Factors Impeding the Learning of English as a Second Language among Male Students in Public Sector Colleges at the Intermediate Level?

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	The primary aim of the study is to investigate the English language learning at intermediate level in the Province of Punjab, Pakistan. To achieve the objective of the study situational analysis and literature review approach for substantive theorizing and historical interpretation is adopted as suggested by Karl Popper. Teachers and students of numerous social surroundings who teach and study in the public and private sector colleges in the province of Punjab have reported numerous problems, in the published articles from 2015 to 2022, they face in learning English language. In the teaching and learning contexts Urdu and regional languages have been reported widely used in the previous studies, and other main reasons highlighted through the review of the literature which are impeding the learners in second language learning include; crowded classrooms, less motivation, literature, teacher-centered teaching, indifferent teacher attitude, inadequate teacher training, and ineffective Syllabus. This study has recommended with teachers' training support, implementing interactive teaching methods, and using the target language in the classes by motivating the learners, these hurdles can be overcome easily.

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1.   Introduction

After the partition, English is relishing the status of a powerful mode of teaching in Pakistan because of being an international language. In country institutions, it is enjoying superiority over numerous compulsory subjects of the Syllabus. According to the world's contemporary demands, many steps have been taken to give it a sustainable, outstanding position in Pakistani society (Sabiha Mansoor, 2003). This language assists us in making good trading relations with the remaining world. The previous history of our country helped us to admit and acknowledge that the natives of this language govern the world through it. People have been dominant in the subcontinent with the help of this language. They entered the sub-continent as traders but got a strong hold on its economy and benefited from the fortunate conditions. In the enormous land of Hindus and Muslims, English starts spreading. As time passes, English has a strong effect on our nation, making it difficult for us to survive without it because this contemporary world has transformed itself into a global village by breaking all the barricades. Those who use different tongues face difficulties in this global village, although those who know the English language benefit from it in crossing all the geographical and dialectical obstacles. Regardless of the national and social biases, they communicate and work as one community because of it. After the separation, English still enjoys its status as a foreign and second language in our country and many other countries. There are many challenges English is confronting while its implementation in our society. These challenges create hindrances for learners while learning English, which can be seen in the method of teaching and learning. This

study aims to find the difficulties and obstacles learners face while learning English in addition to the obstacles on the road to its progress. This study aims to identify the hindrances and their possible solutions. There is a requirement for instructors who are language experts and know the use of modern technology and its utilization. Moreover, students must indulge in proper language learning.

This interactive teaching concept has received significant consideration because there is a pressing need for a multifaceted approach to language teaching globally to meet the requirements of diverse teachers and students. For language teaching and learning to be successful, students must be involved, and their beliefs and hopes must be considered (Savignon, 2007). A need analysis is necessary for this to happen. Once the needs of the students have been determined, proper teaching implementation in the classroom, including form-focused instruction and activities contextualized with real-world situations, can help students become more independent and develop their communicative competence. According to researchers (Abbasi, Shahid, & Shah, 2022; M. T. A. Gurmani, Latiff, Abbasi, Jatoi, & Shahid, 2023; Choudhry Shahid, Muhammed, Abbasi, Gurmani, & ur Rahman, 2022; Yasmin & Sohail, 2018) students' independent learning can assist educators and students in putting theory into practice in the classroom. Theoretical knowledge is the only focus of autonomy research (Little et al., 2003).. According to Manan, David, and Dumanig (2016), the areas that required research in language teaching and learning to fill the research gap were teachers' competence level, autonomy, new teaching strategies, and learning assessment in English language teaching (Ahmed, Shahid, Ali, Akmal, & Arif, 2022; Choudhry Shahid, Abbasi, & Bhutto, 2022).

2. Literature Review

Objective and subjective validity come from the concept of hurdles and difficulty. The solution to this task needs labor and effort. As Newell and Simon (1972) quoted, hurdles can be measured in numerous ways. This study aims to discover the hurdles in learning English academically. However, this study does not aim to view the problem that has been noticed by (Gass & Schachter, 1989).

