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Special Issue: Engaging Research in ELT
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A Stone in My Shoe: An Autoethnographic Research Journey

Mick King[.]

Abstract

This autoethnographic reflection serves as an example of one researcher's journey over a thirty-year career in education. The reflection starts with a justification for researching and identifying a series of chronologically overlapping career stages in which formal academic research started only mid-career. The stages are named: uninformed, obligation, transformation, dissemination, and recognition and take the reader through the pathway from dismissing the need for research to valuing its impact and the opportunities it can create. The drive to research is founded on the continuous aim to find solutions to problems, hence the 'stone in my shoe' analogy of the title. Finally, the reflection ends with a potential blueprint for conducting research. This can serve as a series of suggestions to apply in personal contexts for those at the start or early stage of their research journey or as a motivation for experienced researchers to reflect on their road traveled.

Keywords: Research dissemination, autoethnography, reflective practice, action research

Why Do We Do Research?

As I start to apply a narrative analysis of the research I have conducted, the question is how I should frame this account into what should be a conceptual or theoretical study. As will become evident by my research path, a career-stage analysis, as proposed by England (2020), incorporating the concept of transitions between milestones, is perhaps not appropriate, as my focus is more on research as a service to others than as a part of career path development. Where this account might be framed, then, is within the parameters of autoethnography (Chang, 2008); specifically, evocative autoethnography (Anderson, as cited in McIlveen, 2008), which "foregrounds the writer's personal stories" (Denshire, 2013, p. 3), as opposed to analytic autoethnography with its emphasis on scientific method. Within this framework, I used a narrative approach to share my story, hoping to encourage others on their research journey, be it planned or ongoing.

So, back to the question, why do we do research? Or better said, why do I do research? There are several reasons. And while I can separate these motivations into stages with distinct starting points, the reality is that each step overlaps with and impacts others along the way. A recognized autobiographical approach is to start at the beginning and narrate till the end. While this account follows this trope to a degree, it was relatively late in my career when I became aware of my primary motivation for conducting research. It is what drives me to continue doing so to this day. I call this the 'stone in my shoe' approach; as Robson (2002) suggests, that feeling you have when something is not quite right in your practice and, beyond trial and error, you realize that you do not have an informed solution for it. As my career has oscillated between educational management and classroom settings, by applying a variety of research approaches, I have found solutions for wide-ranging problems, the most recent including supporting teachers who are burning out, assessing the challenges of English medium assessment, and the ubiquitous reflections on emergency online teaching. As you can imagine, this approach has limited the oft-trodden path of becoming an expert in a niche field. For this, I have no regrets. The problem-solution-driven, eclectic way I have chosen has directly informed my practice and broadened my knowledge base and skill set to boot. For those who may accuse me of being a jack of all trades, master of none, let it be known that I wear that badge with honor! This autoethnographic research journey I am about to share escorts you to this point of determining that the stone in my shoe approach was the right one for me and shows how such an approach has opened various doors for me both professionally and academically ever since. It is narrated in overlapping career stages, ending with a reflection - a therapeutic finale in which I hopefully justify research decisions taken in my career recognize where I could have made better choices, and invite you to consider reflecting on your journey, if you are an experienced researcher, but most importantly, taking something away from my blueprint for developing as a researcher if you are not.

The Uninformed Stage

Unlike many practitioners who transition from undergraduate to postgraduate study with little if any break, I spent fifteen years in the profession before returning to university. However, this does not mean that I was not research-active in the broad sense of the word. My school years of the seventies and eighties promoted discovery learning (Richards & Rogers, 2001), so I can remember researching the history of my local church as a 10-year-old (including interviewing a priest!). From my secondary education, I have fond memories of researching with relative independence the history of my local town for a school project. That these are memorable for me, is a testament to the value of instilling research skills in our students. They will not forget those experiences. Alas, my latter years at school and early years at university were rote learning, what was expected to be reproduced in assessments.

Contrary to popular belief, rather than assigning such learning to specific cultures, there is evidence that this occurs universally (Marambe, Vermunt & Boshuizen, 2012), as witnessed in my own education. Thankfully, this changed by my undergraduate dissertation, which pushed me to select and read around my topic judiciously. In those pre-Internet days, I remember making a six-hour train journey to collect some relevant pamphlets from a government ministry. Today we teach students how to navigate the copious amount of information available online. Then the skill was in finding whatever was available.

And so to fifteen years of work. Armed with a degree, a non-accredited TESOL qualification, and with the admittedly beneficial membership of Kachru's Inner Circle of so-called 'native speakers' (Brown, 2007), my research into our profession consisted mainly of bolstering my declarative and procedural knowledge (Ullman, 2015) via books on how to teach grammar and international exam preparation, with some reading of available professional magazines. Suppose we accept that research can inform practice (Kemmis, McTaggart & Nixon, 2014), then on

reflection, I must conclude that my development as a practitioner was founded on a minimal knowledge base, the unfairly privileged position of being perceived as a 'native speaker,' a trial-and-error approach to what worked and what did not, a lot of enthusiasm, and in general terms, good evaluations. As a result, I did not see the need to change my method much. I was possibly overconfident in my abilities as I had no reason to question them.

During this period, I ran a small language academy and worked for a Dutch university before running a foundation department on one of their branch campuses. There are times in life when good fortune shines on you, and securing a post with the Dutch university was one such occasion as problem-based learning (PBL), as espoused by Moust, Bonhuijs, and Schmidt (2001), was its learning model. All faculty were trained as PBL tutors for content subjects, so I was inducted into an inquiry-based approach to education (Levy, 2015) and became a voracious reader of the management literature the students were consulting to be up to speed with them. Furthermore, as students were being pushed to conduct various business and research projects right through their four years of professional education, I also became acquainted with different research models as I tutored them on their journey. These were enriching years in convincing me that maybe it was time for me to renew my research journey.

The Obligation Stage

I had always been somewhat dismissive of the need to study further. In the early years of my career, I could not see the point as I seemed to be doing fine without it. We all recognize that not everyone has access to undergraduate or postgraduate education (McCowan, 2016), so it is with some shame that I view my arrogance at that time. However, I believe such a position is not uncommon. Teachers with this perspective tend to be very unwilling to have their abilities and knowledge questioned, lest they are seen to be lacking. That said, I do feel that my work ethic merited my securing posts to that point. I knew I had been fortunate, given my lack of formal postgraduate study. I also knew that for a long-term career in academia, as Johnson (2011) proposes, such research was necessary, and I would experience that need once again in my life when musing over starting a doctorate. On both occasions, my initial motivation was not anchored in a desire to change the world but more to change my position in that world by increasing my employability.

For my first postgraduate experience, I chose a Master of Science to conduct empirical research. While I was looking forward to it, it was clear in my mind that this was first and foremost a practical decision. Again, this is not uncommon. Education aids personal and socioeconomic growth (Project B, 2019), and generally, we cannot pursue one without the other. Thus, I prepared for my degree with a focus on quick completion to make myself more marketable. It was a personal obligation to myself to secure my future and probably, in hindsight, the worst reason to do anything. Thankfully, once I started the program, my focus changed, and so began my academic research career.

The Transformation Era

Embarking on postgraduate study was my quantum leap where everything I believed in, I started to question. My program had been designed primarily by eminent academics in the field of task-based learning (Nunan, 2004; Willis, 1996), which is the language learning approach most closely aligned to the PBL system I was acquainted with. As I started to read research-based academic books, I began to feel intellectual vulnerability, but far from feeling imprisoned by my ignorance, I felt liberated. I reveled in the adage that the more you learn, the more you realize how little you know. Choosing a modular, empirical research program obliged me to investigate various aspects of my practice, using multiple research approaches that included action research (AR) (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Reason and Bradbury, 2001). AR is often called practitioner-led research, where teachers conduct interventions in their practice based on a perception that this will lead to improvements in teaching and learning. While I had made changes in the past based on the various stones in my shoe, I was no longer fishing around blindly for solutions. For some assignments, I was now experimenting in my work, not based on a hunch, but based on strong theoretical grounding where I could justify the need for my research and apply it to my teaching and managing with an evidence-based solid conviction that it would, as per one of the tenets of AR, make people's lives better (Glassman, Erdem, & Bartholomew, 2012).

