TESOL in Transition: Local Challenges and Global Influences

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Abstract

This paper examines the evolving landscape of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) in Pakistan. It analyzes the interplay between historical legacies, policy directives, teacher education, and global pedagogical trends. Although English holds the status of an official language and functions as a medium of instruction across various tiers of the education system, the implementation of TESOL in Pakistan remains fraught with challenges. These include inconsistent language policies, lack of alignment between curriculum and classroom realities, inadequate teacher preparation, urban–rural disparities, and limited access to sustained professional development opportunities. This study highlights how institutional frameworks have historically shaped the quality of English language instruction, and how recent efforts—such as PakTESOL initiatives and capacity-building programs funded by the U.S. Embassy and Regional English Language Office (RELO)—are attempting to professionalize TESOL in the country. The paper discusses how context-sensitive teacher training, inclusive curriculum development, and reflective pedagogical practices can help reorient TESOL towards local needs while maintaining global relevance. The growing integration of educational technology and computer-assisted language learning (CALL) is evaluated as a transformative factor in expanding access to language instruction, particularly in under-resourced regions. Critical pedagogy is also considered essential for empowering teachers and learners to engage with English in ways that support equity, identity, and meaningful communication. The paper concludes by offering practical and research-informed recommendations for strengthening TESOL in Pakistan. It also advocates for collaborative policy-making, initiate more teacher education programs, and equitable resource distribution. This study contributes to a sustainable, contextually aware TESOL framework that addresses Pakistan's linguistic, social, and educational complexities.

Keywords: language pedagogy, reflective practice, teacher development, TESOL

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Introduction

The teaching of English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) has acquired global prominence as English continues to function as a critical lingua franca in education, diplomacy, science, and the global job market. In Pakistan, TESOL occupies a particularly important role due to the country's colonial legacy, multilingual environment, and the growing value of English as a marker of socio-economic mobility. English is both an official language and a medium of instruction in many institutions; however, the promise it holds for learners often remains unfulfilled due to a host of systemic challenges (Raza, Coombe, & Reynolds, 2021). TESOL in Pakistan is embedded in complex sociopolitical realities, where policy aspirations frequently clash with on-the-ground classroom conditions. These challenges include inconsistent language-in-education policies, a shortage of professionally trained English language teachers, inequitable access to quality instruction between urban and rural regions, and minimal use of modern, technology-enhanced pedagogical approaches. The absence of a unified national TESOL framework, compounded by under-resourced public education systems, further weakens the effectiveness of English language instruction. As Ramanathan and Morgan (2007) argue, language education cannot be separated from the sociopolitical context in which it operates—TESOL may be understood as a deeply situated practice shaped by institutional structures, teacher agency, and cultural ideologies.

The professional growth of the teaching force of the English language stands at the center of any initiative on enhancing TESOL in Pakistan. Reflective involvement and teacher development are of importance in raising the successes of the learners. According to Crandall and Christison (2016), TESOL teacher education may overcome the technical training stage and take on not only sociocultural awareness but also critical reflectivity and responsiveness. On the same note, Crookes (2003) also sees TESOL practicum periods as such which give teachers the ability to make the gap between theory and practice. The corresponding insights are of specific concern to Pakistan since the reality of school experience sets aside the parameters of classroom environment more than defined by policy.

The unavailability of well-organized and consistent exposure to the professional development (PD) future is a looming issue. According to the evidence provided by Al-Harbi and Ahmad (2022), the Pakistani teachers tend to be alienated to the modern practices of TESOL specifically by a lack of institutional support. As

proposed by Farrell and Macapinlac (2021), reflective practice provides a means to find a solution, as it allows educators to improve their tactics with the limitations of the context changing all the time. Consistent with the evidence collected by Al Balushi (2021) in Oman, a context that has clear structural similarities with Pakistan, collaborative and localized PD programs will be required in order to develop resilient and effective TESOL professionals.

The paper describes the transformation and the present scenario of TESOL in Pakistan which involves a literature-oriented, conceptual reflection of TESOL in Pakistan. It discusses historical changes, policy, teacher preparation, and the use of technology and the contributions of national and international institutions like PakTESOL, Regional English Language Office (RELO) and English Language Programs of the U.S. Embassy. Through the synthesis of evidence gathered in both Pakistani and international literature, the paper establishes structural gaps, introduces successful suggestions, and prescribes applicable recommendations that can translate to the improvement of the quality and equity of English language learning in the country.