According to Chomsky (1965); Gass and Schachter (1989), problems and obstacles in language learning are caused by a lack of organization between grammar and data. Reading is the only obstacle students face when learning intermediate English, according to Khan and Khan (2016). Writing English to qualify for his public examination. The home cultures of students, as well as their use of Punjabi and Urdu as their mother tongues, pose a risk to the development of written language models of reading and writing in English as a compulsory subject and second language, according to the context of our research.

Gay (1988); Snow (1992) say that students face a variety of obstacles that prevent them from succeeding. At the intermediate level, learning English is required. Obstacles mean snags, inconveniences, and issues in learning English at the moderate level. The examination system, students' poor English position and grasp, overcrowding in classrooms, difficult literature-based lessons, lengthy and boring syllabuses, inactive students, outdated teaching methods, and poor teacher performance are some of the most significant issues in English education (Malik, 1996). Because failure in English means failure in all subjects, the annual results of students in our country show an absolute rise in failure. According to S Mansoor et al. (2005), "flawed pedagogy and material design" are to blame for the undesirable outcome in the English language. Jargon assumes a fundamental part in learning English as a subsequent language (M. Gurmani, LATIFF, Shahid, Abbasi, & Bhutto, 2022; M. T. Gurmani, Salmani, Shahid, Abbasi, & Ali, 2022).

The four skills of language are reading, writing, listening, and speaking in terms of their purpose. The variation of the social-linguistic divide in this world extends the incapacity or capability over a language. According to Morley and Lawrence (1972), situations in which listening is used as an unfamiliar language encounter complexity and complications. As per Bailey and Savage (1994), talking skill is extremely critical, and its importance can't be declined. Celce-Murcia (2001) mentioned a lot of factors; Shahid and others, 2022), making it a difficult English language skill. Reading, according to Bernhardt (1993), is a socio-interaction course that involves a "reader," "a text," and "social context," and Grabe (1991) noted the difficulties associated with learning this.

According to Sabiha Mansoor (2004), 10.53 percent of respondents use Seraiki instead of this research. It is generally accepted that these contextual factors make it difficult to learn English at some point. The people in this situation don't want to use their own language and want to use it every day. The fact that they are attached to their language is a logical fact. After that, these groups are separated from a number of other groups, each of which has its own distinct culture, language, and tradition. The dialect of each district varies. In these districts, where Urdu is the national language, English is increasingly being used as a teaching medium (Rahman, 2006). In our context, learners are Intermediate students who have already learned their state language and their native language. At their colleges, English instruction encounters difficulties. According to Gass and Schachter (1989), adults and children face the same issues, but adult students face a different rational obstacle to this extent. Numerous researchers concede that in second language realizing, there is a qualification among local and non-local speakers. According to Gibson, Gibson, and Ingold (1993), migrant children of various language backgrounds face similar difficulties in their school environments when it comes to learning English. Our subject students are learners who have been raised speaking other languages. According to Krashen (1981), "comprehensible input" refers to the challenges these students face. Problems arise, according to Cummins (1984), when a student's existing framework and the difficulty of a given language task are misunderstood. Numerous issues arise when L1 is used and tampered with without conscious intention. Because they use their native language every day, students who are learning English as a second language face difficulties in their educational careers. According to Lado (1957), "syntactic errors in adult performance" are caused by the learner's use of the native tongue throughout their lives, and this influence remains in a student's mind for a long time. Krashen (1981) cited this statement from Lado. These errors or issues are difficult to mark because they have become ingrained in the learner's life. Krashen (1981) mentions the objective fact that such mistakes or issues contrast contingent upon the students' relating phonetic settings, refering to (Buteau, 1970; Richards, 1971).