In these 30 months, I conducted AR on teaching literature review writing more effectively and teaching dissertation writing using a PBL approach. I tested the efficacy of employing extensive reading to encourage university students to read academic textbooks. I also used other research approaches to investigate the impact of top-down

assessment decision-making on teachers. Finally, I analyzed the challenges for faculty in implementing content and language integrated learning. I started my doctorate of education straight after the master's degree, such was my reignited enthusiasm for learning, and a similar modular cycle allowed me to apply various research approaches to consider the impact of assessment washback on teaching and learning; to investigate the plight of Indian TESOL teachers working in the Arabian Gulf; to propose a model for evaluating experienced TESOL teachers differently to their novice counterparts, and to explore content teacher challenges in using English medium instruction with low-level L2 learners. Each of these studies addressed stones in my shoe, and holistically they ensured my research approach was eclectic. Each one made me feel I was doing something worthwhile.

This phase in my career was exhilarating and has formed who I am as a researcher and practitioner today. My initial selfish focus on my career development was usurped by my underlying need to find solutions to problems, and this is ultimately why I feel we should research - to improve our own professional lives and the lives of those around us. However, if we focus on our environment, the number of people we can help is limited. This leads to another reason we do research: to share it.

The Dissemination Stage

Although starting a little later than the transformation stage, this stage ran concurrently early in my postgraduate study. I realized the importance of getting my research endeavors out to a broader audience. I admit that I again saw the need to do this to develop my academic career. However, a negative appraisal of this goal is perhaps harsh. We often need to publish and present as part of academic expectations thrust upon us by recruiters and employers, and sometimes it is a contractual obligation for tenure or renewal. However, my main aim was to share my experiences and findings, hoping that others might benefit from them in their contexts (Wilson, Petticrew, Calnan, & Nazareth, 2010). Dissemination took the form of two outlets: presentation events such as workshops and conference sessions, and publications, and here I need to promote the role of professional language teaching organizations (LTAs) in facilitating both (King, 2018).

Educational work environments outside academic universities are unfortunately not always hotbeds of research, so an avid researcher may have to plow a lone furrow, which can be a lonely task requiring huge intrinsic motivation. One way around this is to involve your students in the research you are doing, not just as research subjects but as interested onlookers (Rose, 2009). I have found that students are fascinated by knowing what you are doing; this makes them more motivated in acting as participants and attaining knowledge of research skills for application in their study. Another way to circumvent a disinterested work environment is to join an LTA.

Around the time of my first postgraduate research project, I started to take advantage of professional development opportunities in local events. Alongside the exhilaration of immersing myself in academic literature for my study, I was suddenly surrounded by like-minded academics with a thirst for learning; this led me to join my regional LTA based in a neighboring country and submit my first master's assignment as a proposal for their annual conference. Thankfully, it was accepted. I still remember the trepidation of taking that first step in presenting in a small hotel meeting room to a small audience and the amazement I felt when they seemed interested! I submitted my paper to the proceedings, and my oral and written dissemination journey had begun. Johnson (2011) sees LTA involvement as an excellent outlet for ongoing postgraduate and doctoral research, so when I moved to that neighboring country one year later, I increased my involvement. During my study, I managed to present and publish every assignment. Presentation output ranged from international conferences to local workshops. In contrast, publication output ranged from international edited editions to the LTA conference proceedings, its specialist book collections, and its journal. I have continued to disseminate non-study-based research during my study years and ever since.

I regret little in my dissemination journey. Indeed, I regret nothing concerning my LTA involvement, as it brought me into contact with internationally renowned academics in the field and allowed me to get my research into the public domain (King, 2018). However, had I the opportunity to reset, I would make a few strategic adjustments. First, I would increase my online footprint more (Oliver, 2017). Much of my research appears in print editions, so only those who buy the books will get to read my analysis. I have rarely published in online journals, which are more accessible, and often more valued in research circles (Woodrow, 2014). I am also yet to upload draft versions of publications to dedicated open-access personal online platforms. As not everyone can access journals, I do feel that presenting research can be more democratic. It's easier to prepare and allows for deeper real-time analysis and engagement with recipients. However, not all conferences are free, and not all institutions will fund attendance.

While I can do nothing about the past, the COVID pandemic has provided many opportunities to be seen and heard. Teachers take advantage of often free online learning and professional development opportunities. Having now presented online on various occasions where the audience has numbered in the hundreds, I think back to that handful of people who attended my first conference presentation in the small hotel meeting room. What a long way we have come. From a research perspective, we need to continue to harness the power of technology (European Commission, 2018).

As I have not published in journals so much, at times, I have internally berated my alma maters for not teaching us how to do this. However, I must also accept that I did not take the necessary steps to find out how to do this for myself. I also regret not publishing my doctoral thesis. However, the power of technology means that if something is housed online, it is accessible. My thesis sits in a university repository, which means it is accessible to all (Jones, Andrew & MacColl, 2006). It has been downloaded or viewed more than a thousand times. When I discovered this, just like when that small conference audience asked me questions about my first conference presentation, I was amazed that so many people might find something I wrote worth investigating. This is clear evidence that we cannot keep research to ourselves. People are interested in what we have to share, and the more we share what people find helpful, the more likely they are to seek us out.

The Recognition Stage

Before proceeding, I hope that my continued surprise at others' interest in my output is evidence that you do not have to be a TESOL luminary to get an audience. They are recognized in the field on merit, but all of us who have something to share will find practitioners and researchers who are willing to listen (King, 2011), and the more you research and disseminate, the more you will be heard. Similarly, interested parties will reach out to you. For example, some of my recent research projects include teamwork in researching the challenges of running language departments; co-researching with a former mentor on an assessment of EMI programs; co-researching emergency online teaching with an early research career colleague; and presenting at several online events. All of these opportunities have arisen due to invitations to participate.

While in my case, this recognition stage did not fully overlap with the dissemination stage, there must have been a point where the amount of work disseminated, hopefully, accompanied by a certain quality standard, led others to start reaching out (Ansmann et al., 2014). I mentioned earlier that many academic researchers must stay active to keep tenure, so the extrinsic motivation is palpable as employment depends on it. I have been, from my perspective, fortunate to steer clear of such environments for most of my career, which has allowed -me in general terms to focus on those personally relevant stone in my shoe moments, or at the very least become involved in projects which are exciting or will allow me to work with people I like and admire.

I have alluded earlier to the good fortune in my career, and I am indeed very grateful. However, as the research I have conducted and disseminated has been a choice rather than an obligation, I humbly take some credit for my efforts that have hopefully benefited others in their research and practice, and led to my being invited to participate in projects or contribute to publications. It should be added that it is not only research involvement that may be requested. The broader field of professional development is an area where people are likely to contact you if you have a body of disseminated research behind you. Summing up, you are more likely to get recognition if you have something to be recognized for. One such element of credit is meaningful and valuable research that helps peers in their professional lives.

The Reflection Stage

Reflecting on the stages of my research career, my goal is to provide a personal blueprint for people to consider in the context of their careers; be they experienced practitioners and researchers, experienced practitioners who want to increase their research activity, or early career professionals who wish at some point to start conducting research. For those with a similar background to mine, this may be a chance to remind yourselves of how good and important your work is. Maybe you will have come across something new to consider. For everyone else, please use this reflective blueprint as an a la carte menu of considerations for you to assimilate into your professional lives as required.

To commence, we should recognize that we are constantly dealing with stones in our shoes in life. Whether we take a rudimentary or academic approach to remove that stone, we will use existing and new knowledge to do it,

and this shows that we all can conduct research to address problems. By addressing professional issues as they arise via scholarly study, we can broaden our knowledge base and skill set. Unless we need to specialize in a particular niche area of our field, we are more likely to become rounded and employable practitioners as a result. By choosing to research stones in our shoes, we can produce findings that are meaningful, practical, and hopefully transferable to fellow TESOL professionals' contexts.

