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Effectiveness of Employing the English Language as a Medium of Instruction in ESL Learning in the Pakistani Educational System

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Abstract: *The present research was an effort to explore the effectiveness of the English language as a medium of instruction in ESL learning in the Pakistani educational system. By using a quasi-experimental research design a purposive sample of 72 students equally from both genders was selected from the population of a government primary school in district Kasur. Pretest and posttest were used as research instrumentation. The ESL learners were separated equally into 2 groups termed experimental and control groups. Each group contained 18 male and 18 female ESL learners. The first one was trained in the old-style method while the second one was treated by employing the English medium of instruction for all subjects. The treatment was given for two months. The results of the pretest and post-test showed a significant difference between the scores of both groups. The results revealed that English as a medium of instruction is better for ESL learning.*

Key Words: Medium of instruction, English & Urdu mediums, Pakistani educational system, ESL learning, Experimental research

Introduction

The present research work attempts to explore the effectiveness of the English medium of instruction in ESL learning. In the Pakistani educational system mainly two kinds of mediums of instruction are used Urdu and English medium of instructions, in the present research study the researchers tried to explore which medium of instruction is best for English learning for ESL learners. The introduction of the present research study covers the background information, problem of the

statement, research objectives, research questions, significance and limitations of the present study. In the modern age, it has become a reality that the educational system plays a vital role in reducing poverty so every country wants to educate their people. The English language plays an important role everywhere in the world. If someone wants a high status and best future carrier, he/she must need to learn the English language. Pakistan is a South Asian country in which the English language is used as a second language and also has the status of

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second official language with Urdu which is the national language of Pakistanis and used as a first official language in Pakistan (Shamim & Rashid, 2019). Usage of the English language can be seen in many public sectors, commercial areas, defence, and law departments although the English language is used in private and public sectors it is also employed in many educational institutes of Pakistan as a medium of instruction (Ahmad, Iqbal & Rao, 2023).

Statement of the Problem

English is an international language widely used all around the world and it is measured as a basic source of communication to connect with the rest of world. In the five countries England, America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand it is spoken as a native language and they are referred to as ENL countries; but in the other states it is spoken as a foreign or 2nd language these are referred to as EFL and ESL countries. Pakistanis learn and speak it as 2nd language and Pakistani English learners are termed as ESL learners. To connect with the world, there is a need to be proficient in the English language so that we can communicate with the people of other countries to develop our trade, commercial, education and many other sectors. For this purpose, everyone must study English and its almost the desire of every Pakistani to learn the English language, but Pakistani ESL learners face different kinds of difficulties in ESL learning. The researchers of the present study felt this and decided to conduct research in the setting of district Kasur.

Research Objectives

The main objectives of this research work were to explore the effectiveness of using the English medium of instruction in ESL learning. In the Pakistani context, there are two kinds of educational institutes called English medium schools and Urdu medium schools. The private schools prefer the English language as a medium of instruction in their teaching and learning for all subjects while public institutes are using the Urdu medium in instruction for entire courses excluding English subject which is only educated by means of English (Ahmad,

Shahid & Farhat, 2023). For the purpose of exploring the effectiveness of the medium of instruction in ESL learning researchers developed two research questions.

Research Questions

- I. What is role medium of instruction have in ESL learning?
- II. English or Urdu medium of instruction which is more effective for ESL learning?

Significance of the Study

The present research work is very significant for Pakistani parents because it will provide them guidance in choosing the right institutes for their children's English language learning. This research work is also a significant effort on the part of the researchers in instigating education departments of national and provincial governments to employ English as a medium of instruction on all levels in government schools. The present study will not only benefit the ESL learners of district Kasur but will also prove beneficial for all ESL learners at divisional, provincial and national levels, while in the perspective of the international level it helping for all EFL and ESL learners of all countries in the world. Although this research work is very significant yet there are some limitations in this.

Research Limitations

- This research work was limited only to one district Kasur, we can also conduct it on division, province, countrywide, continental and worldwide levels.
- This research is conducted only in a government primary school and can be enlarged to other educational levels such as secondary, higher, college or university levels.
- The study is conducted in a government school disregarding private sector schools.
- The population of the present research is limited only to one school of primary level in district Kasur it can be extended to more schools.

- The sample size is also limited to 72 research participants it can be increased more.

Literature Review

Literature reviews provide comprehensive hints of the research background and disclose previous works (Maitlo, Tumrani & Farhat, [2023](#)). The literature review comprises the key points of the present research and highlights their value regarding previous studies. This part of the research is contained on the Pakistani educational system, medium of instruction, English as a medium of instruction, Urdu as a medium of instruction, English language learning and some previous research studies related to the present studies followed by research gap.

