

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN HIRING POLICIES AND CLASSROOM PRACTICES: A CRITICAL STUDY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHER PROFILES IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS OF QASIMABAD, HYDERABAD

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Abstract

This study critically examines the alignment between official and implicit hiring policies and the professional profiles of English language teachers (ELTs) employed in public and private schools in Qasimabad, Hyderabad, Pakistan. Employing a qualitative case study approach, the research investigates discrepancies between documented hiring criteria and actual recruitment practices, with a focus on teachers' qualifications, pedagogical competencies, and classroom effectiveness.

Data were triangulated using three sources: (1) job advertisement analyses to explore formal policy expectations; (2) semi-structured interviews with school administrators and teachers to capture implicit hiring rationales; and (3) classroom observations to evaluate instructional practices. Findings reveal that although formal hiring emphasizes qualifications and subject expertise, implicit hiring often prioritizes communicative fluency and general experience over pedagogical training.

Moreover, observations expose significant pedagogical gaps among teachers, particularly in the areas of instructional design, classroom management, and learner engagement. A critical shortage of pre-service and in-service training, coupled with limited access to continuous professional development, further hinders teaching effectiveness.

The study recommends a comprehensive reform of ELT recruitment and development policies, advocating for the integration of pedagogical training, standardized teacher assessments, and continuous professional development to ensure quality English language education in both public and private sectors.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching English in Pakistan has faced many challenges. These issues stem from inconsistent language policies since the country was established. English was introduced as a second language and became an essential part of the education system. However, instead of being taught as a language for communication, it is often treated as just another

subject, like science or mathematics. Many studies, like Yasmin (2018), say that students often memorize English instead of truly learning it. This makes it hard for them to use the language well and affects their learning process. This poor learning environment is influenced by hiring non-certified teachers who are not specially trained in language pedagogical skills.

Therefore, the right language instructors should be hired, and they should be provided with special language pedagogical training so that they can practice skills appropriately. (Din,2010). Just as you need the right medicine for a specific illness, hiring the right teacher for each subject is vital for effective learning. Recently, language education has received more attention, especially English teaching. English is recognized as a global language and plays a key role in international trade, diplomacy, media, and scientific research (Rao, 2019). In Pakistan, it holds the status of an official language, yet its teaching and learning are accompanied by numerous challenges. (Nasir, 2022) points out that issues such as inadequate facilities, outdated teaching methods, and a shortage of skilled teachers hold back effective English language education. Also, many learners show a general lack of interest. This research examines how schools hire English teachers, the official qualifications required, and the actual process behind hiring decisions. Schools list requirements for hiring teachers. However, in practice, they often choose candidates based on fluency, general teaching experience, or availability. Subject specialization and proper training are not always prioritized. To understand these gaps, this study examines the profile of an English teacher, focusing on their qualifications, experience, and teaching skills.

The research investigates how well hiring policies align with actual hiring practices. It also examines whether English teachers have the necessary qualifications and training to effectively teach the language. To achieve this, data was collected through job advertisement reviews, interviews with school principals and teachers, and classroom observations. The findings reveal

that there is a clear gap between what is officially required and what happens in practice. Many teachers do not have specialized training in English teaching, which affects the quality of education. This research shows that Pakistan needs clear hiring policies and standardized language tests. Ongoing teacher training, especially in language pedagogy, is also vital for better English education.

Limitations of the study

The context of the research is specified in a particular region of Hyderabad (Sindh, Pakistan). The manual data has been successfully collected from six government and private schools of the Qasimabad Hyderabad. It does not provide generalized results to represent and interpret the hiring policy and pedagogical practices of ELTs all over Pakistan. It is one of the most interesting and quite productive topics to discuss and explore in the field of educational research and is open for further study on a broader level

Profile of an English Teacher: The profile of an English language teacher refers to the emulsion of personal, and professional, proficiency in language, pedagogy, skills, and qualifications.

Written policy: A written policy is a clear, formal documented set of rules and best practices written by organizations/institutions for their employees.

Practiced policy: Practiced policy can be more informal and reflect actual behaviors and actions that people within that organization carry out, which may or may not fully align with the written policy.

Literature Review

1 Introduction to English Language Teaching in Pakistan

The history of the English language in Pakistan dates to the British colonial era (1858– 1947), when the language was established as the official means of communication for trade, government, and education in the subcontinent. “English has been present in the subcontinent way before the birth of Pakistan”(khan, n.d.). Along with Urdu, the official language, English had been an important part of the education system even after the country came into being in

1947. Despite having English as the medium of Instruction in Pakistan there is still so much confusion in written and practice policies of the English language. As khan, n.d said that “Pakistan does not have a clear policy on ‘English in education’”. According to the National Educational Policy Framework NEPF 2018 there are three types of educational sectors in Pakistan: Public, Private, and madrassahs. “Out of the three school types, only private schools are known to integrate English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) and give emphasis on its

use. This inconsistency is primarily due to the gaps in teacher qualification, training, and practical implementation of education policy.