Historical Overview of English Language Teaching in Pakistan

The background of the English language teaching (ELT) in Pakistan is inextricably tied to the colonial heritage of the region, language planning immediately after independence and the dynamic relationship between language and power-opportunity in Pakistan that English has come to mark. The origins of the ELT to the subcontinent owes back to the days of the British colonial days when English has been allowed to establish itself through the institutionalization of its language via administration, education, and law. This legacy was also preserved after 1947 when Pakistan was created, whereby English remained and still remains a prestigious language and, is slowly becoming a language of social and economic ascendancy as well (Mahboob, 2003; Rahman, 2001).

Since independence, Pakistan has been confronted with multifaceted linguistic situations since the state has tried to create a national identity by attempting to impose Urdu everywhere and at the same time using English both in official and education roles. This bilingual methodology led to a hierarchical language system in which English is at the top and tends to be seen as the language of power, bureaucracy as well as a global connection (Shamim, 2008). This conflict between

nationalistic approaches to language and the reality of England, which lies in the usefulness of English, has been an icon in the field of language planning in the country (Yasmin, Zaman, & Khan, 2023).

During the first few decades when Pakistan was in existence, English was taught at the secondary and tertiary levels mostly in the urban schools and colleges. But, with the world increasingly valuing the English language and the connection between employability, international competitiveness and English being increasingly understood, the reach of English in primary and middle-level education has been increasing. Although English was expanded in this way, there was still a lot of irregularity and unevenness in the implementation of English across regions in this country, with little training of teachers, scarce resources especially in rural regions (Channa, 2017; Coleman, 2010).

The 1970s and 1980s are the time of attempts to standardize the English education due to the development of curriculum and textbooks changes. Yet such endeavors were not well coordinated, and the resulting implantation was at times stifled by inadequate supply of qualified teachers as well as a lack of professional development opportunities. On the one hand, policy-level commitment was evidently supported by Shamim (2008), who stated that the said authorities had taken action to promote English. On the other hand, however, this effect lagged in reality as the existing state of affairs in the Pakistani classrooms showed a disjointed and underequipped English teaching system.

The privatization of schools and institutions that taught using the English language during the 1990s and 2000s continued to create deepening differences among the strata of the society. Even though relatively well-equipped English-medium schools were available to affluent families, the students in the schools in the public sector still experienced the challenge of obsolete methodologies and inadequacy in teaching assistance (Rahman, 2001; Coleman, 2010). This resulted in the creation of a parallel education system in which knowing English became an influential determiner of prospective possibilities and resulted in an escalation of educational and economic disparities (Ahmad, Hussan, & Malik, 2018).

Language-in-education policies put in place later have been some of the same sort see-sawing between adopting an English language to integrate into the global community and retaining local languages and local identities. English as a subject is

introduced to most of the provinces at Grade 1 and as a language of instruction in some, which has sparked quite some controversy about its utilization and suitability, particularly in multilingual classrooms where the teachers and even the learners may not be well-versed in English (Channa, 2017; Yasmin et al., 2023).

The challenges associated with implementing language policy in English language teaching institutions across Pakistan reveal critical gaps that directly impact the quality and consistency of TESOL practices. Saleem, Batool, and Ijaz (2025) highlight that private ELT institutes often follow unregulated, self-designed syllabi that lack standardization, this leads to fragmented instructional experiences for learners. This institutional autonomy, while sometimes flexible, results in a lack of coherence between national education goals and classroom-level language teaching. In the context of TESOL, such fragmentation not only undermines pedagogical effectiveness but also complicates professional development efforts for teachers who may navigate inconsistent curricular expectations without structured support. These findings reinforce the broader argument that TESOL in Pakistan requires not only improved teacher training and reflective practice but also a coordinated policy environment that bridges national standards with institutional autonomy in a contextually appropriate manner.

Gender dynamics within TESOL classrooms in Pakistan remain a critical yet often overlooked dimension of language education. Teaching practices, teacher-student interactions, and even the selection of classroom discourse can inadvertently reinforce traditional gender roles or marginalize certain voices. In English language classrooms, especially in conservative or rural contexts, female students may experience limited participation due to socio-cultural expectations, classroom hierarchies, or language ideologies that do not account for inclusivity. This concern is echoed in the work of Saleem and Khan (2025), who argue that classroom discourse often privileges certain gendered identities while silencing others, thereby shaping not just access to language but also learners' broader self-perceptions and agency within the academic space.