2.1.   Significance of the Study

English is taught from kindergarten through undergraduate programs in Pakistan, and students' language proficiency is very low. Pakistan's education system is fraught with difficulties. The majority of learning input for students comes from their teachers. In all parts of the world, education at the higher education level focuses primarily on self-directedness and independence, and students in the context of Pakistani learning also requires communication skills and self-regulation in order to meet the ever-increasing demands of their professions (Akmal, Ulfah, & Fitria, 2022; M. T. A. Gurmani et al., 2023; Choudhry Shahid, Ishfaque Ahmed Abbasi, et al., 2022). The primary objective of education is to prepare students for future responsibilities. In research-based higher education, students' English proficiency and autonomy in language learning are equally important. The study's findings will aid educators, trainers, policymakers, and students in developing pedagogical strategies to boost tertiary students' communicative competence and learner autonomy.

2.2.   The Statement of the Problem

Intermediate students face many difficulties comprehending English as an obligatory and second subject. They struggle hard to learn it and want to master this language, but they cannot break these hurdles. Unfortunately, all their efforts go in vain. According to Sabiha Mansoor (2003), a letdown in English means a letdown in all subjects at this intermediate level. A high percentage of failure distresses them in two ways. First, they miss the chance of getting a reasonable job in the country, and second, it affects their self-confidence (Malik, 1996). The diverse problems of our learners require consideration. These multi-layered problems have not addressed thoroughgoing despite of been mentioned in numerous studies (Sabiha Mansoor, 2003). The current study is a move to understand the hurdles in learning English. Various efforts have been taken to demonstrate the hitches in swotting English as a second language (Rahman, 2006). Many factors are mentioned that create obstacles to learning English.

Nevertheless, learning obstacles, intermediate students confront have not been labeled. Although, these studies failed to address those important aspects in which students adopt numerous professions to succeed in their advanced education and practical life. That is why this study has given recommendations besides indicating difficulties. Therefore, it investigates the problems and provides strategies too. The study will encourage students to learn English with zeal and zest and help them determine their weaknesses and hurdles. They will feel confident while using to communicate internationally.

2.3.   Objectives and Research Question of the Study

The primary objective of this research is to examine the existing body of knowledge to draw attention to issues with Higher Secondary Level English language instruction and provide an in-depth evaluation of the situation. In addition, provide a framework for fostering Pakistan's English language learning level. The research will respond to the following questions:

1.   What are the factors impeding the learning of English as a second language among male students in Public sector colleges at the Intermediate level?
2.   What are the solutions to address the learning obstacles at the college level?

3.   Research Methodology

The purpose of this qualitative study is to determine the factors that hinder the teaching and learning of the English language at the tertiary level by employing a situational analysis method, substantive theories, and an interpretation of the published work (Popper, 1976). This study is conducted in both public and private colleges in the Punjab province. The study is based on reviews and summaries of previous studies that focus on pedagogical practices and issues in language teaching and learning, especially in Pakistan and other countries where English is taught as an EFL language. In this qualitative paradigm study, document analysis was used as the research method (Bowen, 2015). Situation analysis, organized review, and thematic evaluation are used to find out what influences students' communication and learner language at intermediate level in Punjab. The entire process, according to Muir-Cochrane, Fereday, Jureidini, Drummond, and Darbyshire (2006), involved reading and analyzing to identify the themes and classify them. This study examines papers from 2015 to 2022 published related to English language learning difficulties particularly in the Pakistani context and for reference published articles of overseas scholars also reviewed.

4.   Critical Review and Thematic Analysis

The major themes were revealed by reviewing the papers: low proficiency, inadequate evaluation, and problematic pedagogy are all signs of a skill gap. Teachers and students alike value English language communication skills, but the lack of an evaluation system makes it impossible to concentrate more effectively, and socioeconomic factors also impede EFL students' skill development. The education system in Pakistan has two distinct strands: Languages spoken include Urdu and English (Albahri, Abushibs, & Abushibs, 2018). Private schools are considered significant due to their emphasis on English communication skills among students. When compared to public institutions, private institutions provide higher-quality education. Private schools have well-kept classrooms equipped with cutting-edge language teaching technology; additionally, these institutions offer their students private English language instruction at home. As a result, they stand out in terms of their proficiency in language learning (Fenton-Smith, Humphreys, & Walkinshaw, 2017). The specifics of the thematic analysis and the findings of this study, which was carried out in the context of English as a Foreign Language, are provided in the following paragraphs.