Profile of English Language Teachers in Pakistan

Park and Lee (2006) and Çelik et al. (2013) as mentioned by (Turan Paker) states, the profile of an English language teacher refers to the emulsion of personal, professional, proficiency in language, pedagogy, skills, and qualifications that empower productive teaching and learning of English as a second or foreign language." It is more like a language teacher should be a jack-of-all-trades in the language teaching area. The gap between the desired qualifications and the actual Profiles of English teachers in Pakistan is threatening. According to data which was provided by Agha Khan University merely 20% of service teachers are to some extent qualified to teach English because they are equipped with some professional qualifications. The rest of the 80% do not have qualifications to teach English. Even though there are teachers in the Pakistani context who cannot speak English properly as Dearden's report (2014) indicates "44% of the teachers teaching in EMI contexts in Pakistan demonstrate lower to pre-intermediate levels of English.

Teacher Qualifications and Hiring Practices Globally and in Pakistan

Hiring processes in countries like Japan, China, South Korea, and Germany, have a more thorough process than Pakistan. They require teachers to pass competitive exams, have a bachelor's degree in English or education, ELT certifications, and complete training programs. Yamasaki, H. in his article enunciates that Japan requires teachers to pass a national teaching certification exam. In these countries hiring processes ensure that teachers are not only fluent in English but also skilled in teaching and pedagogy. After the selection processes, in-service trainings are given to newly recruited teachers. As for the English language teachers, in addition to rigorous tests, they are required to have native-like proficiency with TOEFL, and TEFL certification. In contrast, Pakistan's hiring process for English teachers is less rigorous. Teachers are often hired based on their fluency in English rather than their specialized

training in English language teaching. As (Bashiruddin, n.d.) notes, "Unfortunately, in Pakistan, the educational background of most of the teachers is not relevant to teaching English." This lack of formal qualifications among English teachers in Pakistan has led to a significant concern about the quality of English education, as teachers are unprepared to deliver effective language instruction.

Challenges in Implementing Written Policies in Practice

However, the implications are quite opposite to the written policy as (Awan, n.d.) says "The reality is quite the opposite as despite having textbooks written in English most of the classroom instruction is carried out in Urdu which is the national language of Pakistan". "This disconnect between policy and practice extends to the hiring and training of teachers. While official policies may emphasize the importance of hiring qualified English teachers in practice, schools often hire teachers based on their fluency in English or their ability to teach other subjects. This inconsistency in policy implementation has huge implications for the overall quality of English language education in Pakistan.

Why Teachers opt for this Profession?

It is important to know why teachers choose this profession. Oplatka (2007) and Barrs (2005) (as mentioned by (Bashiruddin, n.d.)) stated that family played a major role in the career choice of female Pakistani teachers. The lack of other occupational opportunities is another reason why people join the teaching profession. Hedges (2002) (as mentioned by Bashiruddin, n.d.) enunciates that those who became teachers due to a lack of other opportunities were likely to have a lower level of commitment to teaching than those who gave other reasons. Some started teaching because they were interested in teaching English. Some started teaching because they were asked by school administrators. Most of the teachers have economic reasons for joining this profession. Under such circumstances, it is likely that the motivation levels, will, and sincerity of teachers will be low.

Pedagogical practices and their importance in effective language teaching

The lack of professional development training further increases this issue. English proficiency cannot be equated with language pedagogy. Warsi (2004) interestingly quotes David Crystal's illustration given for the necessity of pedagogic training, "For being an efficacious cardiologist only having a heart is not enough." One needs professional learning and practice. This is the same case in language pedagogy, proficiency in English does not seem enough, and one needs to have some strategic language teaching practices to effectively implement in the EL classroom. The absence of such training is a significant barrier to quality English instruction. Teachers often rely on rote learning; focus on completing the syllabus and preparing students for exams rather than focusing on communicative and interactive language skills. Nawab (2012) argues that this focus on memorization over skill development is a direct result of teacher's lack of pedagogical training, which limits their ability to engage students in meaningful language learning experiences.

Teacher Development Programs in Pakistan

Pakistan can improve its education system when the hiring process is proper and teachers are trained properly like Japanese teacher training. In Pakistan, some schooling system such as Beacon house School and some nonprofit organizations like RELO (Regional English Language Office) provides Teacher Development Programs" but still there is not much improvement.