In general, the historical processes of the development of ELT in Pakistan demonstrate an interaction of the political ideology, socioeconomic factors, and international pressure. English has survived in representing power and opportunity as a language and therefore, issues tend to be systemic and challenges include inequalities in access, level of provision and in teacher professional growth. It is

crucial to understand this historical background in a bid to eliminate the current imbalances in the teaching of English language, and to draw accommodating and context-sensitive TESOL approaches in the future.

TESOL Policies and Frameworks

TESOL operates not only as a pedagogical enterprise but also as a policy-driven field, shaped by ideological, political, and institutional forces. In the context of Pakistan, TESOL-related policies are often influenced by broader national educational strategies, geopolitical affiliations, and global trends in English language teaching. These policies are rarely neutral or universally applicable; they are embedded in complex socio-cultural and political realities that shape their enactment, effectiveness, and implications (Ramanathan & Morgan, 2007).

Language policy in TESOL entails decisions regarding the status of English, curriculum design, teaching methodologies, teacher education, and assessment standards. In Pakistan, such decisions are usually top-down and lack active consultation with practicing teachers, resulting in significant gaps between policy intent and classroom realities. Ramanathan and Morgan (2007) highlight that the process of policy enactment is not linear or automatic; it is mediated by teacher agency, institutional resources, and socio-political contexts. In Pakistan, this mediation is particularly fraught due to uneven teacher training, multilingual classrooms, and infrastructural disparities.

Historically, TESOL frameworks have evolved from prescriptive models to inclusive and reflective ones. Judd (1981) noted early concerns about the disconnects between language policy, curriculum development, and TESOL instruction, emphasizing the need for policies that reflect classroom realities and learner needs. Many TESOL policies in developing contexts like Pakistan remain influenced by externally-driven goals—such as standardization, international benchmarking, and alignment with global economic agendas—rather than grounded in local linguistic ecologies.

Gray (1997) traced the development of TESOL from a primarily methodological discipline to one increasingly informed by interdisciplinary theories and critical perspectives. This shift is echoed by Pennycook (1999), who argues that critical approaches to TESOL challenge the assumed neutrality of English language teaching by interrogating its role in power structures, cultural imperialism, and

identity construction. In Pakistan, such critiques resonate with the elite dominance of English and the persistent inequalities that English-medium education perpetuates, especially when language policies ignore the linguistic and social realities of learners.

The inclusion of teacher reflection in TESOL frameworks is a recent but essential development. Nguyen and Hayati (2022) emphasize that reflective practice is often underrepresented in policy documents, despite its significance in fostering adaptive, autonomous, and context-responsive teaching. Farrell (2014) offers a comprehensive model that embeds reflection at the core of TESOL professionalism, urging policymakers and institutions to empower teachers as reflective practitioners rather than passive policy implementers. In Pakistan reflective practice is seldom institutionalized, partly due to rigid hierarchies in educational institutions and the lack of training in reflective methodologies.

Furthermore, Liggett (2014) proposes the incorporation of Critical Race Theory (CRT) into TESOL to map how language policies often reinforce existing racial, class, or ethnic hierarchies. Though Pakistan's racial dynamics differ from Western contexts, analogous social divisions—based on ethnicity, region, and socioeconomic class—inform the unequal access to English education and, by extension, global opportunity. A critical TESOL framework in Pakistan would, therefore, require policies that consciously address these disparities, supporting inclusive language teaching that values linguistic diversity and learner identity.

In sum, TESOL policies and frameworks in Pakistan exist at the intersection of global influences and local realities. Effective policy may not only define what is to be taught and how, but also create enabling conditions for teachers to reflect, adapt, and respond to their unique classroom contexts. To move beyond superficial reforms, it is essential to adopt TESOL frameworks that are critically informed, teacher-centered, and socially aware—ones that see teachers not merely as agents of delivery, but as professionals capable of shaping and transforming educational experiences within their specific cultural and institutional landscapes.