It should also be noted, as in my case, that it is never too late to start postgraduate study and the research that it entails. Indeed, the years of prior experience provide fertile ground for informing the research you may conduct for your study. In effect, you hold an advantage over those with less practical experience and enrich your peers' study environment as a result. Not everybody has access to study, but if you do, do not waste that opportunity. Do not end up later in your career frustrated by your inability to remove the stones, constantly fighting to gain professional respect from your peers, and going through the motions. For those for whom such study is not an option, it is worth noting that research is not only in the domain of formal degrees. Via self-initiated practitioner research, for example, you can also transform your professional lives and the lives of those around you.

Although I would encourage everyone to use different research approaches, AR is one of the most accessible and democratic. Individuals can exercise their sphere of influence most easily and change their professional experiences for the better most directly (Denscombe, 2007). Hence, it is a great starting point for picking out those stones. Suppose you do this within the confines of formal study. In that case, it is acceptable to reap the benefits for your career development in terms of remuneration and prestige, but not at the expense of meaningfulness. I am sure that we are all aware of the adverse outcomes of doing something we find irrelevant and unenjoyable. AR allows you to combine work and study to produce positive effects.

Once you have removed the stones from your shoes, it is vital to ensure that you share your experiences with others so they may benefit from your findings. It can take the form of oral presentations and workshops, publications, or other formats where professionals come together to share, bond, and collaborate. An LTA membership is a perfect networking launch pad for this as long as you are willing to be an active member (Ansmann et al., 2014). It is important to remember that - contrary to any belief that your research is only relevant to you - many people will be eager to know what you found in your study. They will consider transferring it to their context. Like you, they want to learn and improve their practice, so believe in yourself and what you do and take the leap. The more you disseminate, the more assured you will become in doing so.

Use technology to be seen, read, and heard; be that via publication or presentation. The former is well established via online journals, professional periodicals, and even books, although accessibility can be an issue. However, our *new normal* world has democratized through verbal dissemination via online presentations, and these are usually provided free of charge, so I would propose that unless your employer needs evidence of publication, presenting may have more reach and impact, as it is more accessible and allows for immediate engagement and feedback.

Finally, in answer to the initial question 'Why do we research?', we do so to inform ourselves and others and to exact positive change in our professional environments. By accessing findings, we learn, and by sharing results, we give others the chance to learn. Without research, there is no change for the better, so we should all feel obligated to conduct it in whichever way is possible and meaningful to ourselves and those around us. We can do so safe in the knowledge that there is an audience out there. We are a community of teachers; we are a community of researchers. Together let us rid ourselves of those pebbles digging into the soles of our feet and walk confidently forward.

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Building Literacy as a Walk-in Tutor: A Volunteer's Perspective

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Abstract

Illiteracy is a daunting challenge facing Pakistan. The enormity of this issue dictates that set-ups outside of traditional educational ones be explored to give individuals excluded from the formal schooling system a chance to become literate. It also requires that each individual plays their role in this task. This article focuses on the potential of volunteers to combat this problem by outlining an adult literacy program in the United States. The purpose of this article is to illustrate how public spaces such as libraries operate to facilitate the general public's acquire literacy and how volunteers can play their part in this service. The features of the author's work as a walk-in tutor are comparable to Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) to fulfill their functional needs in an informal, outside-class setting. The author, possessing all her academic and professional experience in Pakistan, narrates her journey describing how she got on board, how she was equipped for the job, what she learned, and the challenges during the process. In this way, the experience led the author to build her intercultural competence. In the end, the implications of this model for the Pakistani context are discussed. It is hoped that this sharing of knowledge will help establish similar programs in Pakistan.

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Introduction

While no one disputes the value of literacy in a society, there is a lack of consensus on its definition (Kaestle, Campbell, Finn, Johnson & Mikulecky, 1999). The New Literacy Studies scholarship considers language and literacy as social practices rather than technical skills learned in formal education (Street, 1997). It emphasizes the development of language and literacy in natural social settings, using the students' backgrounds and personal experiences. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) collects data on literacy "through population censuses or household surveys in which the respondent or head of the household declares whether they can read and write with understanding a short, simple statement about one's everyday life in any written language" (UNESCO, 2020). Going by this definition, in 2017, the rate of literacy in Pakistan was around 59% in the age group of 15 years and older (UNESCO, 2020). Adult literacy is an area that needs our immediate attention.

There are both public and private initiatives to combat this menace. The National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) is an autonomous body of the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training that runs the Adult Literacy Program (Hanemann, 2017). This is a large-scale government initiative that targets young people and adults aged between 11-45. On the other hand, there is Aagahi Adult Literacy Program launched by The Citizens' Foundation (TCF) that aims to provide non-formal literacy, numeracy, and basic skills training to adults in the private sector. Besides these, several NGOs run different programs all over the country (see *figure*). However, there is a lack of information on how these programs are designed, the recruitment process of trainers and how they are trained, the needs of the learners, the resources available, and the instruction process.
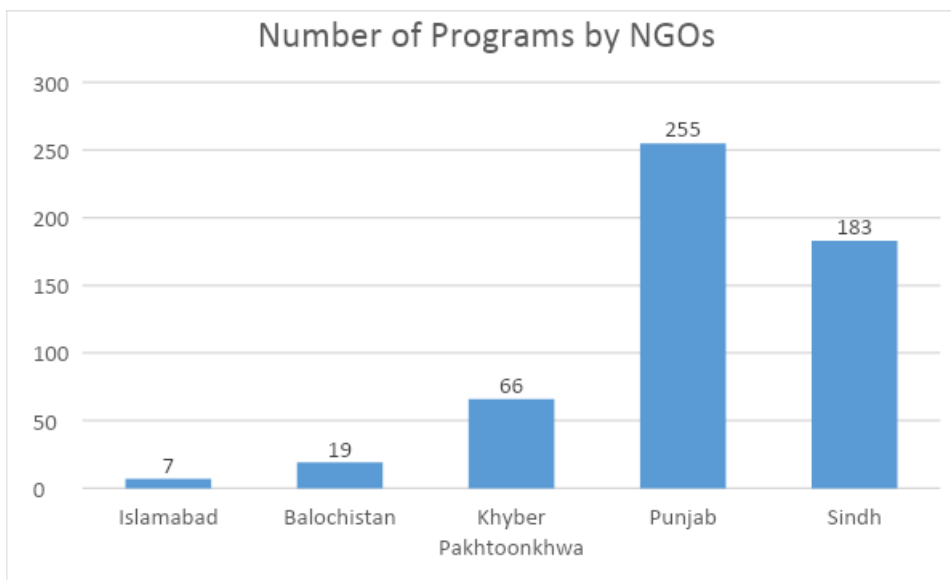

Figure 1: Source Directory of NGOs Working on Literacy and Adult Education 2008

The unsurmountable challenges of illiteracy make it obligatory to explore different pathways of spreading adult literacy. This article portrays one way to increase opportunities to learn literacy in English by employing volunteers.

Volunteering is a useful way of utilizing the skills, knowledge, and time of thoughtful individuals in community building. The use of volunteers in adult literacy programs is relatively common in the United States (Belzer, 2006). On the contrary, in Pakistan, this utilization is lacking (Hamid, 2016). School, college, and university students, especially in urban centers, are valuable resources that can be utilized for the expansion of literacy programs.

Most of the literature on adult literacy in Pakistan deals with policy analysis or results of large-scale programs. It is also rare to find an adult literacy tutor's perspective on these aspects. This paper will attempt to fill this gap by providing an insider's view of volunteer-based one-to-one literacy instruction in the United States. To raise awareness of the issue, offer an insightful analysis of a program, inspire similar programs in Pakistan, and motivate individuals to contribute to their communities. It must be noted that the provision of adult literacy that occurs in the present context is similar to TESOL. Therefore, the model described here holds implications for TESOL practitioners.