Tunio (2012) reports that there are some teacher training programs initiated by the Government of Pakistan that are not effectively working because teachers are trained with theoretical knowledge which is insufficient to cope with existing challenges in language teaching. There is an emergent need to

pledge effective training programs for language teachers to enhance their expertise. It is argued that effective training programs can only be witnessed if they are carried out continuously. (Tunio, 2012)

Research Questions

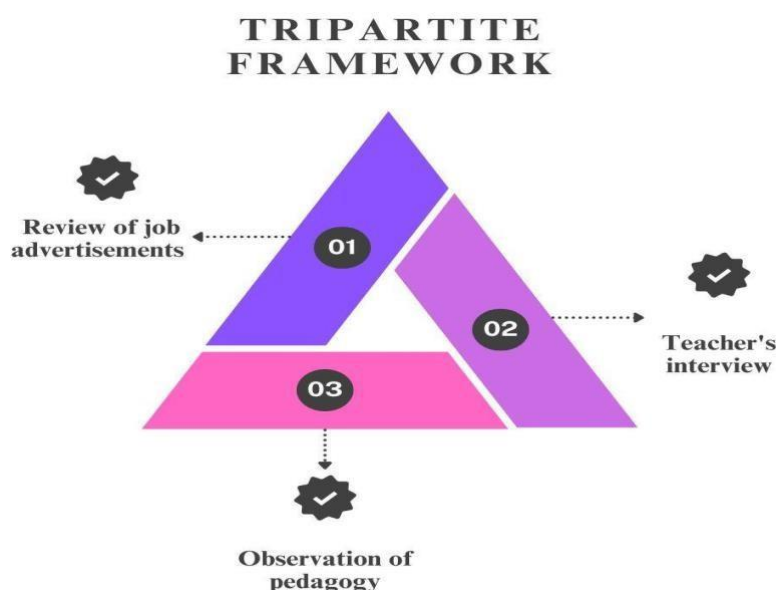
What formal and informal hiring criteria are used to recruit English language teachers in public and private schools in Qasimabad, Hyderabad?

What are the observable gaps between the stated profiles of ELTs and their actual teaching performance in the classroom?

Methodology:

This study employed a qualitative research approach to investigate the profile of English teachers, hiring policy, and its actual practice in the government and private sectors of Qasimabad (Hyderabad). This research focuses on three main components using multiple tools. Firstly, the advertisements have been reviewed to analyze written hiring policies of the government and private sectors. Secondly, the Semi-structured interviews were conducted with School Heads/Administration (n=6) to explore hiring practices to align with actual hiring written policies. Another interview has been conducted with Teachers (n=6) of the 8th class to understand their profile based on whether they are being hired for the right subject. Thirdly, non-participant observations in 8th-grade classes of government and private sectors have been taken to verify alignment between the teacher's interview statements to their overall profile and the pedagogical skills they are executing in the English Classroom.

This study provides an in-depth understanding of hiring policy and practices, and teacher's profiles aligned to their teaching pedagogy in the public and private schooling system of Qasimabad, Hyderabad.



The Purpose of the Tripartite Framework

As mentioned above, this study employs a qualitative method using multiple tools to align the collected data with the main research objective accurately. Three main tools contributed to pilling up the data:

1: Review of job advertisements and School administrator's interviews:

This study focuses on knowing and critically analyzing the explicit/ direct teacher hiring policy priority for reviewing some of the job advertisements taken through LinkedIn pages. It was aimed to know about the explicit or official decisions made while they required appointing an English teacher in school. Secondly, to align the reviewed data, the school's administrators were interviewed to explore and interpret the hiring policy. This session was focused on ensuring whether the explicit or written hiring policy is equally or contradictory practiced in school systems.

Teacher's interview:

The second round of the data collection process was concerned with interviewing teachers who were appointed specially as English teachers or implicitly assigned to teach English subjects. It was aimed to know the actual profile (qualification/degree, experience, qualities, certification, proficiency...) to align the data with hiring advertisements and administrator's interviews to decide whether they are

rightly hired for teaching English or practice shows something else.

Observation of pedagogy:

The third step was mainly concerned with observing the attributes of English teachers of 8th grade to experience their teaching methodology, philosophies, and communication style. It was aimed at aligning the data taken into interviews (abstract ideologies/statements) with their real pedagogical skills in a practical situation.

The main concern of formulating the "Tripartite framework" is to collect data in the right direction. Many researchers have investigated various aspects of the profile of English teachers.

They have shredded light on their different components. However, despite this knowledge, there's a noticeable gap: no one has combined and thoroughly examined how all these pieces connect and intersect. This study aims to connect 3 dots (hiring policies, real profile of English teachers, and language pedagogical skills) and provide one single picture.

The present research aims to fill that gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of all three main components collectively. These combined factors helped us gain a detailed understanding of the causes that are leading to the hiring and profiling problems. This combined approach contributes a fresh and new view that can help us better grasp its complexities.

This shows how the system and explicit policies impact positively/ negatively what is happening inside the EL classroom which directly leads to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the education system in the ESL context.

Data Analysis

This study employed a qualitative approach to examine the data from advertisements, interviews, and observations. First, the schools' advertisements regarding their hiring policies were reviewed through multiple readings, and notes were taken on the specific requirements mentioned in each advertisement, such as qualifications, language teaching certification, and language skills.

Next, thematic analysis was used to examine the interview data from principals and teachers. An online app was used to transcribe the data, which was then coded, and themes were identified.