Role of Organizations in TESOL Development

The development of TESOL as a professional field has been profoundly influenced by the establishment and work of various national and international organizations.

These organizations, which include academic associations, diplomatic language programs, are instrumental in defining practice in teaching, the advancement of professional practices, and the establishment of collaborative structures among teachers of the English language. Such organizations present invaluable opportunities to teacher training, reflective practice, and policy engagement in countries where a systematic problem exists in English language teaching, such as in Pakistan.

The TESOL profession has flourished worldwide and over the years due to efforts made to advance something to be known as pedagogical theory, research and classroom practices. According to the picture of things which Gray (1997) provides in his historical overview, the emergence of TESOL as a formal discipline was made possible through the development of professional organization and teacher unions, which shaped guidelines, conferences, and establishment of communities of practice. This was replicated in many other contexts such as Pakistan where various organizations (PakTESOL, RELO (Regional English Language Office of the U.S. Embassy), the British Council, and other university departments etc.) have been critical in developing the TESOL profession.

Such organizations are not only administrative organizations; they are drivers of change, innovation, and reflection. According to Canagarajah (2016), TESOL is something more than the body of knowledge or a set of practices, being a community of professionals, which flourishes with the values, peer learning and international discourse. This community is also forming slowly in Pakistan via conferences, teacher forums, training programs and cooperative research programs sponsored by various organizations such as PakTESOL and RELO. Such programs further reduce the feeling of isolation experienced by many teachers and particularly those in remote or deprived contexts by providing access to up-to-date methods, resources and systems of support.

A critical function of these organizations is to create and sustain opportunities for teacher leadership. According to Shah (2017), teacher leadership in TESOL follows suit in encompassing educator empowerment to ensure active participation in curriculum, policy, and peer-mentoring activities. As part of the CPD arrangements and teacher leadership discussion groups, organizations will support the creation of a pool of competent, confident, and reflective professionals in the English language field. This is especially so in Pakistani context where English language teachers have

neither institutional authority nor professional acceptability. By instilling leadership positions, organisations subvert the top down relay of pedagogy and instead, encourage teacher agency and autonomy.

A language teacher association in particular is one of the vehicles of strategic planning, network and sustainability in TESOL. According to Uludag (2018), the kind of organizational structure and the strategic plan of the teacher associations also have a major influence of their effectiveness towards professional growth. PakTESOL has become a force to reckon with in Pakistan by organizing regular conferences, webinars, and workshops, which have been attended by educators throughout Pakistan. Events of the type not only spread practices but also give platform to Pakistani teachers to contribute to international discourse on TESOL.

What is more, these organizations promote critical thinking in relation to TESOL paradigms and eliminate the technocratic perspective on language teaching. Pennycook (1999) inserts that a critical lens has to be applied which takes into account the power relationship, identity and linguistic imperialism in the regard of TESOL. Organizations of the said approaches encourage educators in Pakistan to challenge traditional practices, make international approaches contextual, and embrace a culturally and linguistically sensitive pedagogy. As an example, the program of the RELO and the U.S. Embassy are shifting towards culturally accommodative resources and training packages that facilitate international standards and local applicability.

In summary, organizations operating in Pakistan play an indispensable role in strengthening the TESOL profession. By providing access to training, resources, networking, and critical engagement, they elevate the quality of English language teaching and create pathways for sustainable educational reform. Their work not only enhances teacher competence but also contributes to the professionalization of TESOL in Pakistan, aligning it with international standards while respecting local educational realities.

Technology Integration in TESOL

Technology has become an indispensable element in modern language teaching, offering new pathways for learner engagement, resource accessibility, and pedagogical innovation. In the context of Pakistan, where traditional approaches

still dominate much of the English language instruction, the potential for technology to transform TESOL practices is significant. This transformation depends on deliberate planning, infrastructure, and teacher readiness, all of which remain uneven across different regions of the country.

Effective technology integration requires more than just the availability of digital tools—it demands alignment with instructional goals and responsiveness to the learners' sociocultural context. A pedagogical framework that emphasizes the purposeful and contextual use of technology is essential for its success in TESOL classrooms. Research has highlighted that digital tools may be carefully embedded into lesson planning to enhance rather than distract from learning objectives (Yang & Walker, 2015). In Pakistan, where classrooms are often overcrowded and under-resourced, such intentional use is often missing, resulting in sporadic and superficial implementation.