Overview of the Program

The Los Angeles Public Library is a department of the City of Los Angeles with 73 locations within the city, out of which 21 offer adult literacy programs. The Singleton Adult Literacy Center[i] is the flagship location for these services. The Center's Mission Statement states that it "endeavors to provide learning opportunities and services that address unique individual and diverse community needs with the objective of improving adult literacy, basic technological competence, and job skills in the city of Los Angeles" (Los Angeles Public Library, 2018, p. 1). The Center offers three main adult literacy programs: one-on-one tutoring, conversation classes, and walk-in tutoring. In this way, the program provides for continuity of learning opportunities beyond the initial level.

This article deals with walk-in tutoring, which involves one-on-one, 15-minute sessions for tutees, providing them added literacy practice. Therefore, the purpose of walk-in tutors was to supplement main literacy classes and how basic literacy was achieved in participants is beyond the purview of this article. This was a whole-week, free-of-cost service provided to anybody who visited the Center. The program ran throughout the year, and only public holidays were observed (when the library itself was closed). My shift was every Friday from 10:00 a.m. till 1:00 p.m.

Recruitment of Volunteers

When I came to Los Angeles in January 2019, I started looking for voluntary work to keep myself engaged. I hold dual graduate degrees in linguistics and education with a decade-long career in a private sector higher education institute in Karachi, Pakistan. Naturally, education is the cause that I gravitated towards.

While searching for some voluntary positions online, I came across a website volunteermatch.com, where I could find a match between my skills and interests near my place. Thus, I ended up applying to the Los Angeles Public Library's Singleton Adult Literacy Center as a walk-in tutor. This was my first brush with adult literacy, and initially, I was unfamiliar with what it entailed. The job advertisement asked the interested applicants to use their English language skills to fulfill the varied needs of diverse learners. Since adult literacy was a new field for me, I decided to apply.

Background and Needs of Learners

While most of my teaching experience had been in formal classroom settings, this was a completely different set-up. There were people of other races, ages, first languages, and socio-economic levels. The non-native speakers usually had an intermediate level of proficiency, so I did not have to teach them basic English.

Most of the people who signed up for the sessions were regulars, and I was impressed by their dedication. Through my interactions, I learned that their reasons for language learning were primarily to integrate with the larger society or land better jobs. Given the constraints that a 15-minute session imposes, I could only focus on simple issues and, consequently, could marginally improve their overall literacy. Most people wanted to enhance their reading skills and read aloud short passages, some needed feedback on their writings, and some preferred to practice their speaking skills, while others desired to take the TOEFL and therefore work on their test-taking skills. The native speakers usually required assistance in performing daily tasks such as filling in forms, applying for jobs, setting up email accounts, or navigating cell phones. This last one was interesting, for I worked with an elderly gentleman for quite a few sessions, teaching him how to use his cell phone. These experiences reflect the diverse needs of the community the Center was serving.

One critical distinction between these adult literacy learners and my undergraduate students back home was the seriousness of their drive for learning. The former had keenly experienced the disadvantages of the society due to their low literacy levels; this propelled them to work much harder to improve their literacies. Hence, in most cases, the self-motivation of adult literacy learners is relatively higher than students in typical learning contexts (Sandlin & St. Clair, 2005).

Developing the Volunteer Resource Training

While the work was voluntary, I was both interviewed and trained for the position. The interview assessed my background and commitment, while the pre-service training ensured that I had adequate skills for the job. My

interview, which lasted 15-20 minutes, was conducted by the literacy program coordinator, who asked me questions ascertaining my skills. After successfully passing the interview, I had to undergo two-part training: a short online course and in-person training. The online course consisted of a general program and library information, information about learners, one-on-one tutors, and walk-in tutors. The SOPs outlined the job's main aspects, including ethical guidelines (e.g., home tutoring was not allowed). The theoretical elements covered learning styles, different ESL proficiency levels, strategies for reading, etc. I had covered in my Master's in Linguistics at the University of Karachi. The course worked as nice brushing up on theory. It was weirdly an ego boost that my skills and knowledge, developed exclusively in Pakistan, were coming in handy in this developed world.

The in-person training required me to observe another tutor's session, which taught me how to conduct the sessions. First of all, the tutor had to write their name and date on top of the sign-in sheet and put it on the desk. Then, they had to place a sign on the desk that indicated that the tutor was ready to begin. Tutees had to write their names on the sign-in sheet along with the area/skill they wanted to work on, and the sessions were conducted on a first-come-first-serve basis. Specifying the purpose of the visit gave a clear focus to the sessions. If there was only one tutee, I could continue working with them till my shift ended. The seating arrangement was such that both the tutor and the tutee sat on the same side, ensuring that the tutor could easily monitor the reading.

In the session I observed, the tutor was carrying out a conversational activity with the tutee. Some cards had prompts written, e.g., describe your favourite holiday destination, the three objects you always carry with you, which historical figure inspires you most, etc. Both the tutor and the tutee were taking turns answering these questions, with the tutor orchestrating a conversation by asking follow-up questions and sustaining the dialogue. I noticed the cordial learning environment created by the tutor and decided to maintain a similar setting in my sessions.

By the end of the training, I gained confidence that I could handle my responsibilities. This meant that even though the job was voluntary, all tutors were prepared for tutoring.

Materials and Tools

While I was free to bring my learning materials, the Center had a wide variety of teaching resources. There were graded readers, storybooks, dictionaries, grammar books, a set of cards for speaking practice, and desktop computers. There was a graded newspaper (www.newsforyouonline.com) with interesting news events that tutors frequently used to teach vocabulary. I found myself using these resources and rarely felt the need to bring something of my own. In any case, since the needs of the learners were diverse and specific and I could not predict what I would require on a particular day, I could not plan my sessions and so bring any resource from home.

As far as selecting resources was concerned, I had the autonomy to make the selection as I saw fit. Usually, when the learner expressed a desire to read, I would take them to the designated section in the Center where they would pick a graded storybook of their choice. In this way, a balance between the learner's interests and needs was maintained.

Reporting Outcomes of Tutoring

At the end of each month, I was emailed a link through which I submitted my report. The form was pretty easy to fill in, and I had to log in information such as how many hours I spent commuting, tutoring, and preparing for the sessions and the number of tutees who attended the sessions. Other than this quantitative data, I could also provide any qualitative feedback to improve the program or any problem I faced.

Key Learnings and Challenges

My biggest takeaway from this experience was that illiteracy is not just a developing world problem – that there are scores of people lacking in basic literacy in the heart of Los Angeles, just a few paces away from the glitzy world of Hollywood. Illiteracy is genuinely a global challenge. This underscores the need for more similar intercultural experiences and sharing of knowledge as I was able to see the links between my academic and professional experiences in both Pakistan and the United States.

For instance, I realized the importance of non-native English-speaking teachers in TESOL and started to believe that they play a role in increasing the motivation of adult learners. There is growing literature on the role of non-native English-speaking teachers in students' attitudes and motivation towards language learning (Pae, 2017), and

my experiences indeed contribute to it. As a non-native English-speaking TESOL instructor, I formulated a special relationship with other non-native speakers. One major reason for this could be that they were inspired by my fluency and accuracy in a foreign language and were hopeful that they could achieve the same if they worked hard enough. They commended that I spoke such "good" English and were surprised when I told them that English is taught in schools in Pakistan. Our common migrant background also facilitated building an affinity between us, and they could relate to me as "one of their own." My profound understanding of the circumstances and needs of the learners from my comparable circumstances certainly worked to my advantage. My knowledge of the systems in their countries of origin and an advanced understanding of their learning biographies helped ensure successful educational interaction. For example, I could readily help a student improve his TOEFL scores since I was well-familiar with the test. To conclude, this experience reinforced my own identity as a non-native TESOL instructor and enriched my knowledge of intercultural instructional practices. It also calls for more diversity in the tutor workforce to correspond with the learner diversity.

As far as challenges are concerned, there were times when I found myself unable to scaffold the learners satisfactorily. Once a young person came to read who seemed to demonstrate some reading disabilities. My lack of knowledge of reading disabilities did not equip me to offer him much benefit. Moreover, this topic was not quite emphasized during the training. Sandlin and St. Clair (2005) also raise the concern that volunteer tutors are often poorly equipped to deal with reading disabilities and highlight this area as deserving further attention. Thus, I realized my constraints as a teacher and some areas of improvement in the pre-service training.

