compositions on black boards, the assignment of homework designed to be memorized by rote, the lack of refresher courses, the insufficient time spent using English for communication, the overloading of teachers, and the overcrowding of classrooms. The research suggests appointing, setting up workshops to motivate teachers and improve teaching methods, organizing extracurricular activities to improve students' speaking, listening, and writing skills, fostering students' creativity and writing abilities, giving teachers enough time to prepare lessons, limiting class sizes, and avoiding overcrowding.

**Keywords:** English Language, Quality, TEFL, curricular activities, teaching aids, GTM.

## INTRODUCTION

Since British colonizers conquered British India in the 18th century, the English language has taken on a greater role in the region. There would be no way to do international business or acquire an upto-date education in the West without it. Rauf and Saeed (2019) argue that language is the means through which a human conveys his thoughts and emotions to others. Therefore, the ability to read, write, and talk allows for the expression of ideas and opinions. There are four components to language learning: hearing, talking, reading and writing (Al-Mansoor, 2014). Pakistani students seeking STEM degrees in the West encounter many of the same obstacles as their peers from other developing countries. Those who are fluent in English can handle these sorts of situations with relative ease (Nino & Paez, 2018).

A great education is one that produces valuable results, but which also takes into account the contributions of the institution's faculty, course offerings, and surrounding community (Chishti, 2011). Great education necessitates a quality student body, classroom, curriculum, pedagogy, and outcomes (GoP, 2016). Good education also necessitates a well-designed classroom, well-maintained classroom facilities, and strong institutional backing. English is both an official and de facto second language in Pakistan. In its constitution of 1973, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan established English as the country's official language. The National Education Policy of 2009 recommended a gradual

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transition to English as the medium of teaching and the use of English as mandatory language at all educational levels (GoP, 2009). In Pakistan, university students must take English as one of their required subjects. People in Pakistan speak a wide variety of languages, and they frequently translate between them (Rukh, 2014). This tendency of switching between Urdu and English, known as "code switching" is extremely widespread in Pakistan (Fareed et al., 2016). University English classes also make use of code switching for the purposes of vocab development, classroom management, and student-teacher interaction.

In Pakistan, students in grades 6-12 can enroll in what is called Secondary Education (SE). SE not only keeps pupils, but also guides them in a very precise route with their studies (Arain, 2019). SE is the backbone of a student's education and, as such, has significant influence over their development as people. Since the 18th amendment to Pakistan's constitution in 1973, education has been devolved to the provinces. The province developed some new Universities (GoP, 2019).

The universities students can't easily converse in English due to the low quality of English instruction they receive (Awan & Shafi, 2016). Pressure to turn out English language experts is currently the greatest obstacle (Dar, 2019). While there are several approaches to language learning, one of the most successful is via expanding one's vocabulary (Ali & Zaki, 2019). The grammar-translation method is used to teach English at university level. Texts that have been reproduced are being distributed as reading material, but translation is no more than a rehash and cannot inspire original thought (Awan & Hiraj, 2016). The quality of English being fed into the system in Southern Punjab is low. Even though they passed matriculation and intermediate exams, the students' speech and writing skills did not seem to be adequate. Because of this, it is important to investigate the educational system and its contributing factors. This research will look into why the standard of universities English education has been deteriorating.

#### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Khan and Khan (2020) found that most KPK universities pupils lacked competency in English and only had a limited grasp of the language. The majority of those surveyed had significant comprehension and production gaps across all four language domains. However, despite studying English for almost years, twelve they still had trouble communicating. The lack of opportunity to use one's linguistic skills was the root cause of the issue.

The names Arain et al., (2019) investigated the universities in Southern Punjab and discovered that teachers lacked subject-matter expertise and were dissatisfied with the current state of affairs. Teachers were gossiping instead of teaching, and the required curriculum didn't make much sense. According to Akhtar et al., (2019) research on factors impacting English speaking ability in southern Punjab, universities lacked libraries to refer books from and inappropriately treated the teachers. Students' ability to master public speaking was hampered by overcrowding in the classroom and a lack of extracurricular activities such as debates and speeches.

Moghal et al., (2019) research found that crowded classrooms cause issues such insufficient desk space, bathroom lines, and access to technology. Due to class sizes being too large, issues with individual attention, assessment, and communication between teachers and students as well as among students themselves arose. Because of these factors, the English classroom as a whole was impacted. Rawalpindi district research by Arshad et al., (2019) found that pupils' performance improved when universities had facilities including open classrooms, playgrounds, and gardens. The classroom and university environment, teaching methods, safety and security, discipline, AV aids, electricity, and classroom furnishings all have a favourable effect on students' academic development. The usage of the native tongue in the classroom also had a beneficial effect.