The development of TESOL Technology Standards has provided a global benchmark for incorporating digital competencies into teacher education. These standards, developed to guide educators in planning, implementing, and assessing technology-enhanced language instruction, offer structured pathways to integrate technology meaningfully into teaching practice (Healey et al., 2011). While these guidelines hold promise for professionalizing digital pedagogy in Pakistan, their local adaptation remains limited due to inconsistent training and lack of awareness.

The role of English language education in Pakistan extends beyond the acquisition of linguistic competence; it is deeply intertwined with issues of identity, ideology, and power. English textbooks and teaching practices often reflect implicit cultural assumptions and ideological positions that may not align with local religious or national values. In this context, the work of Habib and Saleem (2016) is relevant, as it emphasizes how academic discourse functions as a tool for constructing and disseminating particular visions of national and Muslim identities. Their analysis underscores the importance of critically evaluating the hidden curriculum embedded within language teaching materials and pedagogical approaches, especially in postcolonial societies like Pakistan where English carries both symbolic and practical significance.

Over the past decade, the range of tools available for TESOL professionals has expanded dramatically. Innovations such as mobile-assisted language learning,

virtual collaboration platforms, and AI-powered learning applications have reshaped how language is taught and learned globally. This evolution has prompted calls to update existing TESOL technology standards and rethink how teachers are prepared to engage with new tools (Sun, 2022). In Pakistan, these advancements have yet to be fully realized, especially in public-sector institutions, where even basic access to computers and the internet is not guaranteed.

Teacher preparedness plays a central role in determining the success of technology integration. Programs that embed hands-on training, reflection, and model digital instruction have been found to produce confident and effective educators. For TESOL teacher preparation in particular, strategies such as integrating tech-rich lesson planning, collaborative online tools, and simulated teaching environments are considered highly effective (Honigsfeld et al., 2009). Teacher education programs in Pakistan frequently omit such digital components, leading to a mismatch between pedagogical goals and technological capabilities.

A well-integrated use of technology can also support differentiated learning by catering to students' individual needs, strengths, and learning preferences. When TESOL standards are aligned with frameworks like Multiple Intelligences Theory, digital tools can help create inclusive learning environments. As an example, interactive applications and games could serve kinesthetic learners and podcasts and digital stories could serve auditory learners (Marquez-Chisholm & Beckett, 2002). There is a possibility of adopting such diverse instruction practices often in the urban Pakistani schools where the use of mobile phones and internet connectivity is rampant.

Technology as well does provide opportunities of informal learning and independent learning that is beyond classroom learning. Mobile phones, YouTube video lessons, WhatsApp study groups and social media platforms provide learners with access to natural language use and allow them to engage in communicating outside of class. Such informal digital learning areas may be liberating especially to Pakistani students who do not receive quality language lessons at school (Chirimbu & Tafazoli, 2013).

In spite of its promise, integration of technology in TESOL in Pakistan has some major impediments. Lack of equitable implementation is restricted by the digital divide, which is characterized by differences in infrastructure, access and digital

literacy. Inadequacy of the internet connection and shorter numbers of trained personnel are particularly a problem in the rural areas. Unless these basic inequalities are dealt with, the decision to revolutionize TESOL by technology introduction can further increase these drawbacks instead of solving these inequalities.

To take a step further, the TESOL practitioners in Pakistan should embrace context-sensitive approaches by integrating international benchmarks and local realities. Professional development and design of the curriculum should be based on sustainable, low cost tools that can be applied in different learning environments rather than duplication of foreign models. Technology can support English language education in a highly cost-efficient way and can be a gateway to equity and effectiveness in English language learning throughout the country when supported by focused investment in teacher training and infrastructure and a stronger focus on critical digital pedagogy.

Teacher Training and Professional Development in TESOL

The quality of English language education in Pakistan is closely linked to the competence and continuous professional development of its teachers. In the TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) domain, teacher training plays a pivotal role in shaping instructional practices, learner engagement, and linguistic outcomes. In Pakistan, teacher preparation for TESOL remains inconsistent and often lacks alignment with current pedagogical and linguistic research. This challenge is exacerbated by under-resourced teacher education institutions, outdated curricula, and insufficient in-service training opportunities.