The themes were subsequently refined, explained, and presented in the findings section. Finally, a checklist

was developed to guide classroom observations. The observation data was analyzed by reviewing the complete checklist and matching it with the interview findings. To ensure the accuracy of overall findings, we compared interview responses with observation data and advertisements.

Findings

The findings from the advertisement review, interview thematic analysis, and observation analysis were integrated to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. The use of multiple data sources allowed triangulation, increasing the validity of the findings.

The findings presented below are derived from our review, observational, and interview data, focusing on the pedagogical practices and profiles of the teachers. Further, the findings have been discussed in the discussion part.

Interpretation of the Hiring policy and profile of English teacher

Hiring policy	Subject distribution policy
Professional degree and certification of teaching English	Teaching philosophies and approaches
Language proficiency and confidence level	The latest teaching trends for professional growth
Lack of standardized proficiency testing	In service training

Discussion

Interview Findings from the Principal

The following discussion has been conducted and critically analyzed to answer the first research Question of the study:

Hiring policy

Teacher hiring policies focus on certain qualifications and selection criteria. However, gaps remain between what is required and who is actually hired. This may affect the quality of education. "A successful recruitment policy ensures the selection of competent and qualified teachers for the education as well as the overall development of students". (Azam& Durrani, 2024).

To understand how teachers are hired. We reviewed job advertisements from different schools, and school principals were interviewed. Additionally, classroom observations provided insight into how these hiring

decisions translated into real teaching performance. Schools set different requirements for hiring teachers. Some schools emphasize subject-specific qualifications, while others prioritize experience and English fluency. In some cases, teachers must pass standardized tests before they are hired. For example, government schools require candidates to take specific government tests. Private schools have more varied requirements. Some prefer teachers experienced in international curricula, like American or British systems. Others want a bachelor's degree along with 2–3 years of experience or a B.Ed. degree.

The government school's Principals responded that teacher recruitment is based on a test conducted by the government or IBA. For instance, the Principal of GS1 mentioned

"All teachers are hired based on an aptitude test which is conducted by IBA", This confirms that standardized

testing plays a key role in the selection process in public schools.

The Principal of PS1 answered that the school committee or senior faculty select and appoint the teachers, and they select them after examining their fluency, accuracy, experience, and proficiency in the language. As he stated, "Subject expertise is the first and foremost point which should be considered as a significant factor. There should be skills that he should endorse and should be skillful to impart knowledge in the class". When we observed the teaching of their teacher, it somehow reflected the words of the principal but besides having international qualifications, the teacher was unable to teach effectively, and students were sleeping in his class.

On the other hand, the Principal of PS3 mentioned that he personally conducts interviews and selects the teacher as he stated, "a teacher must be qualified, and he must have, you see, very much relevant experience and degree also. And he must be very fluent as well besides that. And his voice must be very clear to be understood. So, considering these are qualities, I appoint the teacher, and he must be very sincere towards the job". The Principal of PS2 responded "We prefer the teacher who must be MA qualified if he/she is not experienced", whereas the interview from the teacher showed that she was not an English teacher as she stated, "I'm MA in economics".

Teachers in both government and private schools have at least a bachelor's degree. However, there is a gap between the subjects they are hired to teach and what they actually teach. We'll discuss this gap in the next theme. Schools often select teachers primarily for their English fluency. They meet the requirements of a well-qualified teacher. However, they overlook the importance of proficiency and fluency in practice. This means that schools have clear hiring policies, but they don't always follow them in practice. Schools value qualifications, but other factors matter too. For instance, being fluent in English and doing well in interviews can matter more than knowing the subject. This means that a teacher might be hired based on their communication skills rather than their deep knowledge of a subject. Additionally, some teachers are hired for subjects that do not match their actual qualifications. Having the right qualifications is

important. However, it doesn't always mean a teacher will be effective in the classroom. Some qualified teachers struggled to engage their students. This raises concerns about how schools evaluate teaching skills in hiring. Researchers like Bruns and Luque (2014) and OECD (2018) support this. "Hiring policies should not only focus on qualifications but also ensure that teachers have the skills to effectively deliver lessons and improve student learning outcomes". In other words, schools should think about a teacher's education and how well they connect with students. This balance is key for effective learning.