In their research, Ghulamullah and Hamzah (2017) discovered that the articulation system of Pakistani speakers' native language differed from that of their target language, leading to challenges with intelligibility and comprehensibility. Pronunciation materials and English teachers who can actually teach are rarities. Buriro et al., (2017) found that the educational system in Southern Punjab suffered from a shortage of qualified teachers and a poor educational environment. Both the kids and the institutions suffered from a severe shortage of writing abilities and necessary resources. The quality was far lower than in metropolitan areas, and many teachers lacked adequate education and experience. As pupils progress to the next level of examinations, the quality gaps they encountered in middle university became increasingly important.

Researchers Khan and Khan (2016) discovered little enthusiasm among Punjab provincial universities students and teachers to improve their English language skills. Lack of training and unsupportive attitudes among teachers was a common problem. In addition, none of the pupils' first languages was Urdu, making English their third language. The quality of English instruction was found to be negatively impacted by instructors' lack of linguistic competence in areas such as grammar, vocabulary, writing anxiety, and lack of ideas (Fareed et al., 2016). The university system was poorly organized, and unqualified educators utilized ineffective teaching strategies. Major problems included insufficient reading and writing instruction, overcrowding, and a lack of student enthusiasm.

The study by Dar et al., (2014) in Southern Punjab indicated that the teachers there mostly emphasized reading and writing and employed a grammar translation method. In addition, the teacher's modelled reading comprehension was deemed adequate. Writing of spellings and short vocabulary were taught as part of the language learning activities. The faculty lacked enough preparation for their roles. According to Bashiruddin and Qayyum (2014), English teachers in Pakistan are not required to have a background in the language or culture, but rather follow administrative directives to teach the subject. They taught English in much the same way as they had been taught it. There was no set procedure for selecting English language experts. According to a study conducted by Arain et al., (2021) in Indian elementary universities, the standard of English instruction is negatively impacted due to a lack of specialized language training and adequate assessment. The textbooks were also discovered to have curricular holes. Lack of audiovisual aids and incentives hampered the development of an optimal setting for English language study. Tarique et al., (2013) found that due to poverty and parental illiteracy, rural communities were not conducive to the development of English language skills. They cared very little about their children's universities. The children's success in university was heavily influenced by their families' socioeconomic status, cultural norms, and cultural milieu.

#### **Research Ouestions**

The objectives of the current study are covered through following research questions to give specific direction to the research. The research questions of the study were: (a) what are the issues that tail off the teaching quality of English in universities of Southern Punjab? and (b) what may be the solution of the issues found that reduce the quality of teaching English in universities of Southern Punjab?

#### **METHODOLOGY**

Findings and conclusions about the factors contributing to the deteriorating quality of English instruction in universities were the primary focus of this literature review. The current study (Gay, 2012) was a survey in which data was collected using a five-point Likert-type questionnaire divided into two parts: part I asked respondents about demographic information, while part II asked about their education, job title, and the average number of classes they teach each day. Part II of the exam had 16 multiple-choice questions. The questionnaire inquired into such matters as instructional materials, strategies, contexts, etc. Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Undecided (UD), Disagreed (DA), and Strongly Disagreed (SD) were the five possible responses (SDA). All of the data from the population at large was collected, and then a representative sample was selected. The questionnaire was piloted with ten percent of the sample size (11) and revised based on their feedback. Since the questionnaire was distributed during in-person visits to each university, we were able to get a response rate of one hundred percent. Analysis of the data was preceded by the use of descriptive statistics, such as percentages and mean scores. The results were analyzed and suggestions were offered.

**Population and Sample:** The study used a cluster sampling technique to collect data from 03 universities, split evenly between boys and girls. The sample included English teachers who taught university classes.

#### **RESULTS**

It turns out that most teachers are not well in English speaking and writing. They are just equipped with degrees.

Table No. 1. Use of Audio Visual Aids

Statement	Mean	SD
Use of Audio visual aids in class	4.19	.928
Provision of library books to students.	4.15	.816
Provision of dictionaries, story books	4.02	.987

Results showed that they did not use AV aids in teaching English. Teachers admitted that their students did not have access to library books for research. Teachers who were asked said they didn't give pupils access to dictionaries and storybooks. Most universities lacked the resources to purchase or regularly use audiovisual tools, therefore these were not utilized in the classrooms. It was easy to arrange for visual and auditory assistance like charts, recordings, and photographs. The vast majority of respondents said that kids did not have access to library books, whereas a very small percentage said that pupils did have access to library books. Despite the fact that libraries existed in the vast majority of classrooms, few students actually used them. That's why this is such a pressing problem. While some teachers did help their English students improve by giving them dictionaries and children's books, the vast majority did not. Better English instruction could result from kids developing a taste for dictionaries and fiction.