In addition, I felt that there was a lack of checks and balances on the instruction techniques adopted by the tutors, and they could adopt any method they wanted. This can often be the case in one-on-one tutoring. In my practice, I mostly drew on my knowledge of best practices. For example, during the reading aloud session, I found myself focusing on pronunciation only to the extent that it did not lead to miscommunication. Since I could not hold the native speaker standards, I would correct the learner's errors only when I could not understand what they said. These experiences lend support to Maley's (2019) argument that teachers "build their theories of teaching and learning through a continuing process of reflection on their lived experiences. It is this process which fuels their personal and professional growth" (p. 6). Hence, the instruction techniques taught during training may not translate into practice. Belzer (2006) argues that "it may be more useful to completely rethink the training model by investing less upfront and shifting these resources to more intensive on-the-job support and development" (p. 137). In light of these observations, perhaps more supervisory ongoing support should be provided instead of relying solely on pre-service training.

Overall, the work brought me great personal satisfaction, and I thoroughly enjoyed this experience. All the people were quite friendly, and the library staff was also pleasant to work with. Once a man I helped fill out an employment application and prepare for an interview, later on, came to tell me the good news that he got the job. On World Librarian Day, I, along with other volunteers, was invited to the local council meeting at City Hall in downtown Los Angeles to recognize the services of all the volunteers. It was beautiful to see how our contribution was valued. I went home that day with a nice T-shirt and other library merchandise as a token of appreciation. These rewarding experiences enhanced my motivation to continue working as a volunteer.

Implications for Pakistan

The given article details an adult literacy program that incorporates several important characteristics, including sensitivity to the needs of the participants, myriad learning resources, adequately trained staff, and efficient reporting mechanisms. Nevertheless, the author does not claim that the approach described in this article can be easily replicated in Pakistan. There are fundamental contextual differences that cannot be ignored.

To begin with, the conceptualization of the term "literacy" has to capture a range of everyday activities. At the moment, it is defined as the ability to "read and write a paragraph in any language with understanding and ... make simple calculations" (Directory of NGOs Working on Literacy and Adult Education, 2008, p. 4). My work as a walk-in tutor enabled people to perform different skills – filling in forms, sending and receiving calls or text messages, submitting employment applications – all these functions formulate the definition of literacy in a broader sense.

Furthermore, the question of what language – Urdu, English, and/or a regional language – to gain literacy also arises and renders itself to multiple perspectives and complexities. For example, do we have adequately trained staff and material resources to run a program in, say, Sindhi? Irrespective of these language policy debates, the program described in this article can be used to gain English literacy and be modified to suit our needs. The example of the

Aagahi program also highlights the importance of English, for it had to later include an English component on demand of learners. This indicates that there is a need to learn English as well.

Lastly, with the growing number of cellphone users in Pakistan, the dimension of mobile literacy is necessary to be embedded in our definition of literacy. It will make technology more accessible for continuing education. Overall, it is essential to evaluate our notion of literacy in policy and expand it from just being able to read and write to include multilingualism and to perform a range of functions.

There are several benefits of enlisting the services of volunteers in spreading adult literacy. It can provide a low-cost way of overcoming this problem while also allowing individualized instruction to meet the specific needs of the learners (Belzer, 2006). My work was not such that it required a highly trained and qualified individual – all it needed was my time and commitment. Nevertheless, my experience of language teaching certainly helped me understand the nuances of my job. Besides instruction, volunteers can also be used to coordinate or supervise adult literacy programs, like in Aagahi programs. Therefore, program administrators and policymakers need to create avenues for young people to contribute their time and skills and permit them to make effective changes.

The website that connected me to the library was also quite helpful in finding voluntary work that matched my skill set. It is crucial to design similar portals in Pakistan for people, especially students, to discover voluntary positions and for employers to advertise them. We need platforms where different stakeholders can come together.

These days some top-ranking higher education institutes in Pakistan include voluntary work as part of their admissions criteria, which can be a further incentive for students to engage in community building. School teachers in urban areas can encourage their students to participate in voluntary work, especially in adult literacy. English language teachers, in particular, can identify students with a good command of English to help people with basic language needs. When I got involved with the program, I was reminded that when students complete their matriculate or intermediate certificates, they sign an undertaking that they will make at least one other person literate, but not many fulfill that promise. Tapping into the emotional satisfaction of the potential volunteer coupled with better advertising of the voluntary positions would help increase the rate of recruitment.

Moreover, it is fundamental to invest in building public spaces as sites for adult literacy programs. As depicted in this article, Libraries can be favorable spaces for running such programs, but sadly, Pakistan lacks the required infrastructure to unlock its potential. The Adult Literacy Program, for instance, operates in community learning centers. The Aagahi program runs either in the homes of the instructors (who are hired from local communities) or TCF schools. There should be venues where people who have dropped out of school could go to acquire basic skills. Perhaps libraries of private schools can be mobilized to start literacy programs. This will also link the schools with their surrounding communities.

My challenges in not adequately handling reading disabilities made me wonder how do tutors deal with this in Pakistan. People with special needs and learning disabilities constitute a large chunk of the illiterate population (Directory of NGOs Working on Literacy and Adult Education, 2008). Future research can explore the issue of reading and learning disabilities in the context of local languages. On the other hand, observing the particular learning of participants in the current program can be a rich site for future research.

Conclusion

Adult literacy is an area that needs to be focused on in efforts to raise the literacy levels in Pakistan. In cases where it is stressed upon, the emphasis is generally on large-scale efforts, and small steps in this regard are typically neglected. There is also a lack of information on the recruitment and training of adult literacy instructors in these programs. This article extended the existing knowledge base by documenting the workings of an adult literacy program in the United States through the eyes of a volunteer. By providing a volunteer perspective, the author brings back the focus on the role of individuals in this regard. The author's work as a walk-in tutor offered opportunities for both personal development and meaningful service. The author's experience underscores the importance of volunteers and how they can significantly make a difference in a community. The author hopes that her narrative presented here will inform adult literacy policy and practice.

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The Dialogic Circles of Digital Pedagogy:
Reconceptualizing Research and Teaching Practices in ELT

John I. Liontas[.]

Abstract

The primary purpose of this article is to establish "The Dialogic Circles of Digital Pedagogy" as a dynamic construct that permeates and molds old and new theories, practices, conceptions, values, and beliefs of identity formation and negotiation in communities of practice. The focus is on establishing the central precepts for investigating identity development and agency assertion in diverse learning-to-teach settings undergirding didactic cycles of critical reflection and informed professional practice. Five such premises—Discursive Spaces, Digital Storytelling with a Twist, Language Teacher Identity, Theoretical-Practical Knowledge Constructs, Communities of Practice—are appraised in detail to promote the curricular structure envisaged herein and those awaiting conceptualization still. Applying an exploratory teacher-researcher approach, the premises represent the organizational scaffold around which *the dialogic circles of digital pedagogy* can now be more fully explored to benefit pre-service and in-service teachers alike, irrespective of the social or professional settings in which these discursive exchanges take place. Finally, it is concluded that these dialogic circles, steeped in scientific inquiry processes that treat learners as potential co-researchers of their classroom environments, can indeed propagate greater understandings of how to "practice theory" and how to "theorize practice," especially if new reconceptualizations of pedagogical progress involving the transformative power identity has over one's notion of professional knowledge are genuinely sought in today's teacher education programs, teacher cognition and professional development opportunities in ELT notwithstanding.