Medium of Instruction in Educational System

The procedure of growth which embraces a specific consideration of knowledge is called education, while education is defined in the dictionary of Merriam-Webster as “the development of human knowledge and skills” (Education, 2016). According to Panezai and Channa ([2017](#)) as they pointed out that the Islamic doctrine, seeks education from birth to death which is highlighting the importance the education from an Islamic perspective. Furthermore, they stated that it's a valuable movement in adding innovative facts for upcoming generations by providing essential information for a determined lifecycle, and education definitely performs a creative part in social growth as the economic, technical, and development in the field of science these all are dependent on educational development (Panezai & Channa, 2017).

Defining medium of instruction Anwer, Tatla and Butt in ([2020](#)) stated that the language employed by the instructors while delivering lectures in the teaching space is called a medium of instruction, further they pointed out it is a basic element for the accomplishment of education. Rehman ([1997](#)) stated that the medium of instruction plays an

imperative role in the educational system. Lewis, ([2009](#)) pointed out that in the Pakistani multi-lingual and multi-cultural social order almost seventy-two dialects and languages are spoken, but in its educational structure only Urdu and English languages are domineering. Both languages are used by Pakistanis as Coleman (2010) pointed out that six per cent of Pakistanis are speaking Urdu as their national language, while the English language is sharing official status with Urdu language in Pakistan (Fareed, Humayun & Akhtar, 2014). There are two types of institutes public and private sector institutes in Pakistan. In the public sector, Urdu medium of instruction is used in classrooms for all subjects except English subject. But the private sector institutes give primacy English medium of instruction to Urdu medium of instruction and use English as a medium of instruction in teaching space for all subjects (Ahmad, Shahid & Farhat, [2023](#)).

Related Studies and Research Gap

Some research related to the present topic are presented there which will prove helpful in providing ideas about the current research topic. One of these researches was the research conducted by Anwer, Tatla and Butt in (2020) in the setting of district Kasur at the secondary school level for the purpose to find out the effects related to the "medium of instruction" and how it motivates learners. The results of this research study demonstrated that the medium of instruction plays a vital role in motivating students. Asif, Afzal & Bashir conducted their research study ([2020](#)) and analyzed the medium of instruction strategies in the Pakistani educational structure the main focus of this research was specifically the English language as a medium of instruction. The results of this study proved that the English medium of instruction has a positive impact on students. Jabeen, ([2023](#)) conducted research and studied the planning and policies of language and mediums of instruction in Pakistani multi-lingual settings; Coleman, ([2010](#)) analyzed the part of instruction and language in Pakistani educational settings. Manan, David & Dumanig ([2016](#)); Channa,

Manan & David (2021) analyzed ESL instruction strategies in the Pakistani context. On the international level, Hamid, Jahan & Islam (2013) analyzed mediums of instruction strategies and linguistic philosophies speeches of instructors and learners in a Bangladeshi university; while Hamid, Nguyen & Baldauf (2013) analyzed the mediums of instruction in the Asian context.

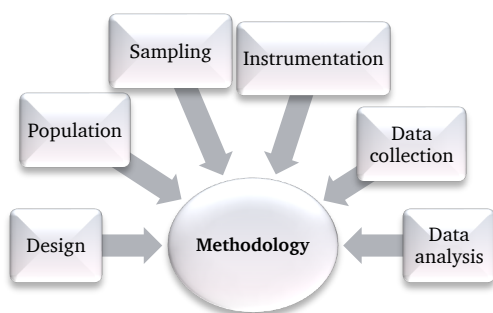
The different research conducted by many types of research to improve EFL /ESL learning in their countries and areas but no research is conducted on the effectiveness of the English language as a medium of instruction in the context district Kasur. The researchers were aware of this research gap and they decided to conduct their research work in this area to utilise the people of district Kasur.

Research Methodology

Research methodology is the study of procedures which is used for the purpose of collecting data to solve the problem of the research (Ahmad, 2022a; Ahmad, 2022b). The research methodology contains the research design, the population of the study, the selected sampling, instruments or tools, and the process of data gathering and analysis. These all are displayed in the figure blew to make it more comprehensible.

Figure 1

Research Methodology.



Research designs are used to collect data and it informs about the diverse variables and

procedures used in the research work for the purpose of data collection (Boaz et, al, 2018). The researchers employed a quasi-experimental research design for the present research. The quantitative design is suitable for this type of research because it allows researchers to analyze data in numeric form.