Subject Distribution Policy

Another question was asked regarding the subject distribution policy that after appointing a teacher how they distribute the subjects to the specific teacher so GS1's Principal stated, "If we face a shortage of teachers, then we ask to newly appoint teachers that if they are capable to teach any subject other than their own as like English or something". Similar kinds of responses were given by GS3, PS2 and PS3's Principals, PS2's Principal mentioned "We distribute the subject if they are not specially qualified in English but are proficient enough" The Principal of PS3 stated, "We have assigned an English subject to the teacher who is a science graduate who is teaching English in class 7th". The principal of PS3 stated "we distribute the subject if they are not specially qualified in English but are proficient enough." These overall findings suggest that while written policies/advertisements focus on qualifications, specialization, and proficiency, implicit practices often prioritize immediate needs, perceived abilities, and staffing constraints. This misalignment between written policies and implicit practices undermines the overall purpose of hiring qualified and capable teachers in both government and private schools. Apart from this, the principal of PS1 stated "we distribute the subject as per hiring and we don't allocate subjects from our own", GS2'S principal said; "distribution of subject is done at the time of appointment and teachers teach the subjects of their own field". It shows that in these schools a teacher is usually appointed for a specific subject, if the school requires an English teacher, then they advertise it and appoint interested candidates to teach the subject

Interview Findings from Teachers

The profile of English teachers in relation to language pedagogical skills: This section aims to critically answer the second research question. It involves various themes conceptualized to examine and understand the discrepancy/gap between a teacher's profile and practical pedagogical skills.

Professional degree & Certification in teaching English

The present data justifies that teachers in both government and private schools were qualified from diverse educational backgrounds and lack any professional degree and certification in English. As the PS2 teacher explicitly stated, "I am an MA in economics" and GS1's teacher shared "I have done BS in telecom." Undoubtedly, these degrees are highly valuable in their own right but do not match the specific needs of English language teaching, where subject specialization is crucial for effective instruction. On the other hand there were teachers who had the degree in English linguistics/literature as like a teacher at PS3 stated, "Apart from my degree in English Language and Literature, I haven't got any kind of certificates from any center or something like that..."

It is argued that mostly all were deprived from any specific training or certifications for teaching English. It has been evidenced that "English language teachers in the Pakistani context are not primarily language teachers" (Awan, n.d.). While some teachers hold degrees in English, others

come from entirely different academic fields. (Awan, n.d). pointed out that there is a gap in the education of teachers who are assigned to work in English medium educational contexts.

Moreover the data proves that those teachers who possessed a degree in English Linguistics/Literature still are not properly implementing their qualifications in real classroom situations, because for language teaching a pedagogue must be specifically trained, skilled, and certified to teach English as a skill rather than only as a theoretical knowledge. This is also supported by many previous studies that, 'Having proficiency in language doesn't mean you can teach too'. Warsi (2004) interestingly quotes David Crystal's illustration given for the necessity of pedagogic

training and certification, "For being an efficacious cardiologist only having a heart is not enough." One needs professional learning and practice. This is the same case in language pedagogy, proficiency or degree in English does not seem enough, and one needs to have some strategic language teaching certifications and ongoing training to effectively implement the skills in the EL classroom.

Teaching Philosophies and Approaches

It is argued that an EL teacher should have and identify with impressive teaching philosophies that ensure their abstract ideologies to be brought systematically into the classroom and appropriately practiced to provide effective language teaching instructions. As the previous studies refer the teaching philosophies as, every teacher has a specific teaching philosophy that motivates them and determines the methods and goals that they use to effectively convey their message to the students (Ivypana, 2020). In this regard the present data found responses such as the teacher of GS1 shared, "Whatever task I put up in my class is that students should participate more." Another teacher at GS2 emphasized practical, relatable learning, and a similar kind of point of view was shared by GS3's teacher. GS2's teacher stated, "I tell them the definition so students can relate it and then learn it very well." However, a huge gap was found while observing their classes when they were observed to match their statements to their real pedagogical skills. The observation does not witness the student-centered approach, the student's active role, and participation in the classroom. Students were rather confused, passive, and seemed not interested. In this regard previous studies refer that mostly in government schools Grammar translation method (GTM) is used, old methods of teaching are still prevailing in government schools (Ashraf & Ashraf, 2015).

Moreover, a teacher at PS1 explained, "My teaching philosophy is impelling and inspire. You can't be a good teacher if you won't inspire students." The teacher of PS3 stated "My major focus is on the direct method that gives more learning time to students than the teacher." The data collected from these private schools show that the focus is often given to blending different teaching methods and their approach to

inspire students to witness their teaching philosophy. As stated by Shah et al., 2022 “To strengthen the teaching technique, private teachers may use brainstorming, small group discussion, games, and an individual study strategy”. However, not all teachers feel confident enough to adopt modern or student-centered approaches. For instance, a teacher at PS2 said, “I focus on grammar translation and sometimes code-switching due to lack of confidence.” Consequently, a gap has been found between teaching philosophies and practical language pedagogical skills both in government and private schools

Language Proficiency and Confidence Level

According to the present data, there is a coexisting relationship between Language proficiency and teacher’s confidence level. This idea represents an extent to which ELTs possess language knowledge and skills and how confidently they showcase it while instructing in EL classroom. In government schools, teachers generally view proficiency as an ongoing process. GS1’s teacher humbly noted, “We cannot judge how much we are, but still, it’s a phase of learning. A teacher has to learn until she is”. While observing her teaching in class we noticed that she was able to transfer simple sentences and avoiding transferring complex or long sentences. GS2’s teacher, who holds a degree in English, expressed more confidence and said, “Since my degree is in the English language, I can consider myself as an expert in English” whereas during observation, we noticed that he was not that much proficient and either confident in delivering lecture in