4.1.   Research Questions Answers

The study attempts to highlight the hurdles in learning the English language and to investigate these hurdles. The collected data has shown that students face hurdles while learning English as a second language. The surveys report published in various articles show that all students and teachers agree that students face difficulties in English learning.

R.Q 1. What factors impede learning English as a second language among male students in Public sector colleges at the Intermediate level?

4.2.   Faulty Curriculum

After receiving harsh criticism and condemnation from stakeholders, the first-year English curriculum has been upgraded after many decades. However, the new and upgraded Syllabus is still receiving criticism from various sections. Students and teachers demand to upgrade part-2 Syllabus to meet the challenges of the contemporary world. Various respondents have demanded revising Syllabus and claim that the Pakistani education system is lacking due to defective curriculum (Memon, 2007). Many respondents complain that they are required to learn English as a second language, yet their whole Syllabus contains only 25% of the English language, the rest of it is literature oriented.

On the other hand, many have appreciated the effort to translate Urdu and other classical tongues into English to better understand students. Another objection made by the respondents is that the Syllabus is designed without realizing the teachers' and learners' needs and demands. Taylor (2006) has remarked on the opinions of Jennifer (1992)' paper that it has been a convention of ELT that it is anticipated from the students of L2 that they would receive the resources nevertheless of their requirements and individualities. So, in our framework, the learners and the teachers have marked out such conditions. Another objection made by the respondents is that the Syllabus is designed without realizing the teachers' and learners' needs and demands.

4.3. Literature based Syllabus

The English Syllabus for intermediate students is solely based on writing and reading. Responders say students are confronting problems in both languages because the Syllabus focuses on literature. Students have no practice in reading and writing either t college nor at home because teachers only explain the idea and do not give assignments according to needs. Both teachers and students do not give attention to speaking because it is not in the Syllabus. All students and teachers agreed on the point that most students confront obstacles in speaking.

4.4. Crowded Classes

The survey discloses that enormous classes are one of the reasons for the learning hurdles. Most teachers are unhappy with the class size as most are teaching a class of fewer than 60 students. It is curiously observed that no such teacher is happy with a big-size classroom. Public sector colleges are mostly famous for fewer facilities and poor pedagogy, with enormous and overcrowded classrooms (Tatar, 2005). In this survey, most of the respondents complained that they are teaching a class comprising more than 80 students, and these classes have many issues. According to Gibbs, Jenkins, and Alan (1992), In enormous classes, numerous teachers and students confront difficulties in learning. On the other hand, small classes are finer and surpass results. The majority of the teachers have shown their dissatisfaction with large classes.

4.5. Indifferent Attitude of the Teachers

Studies have shown that regular, permanent, and contractual, known as temporary, two types of lectures conducted in the public sector through PPSC have different facilities and salaries. Teachers who give English lectures do not have these financial and other allowances, which creates concerns in teachers regarding their careers, and they cannot give their best to the students, which is also a learning obstacle (Horwitz & Horwitz, 1986). The study reveals that there are no proper English teachers in the remotest areas of Pakistan because many teachers are not eager to serve them. The lack of English instructors and their concerns create English learning hurdles.

4.6. Lack of Motivation

Data revealed that most of the responders are unmotivated to learn English for various reasons, whereas most students are motivated to learn English. It means that students want to learn but are demotivated due to the nonappearance of numerous requirements. It spotlights the requirement to motivate students.