The research population is a huge cluster of people or objects to contribute to a research study called population Ahmad, Shahid & Farhat, 2023). For the present research study, the research population is the students of Government Model Primary School Bhedian Khan Pur District Kasur.

Research sampling is selected students from the entire population and for the present research study, a purposive research sample was selected containing 72 students who were selected from the 5th class and were divided into two equal groups by giving them names of experiment and control group. Each group contains 36 students equally from both genders as the control group contain eighteen males and eighteen female ESL learners similarly experiment group also contain eighteen male and eighteen female ESL learners.

Research tools or instruments perform a central part in research methods and serve in collecting exact information from the research participants Ahmad, Shahid & Farhat, 2023). In the present research, the data was collected by using pre-test and post-test questionnaires. The questionnaire was contained in three parts part A contains the demographic information of the participants while part B contains the pretest and part C contains the posttest questionnaire. The pretest was taken before giving treatments to the groups while the posttest was taken after giving two months of treatment to both groups, as the control group was treated in the traditional style in which Urdu medium of teaching was employed for entire courses except English subject and experimental group was treated by using English as a medium of instruction for all subjects. As in the study of Maitlo, Soomro & Lashari (2023), the first author was a teacher in the concerned school and he taught both groups similarly in the present study the first author was an English

teacher in her school and she taught both groups. But for ethical concerns, researchers seek permission from the principal and conducted their research during summer vacation.

The data collection process was completed through Pretest and Posttest. For the pretest and posttest, two question papers were developed of total hundred marks containing four questions. To check their ability in four skills of the English language students were asked to write a paragraph, read a paragraph, speech in English for five minutes, and the last they were shown a short English video clip and then asked to repeat this which they listened in this video clip. All questions contain equally on twenty-five marks. After the two months treatment period daily one hour from 1st June to 31st July, a posttest was taken from both groups. The findings of the tests were analyzed by independent t-test.

The data analysis process tells us about the ways in which the researchers analyze the gathered data. In the present research study, the researchers analyzed data in numerical via

SPSS and analyzed data was presented in tables and figures.

Results and Findings

Part A of this research questionnaire was contain demographic information of the research participants. Table number one and table number two are presenting details of the demographic analysis of the participants. While Table number three presents the pre-test results and the independent sample test for the pre-test is presented in Table number four, similarly, the post-test results are presented in Table number five and the independent sample test for the post-test is presented in Table number six.

Demographic Analysis

Demographic graphic information of the participants comprises the gender and locality of the research participants. The demographic information of the participants is presented in the tables below table one is showing the gender of the research participants and Table two is showing the location of the research participants for the present research study.

Table 1

Genders of the Contributors

Genders	Group names	Frequency	Separately overall	Overall
Males	Experiment	18	36	Totally 72 students from both genders contributed to the current research study.
	Control	18	students	
Female	Experiment	18	36	
	Control	18	students	

Table one above shows the frequency analysis of the gender of the participants as a total of 72 students participated in the research out of these 36 were female and 36 were male students. The experiment group was contained

of 18 male and 18 female students similarly the control group was contained of 18 male and 18 female students who take part in this research study.

Table 2

Locality of the Participants

Location	Group names	Frequency	Separate overall groups	Overall
Urban	Experiment	18	36 students	Totally 72 students from urban and rural areas contributed to the research study.
	Control	18		
Rural	Experiment	18	36 students	
	Control	18		

Table two above displays that from the entire 72 research participants 36 belongs to the urban while the other 36 participants belong to the rural areas of the district Kasur. In the

experiment group 18 participant belongs to urban and 18 belongs to rural areas in the same way in control group 18 belongs to urban and 18 belongs to rural areas of district Kasur.

Table 3

Pre-test Statistics

	Group	N	M	SD	SEM
Pre-test	Experiment	36	120.2857	12.37943	2.09183
	Control	36	119.6571	12.31215	2.08232

In the table, three pretest results are presented which are showing that the mean score (M) of the experiment group (120.2857) and control group scored (119.6571) while the standard deviation of the experiment group was (St. deviation (1237943) and control group (Std.

deviation 12.31215). The word mean refers to the average of the score and standard deviation refers to the variance in the scores from the means, while standard error means is employed for checking accurateness of the result findings.

Table 4

Independent samples test for the pre-test.