Keywords: Identity Development, Agency Assertion, Discursive Spaces, Digital Pedagogies, Teacher Education Programs, English Language Teaching

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Introduction

Understanding language teacher identity is not a new topic in the literature of teacher education. Nor is it a new area of research in second/foreign language teacher education programs. Yet, even at the doctoral level, teacher identity and language teacher identity continue to fuel focused discussions and research, respectively. Unsurprisingly, pre-service and in-service teachers are often asked to explore and express their (language) teacher identities. More often than not, such narrative expressions of teacher identities are imaginations and descriptions of themselves as teachers, learners, or both. At other times, previously held self-conceptions of themselves attain new understandings of agency in negotiation with other individuals (Peercy, 2012; Yazan, 2017). In the process, learning-oriented practices and participatory structures shift and alter how they position themselves or are positioned by others in "communities of practice" (Clarke, 2008; Wenger, 1998). And still, at other times, contextual factors including, but not limited to, ideologies, beliefs, perceptions, experiences, emotions, and understandings of theory and practice in varying communities and social settings impede or impel negotiation of identity to new realms of affective understanding. Add to race, gender, and linguistic identities a healthy dose of social, cultural, and (geo)political contexts, and the ensuing discoursal interactions of all these theoretical-practical knowledge constructs are certain to metamorphose one's multiple constructions of the ever-evolving nature of (language) teacher identity (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Nguyen, 2016a; Nguyen, 2016b; Trieu, 2009).

Indubitably, both pre-service and in-service teachers are capable of examining their ongoing constructions and reconstructions of identity, even when "agency," "investment," and "commitment" appear to be as confounding a notion as they are transformative, especially when such ideas, either individually or collectively, are sure to impact the theories and practices underlying the conceptions, values, and beliefs they long perceived to hold since their early training days in English language teaching (ELT). How to capture and analyze those perceptions of teacher identities within dialogic precepts exhibiting critical reflection and informed professional development remains the subject of intense investigations worldwide (Manh, Nguyen, & Burns, 2017; Nguyen, 2017; Nuangpolmak, 2017; Patil, 2008).

Against the backdrop of such introductory remarks, this article reconceptualizes insights gleaned from previous exploratory practices into a single organizational framework I have here named "The Dialogic Circles of Digital Pedagogy." For ease of presentation, insights are arranged in five theme-based premises: Discursive Spaces, Digital Storytelling with a Twist, Language Teacher Identity, Theoretical-Practical Knowledge Constructs, and Communities of Practice. These premises represent the organizational scaffold around which the dialogic circles of digital pedagogy can now be more fully explored for the benefit of pre-service and in-service teachers alike, irrespective of the social or professional settings in which these discursive exchanges occur. They establish the central precepts for investigating identity development and agency assertion in diverse learning-to-teach backgrounds. They are sufficiently appraised throughout to promote the curricular structure envisaged herein and those awaiting conceptualization still. And they undergird "imagined" and "lived" didactic cycles of critical reflection and informed professional practice as these ostensibly permeate and mold old and new theories, methods, conceptions, values, and beliefs of identity formation and negotiation in communities of practice. Herewith, a brief examination of the nuances underlying teacher identity and language teacher identity.

Literature Review

Not to be overly litotic here, but teacher identity (TI) and language teacher identity (LTI) have undergone definitional change and expansion, especially over the last three decades. Clarifying the interrelationship among the core concepts is no longer as clear-cut as it once appeared in the literature (e.g., Barkhuizen, 2017; Cheung, Park, Ben Said, 2015; De Costa & Norton, 2017; Kanno & Stuart, 2011; Mercer, 2017; Norton, 2013; Varghese, Motha, Park, Reeves, & Trent, 2016). Today, teacher cognition, teacher biographies, teacher emotions, teacher identity development, teacher learning, teacher apprenticeship, teacher participation in communities of practice, and contextual factors are still some of the most important constructs researchers and language practitioners try to cognize more deeply. Understandably, in many teacher education programs worldwide, pre-service and in-service teachers are often asked to express their perceptions of teacher identities or write about their "aspired," "imagined," or "lived" identity-related experiences (Barkhuizen, 2016; Mahmoudi-Gahrouei, Tavakoli, Hamman, 2016; Phuong, 2017). How teachers define their identity "voice" is often the subject of divergent multimodal/multisensory interpretations. For example, some ELT teachers are asked to write about their "teaching self-images," from "identity perceived" to "identity aspired/imagined" to "identity experienced." Alternatively, others are given the freedom to compose a poem, write a song, or tell a story that captures the essence of one's identity formation and development or even the

manifestation of multiple identities. And still, others are asked to artistically paint a polychromatic picture, sing a song, or play an assumed role that promotes identity exploration, negotiation, or both.

In all these creative endeavors, and there are many more I could reference here, the goal remains the same: to understand the transformative power identity has over one's notion of knowledge base and competencies, teaching-and-learning activities and practices, teacher cognition, and professional development opportunities, and personal dispositions and efforts of investments made in learning practical theory-to-practice processes and obligations (Reis, 2015; Song, 2016; Wolff & De Costa, 2017; Yazan & Peercy, 2016). With each new "imagined" or "lived" experience, patterns of interaction and collaboration with other colleagues (and learners), irrespective of the social or professional settings in which these exchanges take place, both underscore and regulate in distinct ways how pre-service and in-service teachers (re)assert and (re)position their agency discursively (Kanno & Stuart, 2011; Kayi-Aydar, 2015), and, perhaps, more importantly, how they see themselves concerning others and the world around them. Indeed, making sense of self (self-image) necessitates the contemplation of bias-free dialogic events that propagate greater understandings of how to, on the one hand, "practice theory," and how to, on the other hand, "theorize practice."

A perfunctory survey of the available literature alone will show the many entwined layers comprising the core of LTI as a genuinely "individual and psychological matter" (Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, & Johnson, 2005) which, albeit equally conceptualized as a "real-world phenomenon" taking place in various instructional or professional venues, is principal "socially constructed, contextually situated and continually emerging (and changing)" (Goh, 2017) over time with self and others, participation in glocal communities of ELT practice notwithstanding (see here, for example, the English language education policies in Korea [Choi, 2007] and South Korea [Chung & Choi, 2016], Hong Kong [Harfitt, 2020], China [Hu, 2005; Wen & Hu, 2007], Japan [Koike, 2007], Cambodia [Tweed & Som, 2015], Philippines [Madrunio, Martin, & Plata, 2016], Pakistan [Manan, David, & Dumanig, 2016], India [Ramanathan, 2016], Nepal [Phyak, 2016], and Sri Lanka [Walisundara & Hettiarachchi, 2016]). LTI is thus closely linked to the professional choices and "possibilities for the future" (Norton, 2013) which teachers are often asked to make. Over time, their construction of identity, much of which is readily recognized, appreciated, and sustained through shared social and professional discourse, evolves into a powerful hybrid construct capable of accommodating multiple identities. These constructs, in turn, permit the investigation of diverse roles teachers seem to assume while carrying out their respective duties (Barkhuizen, 2016; Farrell, 2017). Such investigations also allow the "simultaneous enactment of an agent's subjectivity in real-time discursive (semiotic) processes situated in local, social, and historical circumstances" (Donato, 2017, p. 26), perhaps because, as Barkhuizen (2017) puts it, LTIs are "core and peripheral, personal and professional, they are dynamic, multiple, and hybrid, and they are foregrounded and backgrounded" (p. 4). Moreover, they "change, short-term and over time—discursively in social interaction with teacher educators, learners, teachers, administrators, and the wider community (Barkhuizen, 2017, p. 4).

Under such conditions then, it is only prudent that in exploring their "self-image and other-image of particular teachers" (Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, & Johnson, 2005, p. 39), pre-service and in-service teachers employ self-reflection as a heuristic tool to cognize who they are and how they "self-position and are positioned by others as teachers" (Block, 2015, p. 13). The importance of the role of self-reflection aside, Wolff and De Costa (2017) emphasize the need for teacher education to promote reflexivity and agency for non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) to develop confidence and positive perceptions of their own identities. Emotions and related affective factors such as insecurity and motivation play an increasingly important role in developing NNEST teacher identities. (For a complete account of the essentialization and dichotomization of language teacher identities into NESTs and NNESTs, explicitly addressing the inequity in the field of language education and the marginalization of language teachers, see Yazan & Rudolph, 2018; see also Jeon, 2016.) Along similar lines, there is a need to adapt language teacher identities to those that promote learners' investments in learning. Learner investment, as Norton (2017) suggests, is located "at the intersection of identity, capital, and ideology" (p. 82). Here, too, ELT professionals need to reflect on their own experiences of language learning, or what Ellis (2018) refers to as their "languaged lives" (p. 15), and how they perceive themselves as both teachers and learners of English.