4.7. Lack of Teacher training

According to (Kuhn, 1970), Second language teaching has experienced various variations over the years. A survey investigating hurdles in learning English has revealed that five teachers out of ten have not taken the short courses arranged for them to adopt the latest pedagogy. Most teachers are teaching with old methodologies and are unwilling to upgrade their skills, so how could they prepare children for the upcoming learning challenges?

4.8. Lack of Cooperation of Teachers

In this area of the study, respondents discern that one of the major difficulties' students find in learning English is their teachers' non-cooperative and unprofessional behavior. Although, the rules and practices set for teachers allow them to set a standard for student learning behavior. The survey reveals various teachers dispirited and cold attitudes toward their students. One of the students from these colleges has pointed out the discouraging behavior of his teacher without mentioning his name. The horror of negative assessment obstacles in the way of learning

is as noticed by Horwitz and Horwitz (1986). It is noticeable that English teachers are deprived of the respect and embolden from their management at their institutions.

4.9. Inadequate Number of Teachers

The survey has brought to light that, unfortunately, there is no solitary teacher for English teaching in the various colleges of far-flung areas of Pakistan. No solo English teacher has been posted in these areas for a long. The respondents claim that English is taught to the students by the teachers of other subjects and even by the institutions' principals who specialize in other subjects. Principals of the colleges try to borrow teachers from other institutions, although seeing the unhelpful behavior of authorities and department principals, become disappointed and discontinue post-graduate classes. Woefully, it is hard for these students to afford education away from their hometowns in cities.

R.Q 2. What are the solutions to address the learning obstacles at college level?

The Possible ways to improve the Learning and Teaching of English Language. This study suggests the following suggestions for implications:

- The purpose of this study is to illustrate the concept of student independence in language learning from a variety of perspectives. The characteristics of self-governing students and some information about supporting student autonomy in the language learning process are discussed. Competence and autonomy are particularly important in language learning, as they are in everyday life and education. This is due to revolutionary changes that placed students at the center of the language learning process in the 1990s, such as student-focused educational modules, the arranged schedule, student preparation, the project-based prospectus, and student-based training. The roles of the teacher and the student have changed due to student-centered methodologies, primarily regarding their expertise and capacity. As a result, language students now bear a greater responsibility for their education. As a result, self-determination and student self-government have emerged as prominent topics in language training. The EFL context can be improved in the following ways to foster autonomy and communicative competence.
- Demonstrating learning systems is an essential strategy for assisting students in gaining autonomy. Students should receive technique preparation to provide a learning environment where they can independently learn.
- As a result, teachers should teach students how to develop and implement engaging learning strategies. In addition, teachers should introduce preparation exercises to increase students' knowledge of effective methods for learning and acquiring the necessary skills (Hedge & Kriwoken, 2000).
- Second, creating self-governing students requires considering the rule of helpful learning. This is because it wants to create a space in the classroom where students can freely ask questions and discuss them with the teacher and each other.
- Thirdly, using portfolios is an important part of creating an independent English language classroom.

They also allow students to take responsibility for their progress toward individual and class-arranged learning goals. Students can document the learning, getting used to, checking, and assessing processes using portfolios.

- Teachers' roles in fostering learner autonomy are significantly more important. They play a crucial role in providing students with an independent language classroom.
- The role of student autonomy in promoting English as a foreign language is prominent in the field. First and foremost, students are connected to their education; They have much energy; so their learning becomes more and more effective.
- Lee (1998) contends that individuals are brought into the world with independence in parallel. In addition, autonomy is typically recognized as implying particular skills, practices, and strategies for organizing the teaching and learning process. The concept of autonomy is seen as having multiple dimensions and necessitating a unique learning environment. Benson (2010) recommends that "autonomy is not a technique for adapting, but rather an attribute of student's way to deal with the learning process." He criticizes these methods because they make the term "autonomy" seem more confusing and complicated than it is.