Table No. 2. Co-Curricular Activities

Statement	Mean	SD
Debates in the university	4.18	1.038
Arrangement of quiz competition	3.17	1.289
Speech competitions in the class or university	4.14	.978

The data analysis shows that their universities hosted debating competitions. Competitions in the form of quizzes were set up between the classes. There was never a class or university-wide speech contest. The majority of students surveyed reported that their universities lacked opportunities to participate in debate competitions, despite the proven effectiveness of such events in improving students' linguistic abilities. Most teachers stated that they had never had a quiz competition in class, missing an opportunity to pique their pupils' interest in the subject matter. Almost three-quarters of students said no speech contests were held at their university or in their classes; this is a far smaller percentage than the size that planned such events. There was a squandered opportunity to boost kids' linguistic abilities and enthusiasm through these exercises.

Table No. 3. English Language Teaching Methodology

Statement	Mean	SD
Writing composition on class board.	4.26	.816
Using grammar translation method.	3.86	1.012
Drill of past years question papers in class.	3.97	1.045
Assigning the lessons to memorize.	4.00	.972

According to the statistics, they used a blackboard to compose their essays and other assignments. The students were taught using a grammar-translation approach. In the past, teachers frequently used students' papers from the previous year as a form of review. Memorizing what the teachers taught was a requirement. Three-quarters of the black board was taken up by articles written by teachers, while the remaining quarter was used to stimulate student writing. It was a really significant point. Nearly half of the educators surveyed utilized some form of non-technical translation of grammatical terms into student-friendly language, making this approach a virtual tie with the more commonplace traditional method. Three-quarters of teachers regularly used last year's articles as a teaching resource, while one-fourth did not. The vast majority of educators formerly tasked students with memorization, whereas the minority did not. To learn the language, you must reach this point. In order to understand the true state of education, one must read the above four queries together.

**Table No. 4. Teachers Training** 

Statement	Mean	SD
Attending refresher course regarding English.	4.16	.862
Using English for communication in the class.	4.32	.893
Teaching science subjects except English.	3.56	1.230
The classes are overcrowded.	4.37	.834
More than fifty minutes English class duration.	4.10	.664
Teaching English two credit hours daily.	3.65	1.110

Based on the available data, it is clear that teachers did not have access to the required refresher training. Conversation in class was conducted entirely in English. All disciplines in the sciences were taught by the teachers except English. The classrooms were too crowded. Periods in English lasted longer than fifty minutes. Two credit hours of English were required to be taught every day. Data analysis reveals that even though opportunities for refresher courses were made available to all relevant teachers, the vast majority of teachers were unable to take advantage of them. A sizable minority of students did not make regular use of the English language during class discussions. Many of the universities teachers had a background in science and focused on educating students in that field alongside English. Consequently, it resulted in an excessive amount of work and a decrease in time available for planning lessons in English. Evidence of this is also provided by the data presented in Part I. Since a sizable proportion of children have experienced overcrowding, teachers may need to employ alternative strategies to effectively educate their kids. According to the vast majority of classroom instructors, first period runs longer than fifty minutes. It's possible that having a class session that's a little longer would bore the children to tears. English teachers often have two class periods every day to teach their subject. Universities sessions may last for 50 to 130 minutes every credit hour, and teachers may have an extra hour per day, twice a week, to prepare for tests and other classroom activities. The learners' ability to study suffered, and the teachers' energy levels dwindled as a result. The answers to the above six questions are most helpful when read in tandem.

#### **DISCUSSION**

For starters, most of the English teachers were actually from science background who saw no use in learning the language. Roughly half of the universities in Southern Punjab had an inadequate number of trained English teachers (RSU, 2013; Dar, 2014). In a perfect world, UTs would be the ones responsible for teaching English, but since there aren't enough of them; science teachers have been tasked with the extra work. Despite their education and expertise, teaching English requires a background in the language and literature of the United Kingdom.

Second, these tools for instruction were underutilized in classrooms. Lack of resources for English teachers in Pakistan was also reported by Ahmad (2013) and Teen (2011). Although charts and other visual aids might be easily prepared, they were rarely used in the English classes I taught. Since the actual scenario of the issue may be conveyed using AV aids, which is absent in the lecture style, the students' curiosity is piqued and their understanding is strengthened (Mishap, 2014).