So contextualized, I now present an account of the discursive spaces in which doctoral students were asked to explore, construct, and deconstruct knowledge through critical dialogic engagements and shared events.

Discursive Spaces Re-imagined

As already noted at the outset of this article, carefully planned discoursal interactions of theoretical-practical

knowledge constructs can indeed transfigure the ever-evolving nature of (language) teacher identity. For optimal results, perceptions of teacher identities are best explored in learning environments promoting critical reflection and informed professional development tackling real-life challenges. Most assuredly, creating such environments is as important as the conditions and the materials permeating the curricular structure in which the perceptions pursued are to be captured and analyzed. Unfortunately, articulating the specific requirements considered important in appreciating the particularities between practicing theory and theorizing practice remains a challenge not always made relevant in today's teacher education programs (Ilieva, 2010; Lee, 2016; Peercy, 2012), especially when those programs involve current trends, issues, and tensions in English language education (e.g., Choi & Lee, 2008; Tsui, 2004)), curricular decisions (e.g., Madya, 2007), or English educational reforms (e.g., Hiranburana, Subphadoongchone, Tangkiengsirisin, Phoochaeoensil, Gainey, Thogsongsri,... & Taylor, 2018).

Following an epistemological orientation grounded on the principles of egalitarian dialogic learning (reason, discussion, argument, questioning, explanation), doctoral students were counseled first to cultivate active discursive spaces of agency and critique that intentionally instill a sense of belonging and build healthy relationships fostering a sense of community and a sense of shared purpose. They were then asked to identify, formulate, and explore innovative digital technologies believed to facilitate language teaching and learning, analyze and critique published research reflectively, and survey and assess those digital alternatives purporting to inform, guide, and enhance academic content and language learning practices. After that, they were encouraged to engage in problem-posing participatory praxis, shared reflection, and action as a means of raising critical consciousness of themselves and others, of their learning and diversity of voices, and of their lived experiences and worldviews. Irrespective of theory or pedagogical practice explored, having now acquired a critical awareness of their own condition. Condition, they had to engage each other in a meaningful and authentic manner, respect individual voices affirming different sets of priorities, values, and views from multiple locations and spaces, and develop conjoint agreements and procedures on collaborative projects pursued and the design roles each group member agreed to take therein. Moreover, these digital creations (8-10 minutes long informercials/containments), following learner-initiated and learner-centered inquiries grounded on the ART of Persuasion—Aristotle's Rhetorical Triangle or A(ristotle's) R(hetorical) T(riangle) of Persuasion (the rhetorical appeals of *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*)—had to exemplify their collective agency in which their individual linguistic and sociocultural identities and voices could be clearly heard, affirmed, and understood and, perhaps, even more pointedly, make personal dialogic learning through the canons of rhetoric and acts on imagined or perceived classroom situations all the more relevant to their daily realities and aspired/lived experiences heretofore elicited, invented, or advanced. Helping teacher-inquirers understand culturally relevant pedagogy in diverse classrooms that are mediated by culture and social interaction through engagement in dialogue-oriented toward specific digital skills, strategies, or processes may well epitomize the multi-dimensional character of dialogic exploration and discovery of the didactic cycles of critical reflection and informed professional practice ever so intentionally seek to attain (Gu & Benson, 2015; Liontas, 2020; Mannion, 2020).

The precepts representing the organizational scaffold around which these didactic cycles can now be more fully explored for the benefit of pre-service and in-service teachers alike, irrespective of the social or professional settings in which these discursive exchanges take place, have already been applied twice in doctoral courses addressing applications of technology to second language acquisition and foreign language education (Summer, 2018; Eisenmann & Summer, 2020). They are now seen as significant and transformational in empowering doctoral students to voice their agency, both individually and collectively, in a self-guided and self-disciplined manner. Information covering the course itself—FLE 7700: Applications of Technology to SLA and FL Education—including course devices, purposes, and procedures will not be explicated herein so as not to repeat content already addressed elsewhere (Liontas, 2020). Instead, the most important insights gained from analyzing the identity-related themes are précised hereafter as twenty terse statements. For ease of presentation, all affirmations are prearranged anew in Table 1 in five theme-based premises. These premises comprise the nucleus of digital pedagogy the next section introduces in more detail.

Table 1.
Identity Themes Summative Insights

Language Teacher Identity
● LTI is an ongoing dynamic cognitive construct that is never fully precast, molded, or formed. All notions of identity are continually rethought and recast.

- LTI is closely aligned with the theories, practices, conceptions, values, and beliefs teachers have about themselves and others engaged in the profession—they collectively comprise an interactive system of knowledge and cognition that furthers and refines the development of identity formation.

Theoretical-Practical Knowledge Constructs

- How teachers learn to perform their profession, theorize practice, educate students, and act-react-interact and collaborate with other colleagues in social and professional settings exerts a profound influence on how they process and understand the dynamic and ever-changing nature of teachers identity. These "frames of reference" help teachers transform and renew their learning theories and teaching practices.
- During the transition from "pre-service teachers" to "in-service teachers" and from "language learners" to "language professionals," professional knowledge attained is iterative and ever evolving.
- The transition from a "student self" to a "teacher self" is subject to the "investments made" in developing one's own professional identity. Similarly, the transition from "doctoral students" to becoming "teachers" or "language professionals" is dynamic and ever changing, often linking active identity negotiation to teacher education courses.
- Dialogic interactions, collaborative work, professional development opportunities, and further study enable teachers to (re)construct their professional knowledge. Teaching self-mage is amenable to change over time just as lived or imagined LTI knowledge is transformative in nature.

Communities of Practice

- Critical discussions of race, gender, class, language, religion, nationality, and sexuality influence the situations individuals experience and the roles they embrace to (re)assert and (re)position their individual or collective agency based on current, developing, or aspired/imagined self-identifications.
- Participation in communities of practice, including those performed in social and professional settings, frequently reworks doctoral students' self-conception and imagination of themselves as "learners" and as "student-teachers" concerning others and the world.
- Identity-related experiences developed over time and across space define, mold, and transform the identities doctoral students wish to maintain, negotiate, or (re)assert dialogically in social interactions with self and other individuals in which they position themselves and are positioned by others.
- Teacher learning and teaching practice exert a strong influence upon identity formation and development, resulting in a complex web of co-dependent identity-related experiences deeply rooted in meaning-making procedures of commonly accepted knowledge, beliefs, and values.

Discursive Spaces

- The creation of discursive spaces affords doctoral students the opportunity they need to (re)assert and (re)position their individual or collective agency with adaptable degrees of emotional intensity across contexts and over time.
- Contextually situated and socially (re)constructed in real-time semiotic processes, the discoursal interactions between and among doctoral students lead to frank expositions of subjectivity commonly positioned in local, social, or historical circumstances.
- Identity formation and development is an ongoing investment of emotions and agency assertion that is discursively maintained, negotiated, or (re)asserted in social interactions with self and others.
- Engaging in dynamic discourses of educational technology-infused language pedagogy exerts much influence upon the settings in which doctoral students negotiate their agency and developing identities. The ensuing negotiations afford them valuable opportunities to (re)construct and perform multi-faceted identities while also engaging methodically in discourse and negotiations related to curricular demands and student interests.

Digital Storytelling with a Twist (DS+)

- DS+ projects, from the simplest to the most complex, are the epitome of self-actualization and self-discovery.
- DS+ projects are the prime modus operandi of creative expression through which storytellers transcend digital discursive spaces in teacher education programs.
- DS+ projects cultivate identity development-and-negotiation and agency assertion in diverse teaching-and-learning contexts, especially when applied with a purpose and for a purpose.
- DS+ projects embody the ever-evolving process of discovery and rediscovery of intricately interwoven practical knowledge, which, firmly grounded in authentic digital pedagogies, further facilitates the multi-dimensional nature of digital storytelling.
- DS+ projects empower storytellers to explore their evolving identities through discussion and negotiation of critical reflection on perceptions of ideologies, pedagogical approaches, professional development, and personal experiences with language and culture.
- DS+ projects challenge storytellers to generate and conduct their evaluation heuristics while addressing all pre-established conception-design-development-completion project parameters.