One of the key determinants of effective language education is the availability of structured and ongoing professional development. Studies from different global contexts have demonstrated that systematic teacher training significantly enhances teaching effectiveness and student performance. For instance, longitudinal research on teacher behavior and student achievement emphasizes that well-designed professional development directly influences classroom practices and, by extension, learning outcomes (Kyriakides, Creemers, & Antoniou, 2009). Similarly, professional development models that prioritize instructional quality, collaborative learning, and reflective practice are shown to elevate teacher competence (Creemers, Kyriakides, & Antoniou, 2012).

In Pakistan, the absence of cohesive professional development frameworks presents a barrier to effective English language teaching. Most teacher education programs—particularly at the public-sector level—focus heavily on theoretical input with limited emphasis on language-specific pedagogy. Furthermore, many TESOL practitioners enter the classroom with insufficient training in communicative language teaching (CLT), second language acquisition (SLA), and learner-centered approaches. This disconnects between theory and practice hinders their ability to implement engaging and context-appropriate language instruction.

A major contribution to the global discussion on teacher training comes from research on the integration of technology into professional development. As shown in the Nigerian context, information and communication technologies (ICTs) can serve as vital tools for enhancing teacher capacity in under-resourced settings (Olakulehin, 2007). The relevance of this insight for Pakistan cannot be overstated. With widespread mobile penetration and increasing internet access, ICT-based professional development programs—such as online modules, virtual mentoring, and digital microteaching platforms—could offer scalable and cost-effective alternatives to traditional models.

The emphasis on sustained, high-quality professional learning is echoed in policy-focused literature as well. Research suggests that one-off workshops or passive training sessions are largely ineffective in bringing about lasting pedagogical change. Instead, professional development might be continuous, job-embedded, and grounded in the actual classroom realities faced by teachers (DeMonte, 2013). In the Pakistani TESOL context, this means creating space for teacher inquiry, peer collaboration, classroom-based research, and locally-relevant case studies.

Moreover, the effectiveness of teacher development programs is often contingent upon the alignment between training content and classroom demands. Teachers benefit most from programs that address real challenges—such as large class sizes, multilingual student populations, or limited instructional resources. Professional development should therefore be situated in the socio-political and cultural realities of Pakistan, rather than imported wholesale from Western contexts without adaptation. This position is supported by research which argues that contextually grounded teacher learning leads to meaningful professional growth (Avalos, 2011).

In addition to these structural considerations, there is a growing recognition that TESOL teacher development also prepare educators for leadership roles within their schools and communities. A forward-looking approach to teacher training encourages teachers not only to master linguistic and pedagogical content but also to become change agents capable of mentoring peers and influencing institutional culture. As highlighted in research from the Center for Teaching Quality, effective teacher preparation programs cultivate both instructional excellence and leadership capacity (Berry, Daughtrey, & Wieder, 2010).

In the Pakistani context, several institutions and initiatives have attempted to respond to these needs. Organizations such as PakTESOL, the Regional English Language Office (RELO) at the U.S. Embassy, and the British Council have introduced capacity-building programs aimed at TESOL educators. These efforts include teacher training conferences, online workshops, resource-sharing platforms, and certificate courses. Nonetheless, these worthy efforts notwithstanding, the scope and the sustainability of such programs are narrow. Access to these opportunities is often an infrastructural or administrative problem that is faced by many teachers, particularly at rural-based or even in the public sector areas.

Systemic improvement means that the training of teachers in Pakistan should be a part of the national policy with references to TESOL as a special and dynamic sphere. Continuous professional development should be a requirement in policy-level intervention that entails the promotion and career development of teachers. Also, the universities, teacher training colleges and international language organizations have formed partnerships that can be used to standardize and modernize TESOL preparation programs nationally.

Finally, the educational reform of TESOL in Pakistan needs an overall reimagining of the process of teacher preparation and accompanying this process with the help of different support means and methods. Professional growth may not be an add-on but should be part and parcel to the teaching profession-it should be planned, managed with dignity and assessed in terms of its effectiveness. It is only with such an approach that this nation can hope to lift the tone of its teaching of the English language and provide its educators with the resources needed to stand the test of time in a global world.