English. GS3’s teacher was also confident in her language proficiency and stated, “I never feel hesitation and discomfort while teaching English” and we observed that she seemed quite confident and proficient while teaching. Similarly, Private school teachers, especially those with international exposure, tend to feel more confident in their English skills. For example, a PS1 teacher said, “Having lived in the UK for six years and in the US for six more years, I am okay with the language.” Another teacher at PS3 highlighted their practical experience and said, “I have a long teaching experience, so I am proficient enough that whatever comes into my mind, I can share it with anybody.” They were proficient and Confident. On

the other hand, not all private school teachers share this level of confidence. Such as, a teacher at PS2 admitted, “I am not proficient and lack the confidence to speak English in the classroom” and it is noticed that she was unable to hold a conversation in English and was switching codes during lectures. It is argued that, teacher’s proficiency in English and confidence level varies widely based on their specialization, Language competence, educational, cultural background, and professional experience in the field. The relationship between self-confidence and English language proficiency is intricate, influenced by factors such as personal traits, cultural background, and language learning experiences (Ghafar, 2023). According to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), language proficiency is closely linked to language competence. The CEFR defines language competence as the sum of knowledge, skills, and abilities that enable a person to use language confidently and effectively. (Council of Europe 2001). In terms of the collected data, it seems that language proficiency and confidence come within knowledge, experience and interest of the concerned teachers. It has been stated that language proficiency is influenced by prior language knowledge, and practical language usage experiences. (Vajirakachorn, Ratasuk, & Anuwong, 2023).

The latest teaching trends for professional growth

The multilingual context of English learning requires ELTs to have strong knowledge about up-to-date trends in facilitating learners with effective language learning opportunities and platforms. Latest English teaching trends include Task-based learning, integration of technology through blended learning and mobile-assisted learning, focus given to communicative and intercultural communicative competence, integration of gamification, and others that collectively can transform more productive, engaging, interactive, and impressive learning environments (Vaishnav;2024). The present study has been emphasized to explore the teachers’ competence and experience they possess about these latest innovations added in the field of ELT and the strategies they utilize to familiarize themselves with this modern and personalized language teaching

context. Consequently, more or less experience in integrating the latest teaching trends leads to the teacher's continuous professional development and reflects their Language pedagogical effectiveness in real situations.

The data shows that most of the teachers prefer Artificial intelligence (AI), and Internet sources such as Google or YouTube to get familiar with the latest teaching trends. As the GS2 teacher responded, "AI suggests me that how I can teach a certain topic to my students." The same response has been collected from one of the private school teachers PS3 stated "AI helps the teacher to make their activities, MCQS so it is also help me a lot". Apart from that, one of the teachers highlighted the impact of her previous teaching experience to empower her teaching style more personalized or modernized. GS1 teacher sharing her point of view said that "obviously, my previous experience of private school helped me a lot". Furthermore, she said "I use some video clips to prepare students to learn 21st century skills. We making students see some video clips so that, obviously we do not have projectors but our mobile phones are with us". It means the unavailability of adequate resources is one of the main factors which hinder teacher's efforts to make an engaging environment for the class.

The data is mainly argues to find out the gap between teacher's competence regarding the latest teaching trends and the extent to which they are practically implementing modern techniques and trends. The data in addition to the observation of teacher's real pedagogy critically shows that teachers who confessed the integration of AI-led them to know about the latest teaching trends were unable to use those modern techniques or strategies while inculcating English in the classroom. A comprehensive discussion results that teachers were less equipped with such attributes to provide a more interactive and engaging classroom environment. Teaching strategies seemed limited to traditional strategies and methods such as GTM while instructing grammatical rules of English, drilling difficult vocabulary, reading course books, etc... Such activities reflect old techniques that limit learners to individual approaches to learning opportunities rather than enable them to be

cooperative and competent communicators at the demand of latest trends.

Additionally, one of the teachers mentioned that AI helped them to make mcqs tests which indicates they are still following only product-based assessment methods emphasizing to assess learner's memory power rather than assessing their communicative, creative, critical thinking, or problem-solving skills. This shows that teachers using AI to get the award of the latest and most effective teaching practices were predicted to be less trained, skilled, and experienced in creating new and more engaging environments for EL classes.

Apart from it, the teacher's previous experience didn't effectively reflect in their language pedagogical skills. Indeed, experience from a long time in teaching may improve the teacher's effectiveness in terms of classroom management, punctuality, motivation, or confidence. The DEPRG (2014) report claims that "All other things being equal, teachers with more experience are better teachers" (p. 25). However, this study mainly argues how it can be contributed to inform the latest teaching trends. A teacher from GS1 possessed seven years' experience of teaching in the private sector; she claimed that experience supports her to modify her teaching practices. However, teacher observation showed that the techniques priory used were reading lessons and final examination as the main objectives of the lesson plan. Such passive strategies and activities may not effectively approach learner's more productive achievements in this modern era.