		Levene's test for equality of variances			t-test for equality of means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2- tailed)	MD	SED	95% confidence interval of the difference
		<div>LowerUpper</div>							
Pre-test Score	Equal variances assumed	.063	.800	2.58568	.012	7.628572	.951571	7.3880	13.51835
	Equal variances not assumed			2.58567	.999	.012	7.628572	.951571	7.3880 13.51835

The independent sample test for the pre-test of the experiment and control groups is presented in Table number four above. For the purpose of classifying the statistical alteration between the

pre-test scores of these groups' t-tests, an independent sample was employed. The scores of both groups are almost the same in the pretest before giving treatment.

Table 5

Post-test Statistics

Test	Group	N	M	SD	SEM
Post-test	Experiment	36	348.1145	30.78774	5.80753
	Control	36	130.3711	.1863	3.37364

In the above table, number five post-test results are presented which are displaying the mean

score (M) of the experiment group (348.1145) and the control group scored (130.3711).

While the standard deviation of the experiment group was (St. deviation 30.78774) and the control group was (Std. deviation .1863). The word mean refers to the average of the score

and standard deviation refers to the variance in the scores from the means, while standard error means is employed for checking accurateness of the result findings.

Table 6

Independent Samples Test for Post-test.

		Levene's test for equality of variances		t-test for equality of means						95% confidence interval of the difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	MD	SED		Lower	Upper
Pre-test Score	Equal variances assumed	2.18	0.03	20.243	68	.000	212.74286	10.50929	91.77190	233.71382	
	Equal variances not assumed			20.243	65.844	.000	212.74286	10.50929	91.75946	233.72625	

The independent sample test for the post-test of the experiment and control groups is presented in Table number six above. For the purpose of identifying the statistical variance between post-test scores of the groups t-test independent sample was employed. There was a significant difference between the scores of the experimental and control groups in the post-test. The experimental group performed better than the control group after treatment.

Discussion

The main purpose of conducting this research was to explore the effectiveness of the English medium of instruction in ESL learning. The results of the pretest and posttest revealed that the usage of the English language as a medium of instruction in the Pakistani educational system is better than the Urdu language as a medium of instruction because it is much more effective for ESL learning. To find the answers to both research questions researchers made two groups from a government primary school one group was taught by using an old style prevailing in government schools for years also called the traditional style. In the traditional

style, Urdu is used as the medium of instruction except for English subjects. The experimental group was treated by using the English language medium of teaching for entire courses. After three months of treatment, teachers find that the experimental group performed better than the control group, while in the pretest the performance of both groups was almost equal.

The results of the present research match with the results of many previous studies which also proved that English is a better medium of instruction than any other medium of instruction regarding ESL/EFL learning. The results of the present research study also match with the results of the research conducted by (Coleman, 2010; Manan, David & Dumanig 2016; Channa, Manan & David, 2021; Anwer, Tatla & Butt, 2020; Asif, Afzal & Bashir, 2020; Jabeen, 2023) in Pakistani context. While on a continental and international level, its results are similar to the studies conducted by (Hamid, Jahan & Islam 2013; Hamid, Nguyen & Baldauf 2013) analyzed the mediums of instruction in the Asian context.

Conclusion

The main aim of this research was to know which English or Urdu language is best serving as a medium of instruction for ESL learning in the Pakistani context. The result revealed that the English medium of instruction is best for ESL learners. English language must be developed as a medium of instruction to enhance ESL learning, for this purpose teachers, students, parents and officials of the education department take steps and develop English as a medium of instruction in all types of educational institutes on all levels. English language paved way for the success helps in building future careers and reduces poverty around the globe. So, the government must take steps for progress in this field by providing facilities to ESL learners. There is a need to provide scholarships and free laptops to the students. The government must motivate parents and teachers by facilitating them.

Recommendations and Suggestions

- The officials of the education department must privilege the English language in public schools similarly as it is used in private sector schools.
- For this purpose, the government should recruit highly qualified teaching staff of
- at least Master or M.phil level which are more proficient than traditional teachers and facilitate ESL teachers with new technologies, students with scholarships and financially support the parents of the poor students to educate their children to meet the criteria of the global world.
- ESL teachers must try to preferably employ the English language as a medium of instruction in their teaching spaces and he/she must motivate and encourage his/her students to speak English language in the classroom with their teachers and fellows without hesitating.
- The ESL students must try to use the English language with teachers, fellows and family members. The parents should support their children.
- The researchers recommended some suggestions for future researchers as there is a need to conduct more and more research studies to highlight this problem. For this purpose, the researchers must need to conduct this type of research on other education levels and institutes.

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