- Cognitive theories of motivation provide useful schemas for comprehending and sometimes altering teacher-student interaction patterns. Teachers can look into the reasons why students succeed or fail at the tasks they are given. Teachers can alter their verbal interactions with students, the tasks they assign, and the learning environments they create based on these analyses.
- Based on the literature review, it is possible to draw the conclusion that language teaching in undergraduate programs in Pakistan needed to be investigated in order to help students develop their communicative competence and learner autonomy and pave the way for a change in language teaching practices.
- According to Taylor (2006), not only do natives use English, but the percentage of non-natives has also been augmented.
- The study has indicated that various people in the surroundings are unaware of their obligation to learn and its international status. The popularity of English will never disappear, and we must realize the importance of its learning. Nations cannot survive without communicating with the contemporary world; English is the language that assists us in making strong communication with the rest of the world. According to Demircan (1988), and commented that Turkey is currently the most successful country in the world. Turkey started realizing the importance of English in 1950, and now it is a progressive country because it realized that it needs English to link with the world's developed countries. If we want to see our country succeed, we must work on the same pages.
- According to the current study, many intermediate college students come from urban and rural areas, and the majority are enrolled in public rather than private institutions. As per the exploration coordinated by HEC, there are roughly 1882 schools in the whole country, 1025 happen in the public area, and 857 are in the confidential area. The majority of colleges are public, while the remainder are private, with little difference between the two. The fact that the majority of people learn in the public sector suggests that private institutions should be recognized to close the gap.
- A new report shows that educators and understudies guaranteed that their English instructors are not worked with the trend setting innovation and procedures of the time, there could be no legitimate mind educators and no accentuation on instructing abilities. Errors in teaching the English language are to blame (Abbas, 1998; Akmal et al., 2022; S Mansoor et al., 2005; Choudhry Shahid, Ishfaque Ahmed Abbasi, et al., 2022; C Shahid, Asif, & Muhammad, 2022). This discussion demonstrates that teachers are not the only ones to blame; it also suggests that there are insufficiently trained master trainers, a lack of vocabulary, a lack of autonomy in learning, a lack of competence, a lack of emphasis on teaching practice, and a lack of a proper teacher support and monitoring system. The training sessions for lecturers have only been attended by five out of ten teachers. After earning their master's degrees, they were hired as lecturers with no prior teaching experience. Our syllabus is focused on literature and how a literature specialist can teach language. According to the findings of this study, English teachers should receive timely training in order to meet the challenges of today.
- Various respondents complain about the unjust conduct of exams, especially during the objective portion. Moreover, they object that the examination is based on rotting. Modern researchers illustrated that the relationship between testing and teaching should be unbiased (Taylor, 2006).

5. Conclusion

The primary objective of the study was to determine the primary factors that hindered students' growth of communicative competence and learner autonomy in higher education. This objective was achieved by distinguishing the principal impacting factors. Critical analysis of previous studies indicates that students have a strong desire for strong English language communication skills due to its social and professional significance. A wide gap between skill demands and skill development, students with low proficiency, an outdated language evaluation system, and traditional pedagogy are the primary factors preventing skill development in Pakistani EFL. Advancing understudies' relational abilities and giving them actual space for learning the objective language makes it conceivable to work on understudies' skill and independence. The development of young professionals' skills should be a top priority for educational institutions because they play such an important part in the growth of any nation. According to the findings of this study, students' communication and development of autonomous learning are lacking. The mixing of Urdu and English instruction, low teacher proficiency, an inadequate evaluation system, and traditional pedagogical practices are the

primary factors that impede students' progress in learning English. Plans for contingencies are required due to the impact of language proficiency on academic achievement and the social significance of language proficiency for students at the local and global levels. Moreover, Self-direction and responsibility for learning are expected of students. Further in-depth research is needed to determine teachers' and students' levels of communicative competence and learner autonomy at the higher education level. The findings will assist policymakers in making decisions and teachers and trainers in designing the Syllabus accordingly in Pakistani higher education institutions.

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