The result shows that teachers were somehow familiarized with the latest teaching trends with the help of AI tools and internet resources, or previous teaching experiences. Integrating such trends may lead them to develop their professional skills. That leads teachers to be more flexible, creative, and critical while developing and modifying the materials and teaching practices that ultimately develop teachers' professional growth. While observing teachers' teaching practices highlight the huge gap between the teacher's awareness of the latest teaching trends and practice in the classrooms. This gap has been created due to several factors found such as large classroom context, unavailability of technological resources, and lack of teacher's up-to-date training sessions.

Lack of Standardized Proficiency Testing

High-quality teaching starts with the right tools, and testing is the first step. Standardized language tests have become a crucial part of modern language education. According to Abbas, S. G., et al. (2023), 'Standardized testing in education refers to the process of giving the same test to all students in a consistent and controlled environment. The test follows a set format and scoring system to fairly measure students' knowledge, skills, and abilities. This means that these tests are created to measure students' abilities in a fair and unbiased way.' One of the key problems this study has noticed is that there isn't a proper system to check how good teachers are at English in Pakistan. Since English is a second language in Pakistan, not everyone is fully proficient in it. Unlike the first language of Pakistanis, English requires dedicated learning and practice. To ensure students learn English effectively, schools need expert and highly proficient English language teachers who have strong language skills and know how to teach it efficiently in a classroom setting. Most teachers do not take formal tests like IELTS or TOEFL to prove their proficiency. Instead, they rely on informal ways, like taking random online tests or self-assessing their skills. This creates inconsistencies because there is no clear standard to measure whether they are truly proficient and ready to teach English effectively. From interviews with teachers, we found mixed responses. One teacher of GS1 mentioned that she had taken an English test at her previous private school and said, "I think out of 10, I scored seven". She admitted there were areas she needed to improve. However, when we observed her class, it was clear she struggled. Her lessons were not well-organized, her instructions were unclear, and her students looked confused. This showed her previous test did not truly measure her ability to teach English effectively. Another GS2 teacher shared that "I gave a random test on a five for the approval of my profile, so I got the expert level in their test". However, during his class, it was obvious he was not proficient or prepared, as his students were disengaged. Informal or random tests aren't enough to truly measure a teacher's ability to teach English. Teachers might claim proficiency, but their classroom performance often tells a different story. For example, relying on a random Fiverr test does not provide the

kind of assurance needed to trust that someone can effectively teach.

Teachers who skip formal testing altogether miss the opportunity to identify areas they need to work on. The GS3 teacher said she had taken a proficiency test but when we observed her during class she could not apply her skills in the classroom. Another PS3 teacher admitted "I haven't taken it because I didn't feel need". He never felt the need to take a test and relied on his judgment. While he was somewhat fluent, his lessons lacked preparation and left his students disconnected. This highlights a major issue that skipping testing entirely, makes it hard to assess whether the teacher is actually capable of teaching English well. Another PS2 teacher claimed to have taken a test but openly admitted she lacked confidence in speaking English. While observing her class we confirmed that her teaching was unstructured, and the students were struggling to stay engaged. This proves that even if a teacher takes a test, it must be a reliable and thorough one to ensure they are genuinely skilled. This is exactly what Chapple argues that evaluating English language proficiency alone does not give a complete picture of a teacher's ability to teach English as a second language (ESL). It is essential to include teaching practice evaluations to gauge how well teachers can translate their language skills into effective teaching.

Since there is no proper testing system in Pakistan, schools should introduce their own English proficiency tests for teacher hiring. Teachers have many responsibilities at school, such as making sure students learn well and taking care of their safety. To do this job well, teachers need more than just knowledge of their subject. They also need skills like good communication, patience, and problem-solving. A teaching test is a helpful way to check if someone has the skills needed to be a teacher. This is why standardized tests are so important. These tests provide a clear and fair way to measure teacher's English skills and ensure they meet the necessary standards. Without a proper system like this, schools end up hiring or keeping teachers who might not be fully prepared, which ultimately affects the quality of education for students. Tiley states that the language learning experience is essential for language teachers, and standardized language tests can play a critical role

in ensuring that teachers have the necessary language skills and knowledge to provide effective instruction. It can be an important part of a language teacher's development. It shows teachers have a good hold on language and language teaching.