Recommendations for Strengthening TESOL in Pakistan

To foster meaningful progress in the field of TESOL in Pakistan, a multidimensional and context-sensitive approach is essential. One of the most pressing needs is the development of a cohesive national language-in-education policy that clearly positions English language teaching within the broader goals of multilingual education. As Coleman (2010) emphasizes, ambiguity in language policy hampers pedagogical planning and teacher preparation, leading to inconsistent implementation across regions and institutions. Therefore, it is critical for policymakers to articulate a unified vision that integrates TESOL goals with national educational priorities, ensuring that English does not displace local languages but functions in tandem with them to broaden learners' communicative competence and global participation.

An investment in teacher education is indispensable. Many English teachers in Pakistan enter classrooms with limited formal training in TESOL methodologies, particularly in rural and under-resourced areas (Bashiruddin & Qayyum, 2014). To address this, pre-service and in-service training programs should be redesigned to incorporate not only foundational linguistics and pedagogical theory, but also contextually relevant classroom practices. Such programs will need to have pragmatic modules on Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL). Mentoring, collaboration with their peers, and reflective quality practices in teaching should become inseparable parts of the process of developing teachers.

The other important suggestion is to streamline and liberalize engagement of professional development. Urban-based initiatives tend to leave out teachers in the peripheral regions, and this enhances differences in quality. Online websites, geographical centers, and local networks can be used to counteract this shortcoming. The institutional collaborations among Pakistani TESOL organizations and international knowledge base, such as TESOL International, RELO, and the British council should be engaged to a level, and long-time capacity building should be pursued. Such alliances can aid in curriculum redesign, provision of material and research-based pedagogic creativity applicable to Pakistan.

The studies in TESOL have to be promoted and contextualized. A limited empirical investigation in the teaching and learning of English within Pakistan has been carried out on the manner in which English is taught, learned as well as viewed in

various Pakistani settings. The promotion of action research among teachers and granting funds that enable local researchers will enable the field to develop naturally, instead of having to rely on imported ways of researching. By developing a corpus of native knowledge, Pakistani TESOL will become an international as well as a locally contextualized area. A future-oriented TESOL plan in Pakistan thus should be participatory, technologically advanced, policy-supported and research-based and to focus on teachers and students as the main facets of sustainable language education change.

Conclusion

Pakistan represents a complicated and dynamic reality of TESOL with some underlying problems, and at the same time, changing and improving aspects. Although English maintains the privileged status of official and academic language, the real-world experiences in the teaching and learning aspects of English reveals the underlying problems that are related to policy uncertainty, unequal access, and poor teacher preparation. The concern is mismatch between the language planning model as imagined in the top to bottom approach to language planning and the realities on the ground experienced by English language teachers especially in under resourced rural areas. This gap is an obstacle in developing an inclusive and context-sensitive TESOL system to accommodate the needs of different learners in the entire nation.

There should be a level of optimism based on recent developments even though such optimism should be tentative. Projects launched by PakTESOL and other organizations as well as, international organizations such as the U.S. Embassy and RELO have been crucial in the development of collaborative learning among teachers, the development of capacity, and professional standards. Such partnerships are gradually leading to establishment of a professional TESOL community that embraces the spirit of lifelong learning, reflection and innovative practice.

The digitalization of English language learning is another option that makes English teaching available and approachable as technologies and digital platforms have already been introduced into an English language classroom. Properly used, even such a tool as CALL can become a democratizer of learning opportunities, decreasing the urban-rural gap. Simultaneously, critical pedagogy provides teachers

and students with a paradigm to challenge the accepted accounts and to negotiate English through the lens of empowerment and not subordination.

The future of TESOL in Pakistan will rely on the efforts of policymakers, educational institutions, teacher educators, and the ELT community, in general. There is a critical move towards inclusive, evidence-based, locally responsive learning strategies that would to make English language learning less about the divided symbol, and about the equal opportunity. The social construct of TESOL, given concerted initiatives, can be constructed to be resilient, adaptive, and socially just and responsive to the specific sociolinguistic circumstances in Pakistan.

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Article Information:

Declarations:

Authors' Contribution:

- **All authors** **Conceptualization, and intellectual revisions. Data collection, interpretation, and drafting of manuscript**

- The authors agree to take responsibility for every facet of the work, making sure that any concerns about its integrity or veracity are thoroughly examined and addressed

- **Conflict of Interest**: NIL

- **Funding Sources**: NIL

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