Third, the library books were only available in limited quantities. Lack of access to libraries was also cited by Akhtar (2019) as a problem that degrades the standard of education. However, children who read English newspapers improve their language skills, and the big universities have good libraries that aren't effective since the immediate management doesn't know how to use libraries (Raja, 2011). The storybooks and dictionaries were also not presented. The students' reading proficiency could be enhanced through the availability of library books, supplementary story books, and dictionaries. Without any supplementary materials or help from their lecturers, children are only able to retain a moderate amount of what they learn. Both the universities and the teachers there don't seem to realize how much of an impact motivation, involvement, and creativity can have on students' learning.

Fourth, debates, quizzes, and speech competitions weren't regularly scheduled in the universities. Co-curricular activities like as quizzes, debates, etc. were also lacking at the universities level, according to Akhtar et al. (2019). The pupils' ability to communicate and acquire a new language was aided by their participation in these extracurricular activities. This indicates that either the teachers or administration were unaware of the activities or that the conditions were unfavourable

for them to occur. Such exercises, which have been shown to improve language acquisition and simulate realistic competitive situations, could be incorporated into formal curriculum. Students' academic, social, mental, and moral development is all boosted by their participation in extracurricular activities (Farman, 2018).

In fifth place, most composition assignments were written by teachers on the Whiteboard, and pupils simply copied them into their notebooks. In this way, they checked off the formality of completing the course objectives allotted to them, but it limited the pupils and did little to strengthen the learners' writing skills. Teachers could employ a process-oriented strategy that puts more emphasis on the steps students take as they create a piece of writing than on the final product (Azodi, 2020). The majority of the course was taught via the translation grammar approach. Teachers reportedly employed the grammar translation technique, placing a premium on reading and writing skills solely, as reported by Dar et al. (2014). It's possible that a more modern approach wouldn't improve the quality of learning any more than this more conventional one. The potential for a higher standard of instruction exists due to the method's focus on the classroom teacher. The lesson was read aloud by the instructor, who also provided a translation into the native tongue. The students followed suit, learning the material by heart. Teachers also had students practice with old exam papers from previous years. Students were tasked with cramming for exams by memorizing teachings, essays, summaries, and explanations. The learners were able to pass the tests, but they had no real capacity for learning. They failed to even pass the test of being able to create an application or write a few lines on a novel topic. Lacking in the assignment was teacher-created activities.

Sixth, about half of the faculty did not have access to in-service training, with some having to repeat the same courses again. Favoritism was used to select instructors for in-service training (Arain, 2019), and teachers' failure to communicate with students in English demonstrates a lack of ability, confidence, and enthusiasm in the subject matter. The students' listening skills suffered, and they became less confident as a result. While code-switching is unavoidable in some situations, a more positive atmosphere can be fostered through the usage of English. The issue of overcrowding in the classrooms was critical at the time. Some classrooms had over a hundred pupils, making it challenging to provide each kid with individualized attention and to organize group activities and competitions. Having too many students in one classroom is an issue that Moghal et al. (2019) also found to be present in universities. All of these issues required to be examined in tandem in order to get at the root causes of the decline in educational quality.

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study found that teachers were not equipped with teaching aids and used to teach English, library books were not used, students were not given access to dictionaries or story books, traditional translation grammar was used, white boards were written in the same way every year, and students were asked to memories the same material from the previous year out of habit rather than because it was new. The quality of higher education in the province of Southern Punjab was found to be lacking for a number of reasons, including a lack of refresher courses, the absence of the use of English in classes as a means of communication, an excessive workload for teachers posed by the requirement to instruct science subjects in English, and overcrowded classrooms. The research suggests hiring English teachers with advanced degrees in literature or linguistics having out class spoken and written expertise. Teachers should be provided with opportunities for professional development; seminars should be held to convince teachers and administrators of the necessity of English language instruction; debates, quizzes, and speech competitions should be organized to improve students' abilities to express themselves orally and in writing; teachers should be given adequate time for lesson planning and not be overworked; class sizes should be kept small; and students should be encouraged to use their imaginations and develop their writing and speaking skills. If Universities implements these suggestions, it will be able to create a learning environment that is both inspiring and conducive to student innovation, greatly increasing the likelihood that those outcomes will be achieved. It will help students improve their English language skills in all areas, especially reading, writing, listening, and speaking. It has been proposed that mandatory teacher refresher courses be implemented to improve educator competence. Improvements such as this are essential if we want to see English classes improve.

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