Pearson (2019) as mentioned by Tiley also mentions that the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is too expensive and the rules for retaking the test are unfair. IELTS and TOEFL are widely recognized, but not everyone in Pakistan can afford them. Since these tests expire within two years, it can be a significant burden for those who cannot afford to take and retake them. To address this issue, schools in Pakistan should integrate a new testing policy. They should create their tests and conduct comprehensive English language tests, as conducted. The testing process and procedures should be similar to IELTS and TOEFL. Those who have already taken IELTS or TOEFL should be exempt from this requirement. The test should be objective, rather than subjective to ensure fairness and accuracy. Teachers should not be hired solely based on the recruiter's impression of their proficiency. Instead, the teacher hiring process should be rigorous and thorough. This would ensure that only qualified candidates are selected for the position, based on a thorough and unbiased evaluation. This will ensure that students have qualified teachers who can help them learn. Using this test as a first and right tool, during the hiring stage is the best way to identify the strongest candidates who are highly skilled and right fit for the job. Without such a system, schools will continue to hire teachers who may not be fully prepared, and ultimately it will keep on harming student's education.

In-Service Training

In-service training is an ongoing process (during performing duty) of updating the teacher's pedagogical knowledge, skills, and requirements which leads to better job performance and a more productive learning environment. The previous studies highlight the idea that in-service training acts as a catalyst for a teacher's effectiveness (Che Omar, 2014). It has been given major consideration in the education department to update and practically train teachers to appropriately practice reformed strategies,

techniques, technological resources instructional methods to advance learning opportunities and achievements. Concerning English teacher's pedagogical skills in relation to their profile, this area has been emphasized while interviewing government and private school teachers. It is aimed to ensure whether they are provided or lacking in-service training. Because more or less the in-service training may play a main role in overcoming the challenges they face while teaching English.

A GS1 teacher shared, "We were given IBA training, but it wasn't for English—it was a professional development session." Another GS2 teacher echoed this, saying, "It was only related to teaching methodologies, not related to the specific subject." Whereas GS3 teacher stated the same "Before my joining in school, I went through a training which was given by the government but it was a general training for all the teachers". Similarly in private sectors, the data shows that teachers are predominantly trained through various training sessions. A PS1 teacher mentioned "We the moment teachers walk in, they have to go through a plethora myriad of training sessions, which are different kinds, reflective practitioners, zero pieces of training, advanced training". PS2 teacher explicitly mentioned, "Basically, to be very honest, not like that, right? I haven't got any kind of opportunity to learn from some training".

The present data shows that in service training for teachers vary significantly across schools. It seems most Govt. Schools are provided with general training during their services so that they can adequately meet the constantly changing demands of the modern education system.

However, the data analyses that teachers are generally trained to develop their professional competence, rather than to improve their language pedagogy skills or competence which leads them to teach English effectively. As the statements of private school teachers show that they were also given teacher training, not language teacher training which is essential for a teacher who teaches language or specifically English language. Further it was observed that teachers' responses were mainly focused to highlight the pre-training they were provided before appointing or joining the school. That means teachers

were less familiar and less engaged with the pyramids of in-service training which is essential for a teacher to have. As Niazi 2005, p.33 stated that it is a fact that due to the induction of information technology in the field of education and training, teachers must be provided in-service training to enable them to accept the responsibility according to the change in the assignment and circumstances of work. However, observation of their teaching practices has been critically analyzed that teachers were not properly trained to effectively practice/perform language teaching competence in the EL classroom. This inconsistency in training and the lack of language teaching-related in-service training leads to many issues and challenges for EL practitioners. The study highlights EL teachers lacking in such particular subject-specific continuous/ ongoing training are unable to bridge the gap between their profile and the way they are implementing skills to teach English

Conclusion

To conclude the study, it has been revealed that the mismatch between official hiring policy and actual practice is influencing ineffectiveness in the education system. The discrepancies found in ELT's said profile and their pedagogical practices evidence their incapability to unfit for the job. The discussion over findings reveals that ELT's language fluency and teaching experience often prioritized over subject specialization and language teaching competence. The study suggests that there is a need to enhance ELT's language pedagogical skills through in-service training to update and train them about up-to-date trends of teaching English. That may help ELT's to effectively engage learners in a more productive and practical learning environment.

Recommendation

To conclude, this study highly suggests some of the recommendations to resolve the issues, challenges, and gaps found related to English language teaching in the ESL context.

There should be a balance between explicit hiring policy (advertised requirements) and practice while practically appointing English teachers.

ELTs should be selected based on specialization (degree) in a relevant field rather than any other

science subject.

ELTs in both governments. as well as private sectors should be enlightened by pre and in- service training specifically related to modifying their language pedagogical skills.

ELTs should be properly trained to implement up-to-date ELT trends in their classrooms.

EL classrooms should be redesigned with adequate resources (such as multimedia projectors, sound system, screen ..) that may help to bridge the gap between the teacher's competence and its practice.

A specific standardized language proficiency test should be taken as one of the main aspects of the hiring process.

Abbreviations

GS (Government School) (PS) Private School

(EL) English language

(EFL) English as a foreign language (ELT) English language teaching

(CEFR) Common European Framework of Reference

(IELTS) International English Language Testing

System (TOFEL) Test of English as a Foreign Language

(GTM) Grammar translation method.

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