In what follows next, I discuss distinct notions of LTI that combine with time-tested theory-to-practice constructs to present a theoretical underpinning already proven empirically to support the arguments previously presented, especially those involving identity development and agency assertion.

The Dialogic Circles of Digital Pedagogy

This section establishes the central precepts for investigating identity development and agency assertion in diverse learning-to-teach settings I named "The Dialogic Circles of Digital Pedagogy" (Figure 1). The precepts discussed here are conceptualized as a dynamic framework that is comprised of five interlaced rings (Theories, Practices, Conceptions, Values, Beliefs) in two primary (red, blue) and three secondary (orange, green, violet) colors, respectively. All rings are of equal dimensions to not aggrandize the prominence of one dialogic circle over another.

Figure 1. The Dialogic Circles of Digital Pedagogy

Combined, the pentad-colored rings are displayed in a continuous overlapping ring pattern on a white field in the center (the top two circles, from left to right, are orange and green; the three bottom circles, from left to right, are red, violet, and blue). Singly, "Theories" interlaces with "Conceptions" and "Practices," and "Practices" interlaces

with "Theories" and "Beliefs." Similarly, "Beliefs" interlaces with "Practices" and "Values," and "Values" interlaces with "Beliefs" and "Conceptions." Finally, "Conceptions" interlaces with "Theories" and "Values." No single ring is disjointed from the next ring to the left or the right. Centered within each ring (precept) is the overarching theme that both focuses and delineates the discoursal landscape of each dialogic circle. Five such landscapes are featured here: Discursive Spaces (Theories), Digital Storytelling with a Twist (Practices), Language Teacher Identity (Conceptions), Knowledge Constructs (Values), and Communities of Practice (Beliefs). Each theme guides and expands the foundation upon which the five precepts are conceptually organized in overlapping 1:2 patterned interrelationships (e.g., Theories with Conceptions-and-Practices, Values with Conceptions-and Beliefs).

Individually and collectively, the polychromatic colored rings not only show a variety, or a change, of emerging understandings surrounding identity development and agency assertion in ELT contexts too fluid to capture in the design of a single framework, far more importantly, they represent the coming together (confluence, synergistic merging) of distinct theories, practices, conceptions, values, and beliefs that both empower and promulgate the continuity of the wholeness of each interlocking precept, and thereby, the symbolic unity of the digital pedagogy dialogic circles here engendered. In summary form, Table 2 captures the significance of each precept sans its synergistic relationship to the others. The single premises embedded within each precept introduce the exploratory and interpretive stances each precept embodied alongside individual and collective accounts promoting dialogic exploration and discovery.

Table 2.
Theories, Practices, Conceptions, Values, Beliefs

Discursive Spaces educe…
Discursive spaces educe the theories (realities, methods, procedures, transparency, efficacy, falsifiability) pre-service and in-service teachers resort to discussing openly and candidly the facts previously known to exist by experience or observation. Grounded in objective evidence, the relevance of research findings is explored in CALL Applications and Digital Environments; Applications, Software, and Hardware in FL/ESOL Language Classrooms; Artificial Intelligence and Idiomaticity; Augmented and Virtual Reality; Authenticity and Authorship in Digital Worlds; Emerging Technologies and Cultural Considerations; Gaming in SL Education; MALL and Language Skills Integration; Multimedia CALL and Professional Standards; SL/FL Proficiency Computer-adaptive Tests; and Teaching Approaches, Theories, Models, and Call History.
Digital Storytelling with a Twist exemplifies…
Digital storytelling with a twist exemplifies the practices (processes, techniques, guidelines, standards, habits, behaviors, mindful effort, course of action) pre-service and in-service teachers employ to design, build, and test established and emerging theories, models, and/or systems. In addition, digital creations (infomercials) are employed methodically as the primary theory-to-practice construct for personal critical reflection and peer-to-peer collaboration to help learners explore, discover, and articulate more deeply their evolving pre- and post-conceptions, values, beliefs, and theories of CALL-MALL (computer-assisted language learning or mobile-device assisted language learning) practices in education in general and second/foreign language education in particular.
Language Teacher Identity (LTI) encompasses…
Language Teacher Identity (LTI) encompasses the conceptions (intuitive theories/knowledge, general notions, abstractions/conceptualizations, concept maps, viable designs/plans, empowering thoughts, patterns, conceptual understandings, generalizations, inferences, definitions, impressions, perceptions, comprehension, self-concepts/images/actualizations, requirements, knowledge verification, testable specifications) pre-service and in-service teachers embrace about others and themselves, the roles they assume and/or fulfill, and the positions they take in different contexts to uncover and develop their own (language) teacher identity/ identities. The multi-faceted nature of LTI helps learners contemplate actions and understandings of their teacher education practices and, concomitantly, negotiate their place in the larger society in which they live and work.

Knowledge Constructs entail...

Knowledge constructs entail the core values (guiding principles, decision-making ideas, ideals and standards of competence/ morality/forgiveness, cognitive processes/measures, traits/qualities, emotional intelligence/investment, collaboration/cooperation/teamwork, responsibility/accountability/commitment, achievement/fairness/ diversity/inclusivity, innovation/creativity/success, respect/dignity, integrity/ethics/honesty) pre-service and in-service teachers hold and follow in their professional practice over time. Values are internal, subjective, and malleable. They are deep-rooted in the philosophy of values even when such a personal belief system is not universally accepted. They define teacher behaviors in various situations: who teachers are as individuals and professionals and how they behave, communicate, and interact with others in the world. And they influence the choices and the order in which decisions are made.

Communities of Practice epitomize...

Communities of practice epitomize the internal (individual/collective) beliefs (assumptions, assumed truths, tenets, convictions, foundations of mental attitudes/acts and behaviors, shared opinions, conditions, mindset, mental representations, priorities, trust, confidence, openness) pre-service and in-service teachers hold to be true, suitable, or desirable exclusive of actual evidence or proof to anchor and model their social and professional behavior and understandings of themselves, the world around them, and their (personal/professional) futures. Thus, in more ways than one, communities of practice help learners become reflective, engaging, collaborative, and competent users of their content and technology knowledge.

It is through the unity of these interlocking/interweaving multicolored rings that the five-ringed symbol, itself enfolded by the continually changing nature of LTI, displayed here in ten essential pairs of identity-related notions, finds its ultimate currency in the themes (doctoral) students are willing to reflect on, analyze, adapt, and apply to their teaching practices irrespective of the global settings in which they continue to learn and work. Expressed differently, LTI, read vertically from left to right, requires investments in the agency just as identity development involves negotiating roles one is willing to assume. Conflict-free integration results from dynamic positioning, just as (self-)actualization is the product of (self-)perception. Any conception of identity formation is subject to deep cognition, which, in turn, stimulates the imagination to produce further reflection. Conversely, LTI, read horizontally from left to right, demands liberal practice to overcome shared struggles (tensions) with identity discovery, just as participation entails honest and direct interactions with self and others. The self-image(s) resulting from such dialogic interactions can be further refined through practice-based procedures expressly designed to address unusual solutions to common challenges not yet answered. The judicious application of theory-to-practice techniques engenders the needed identity transformation(s), which, in turn, produces enriched understandings of knowledge (funds of knowledge) not otherwise fully attained.

Collectively, these pairs of identity-related notions (Investment-Agency, Development-Negotiation, Integration-Positioning, Actualization-Perception, Conception-Cognition, Imagination-Reflection, Practice-Struggle, Participation-Interaction, Image-Procedure, Transformation-Knowledge) are affixed in four squared corners (Practice-Investment, Imagination-Struggle, Knowledge-Reflection, Agency-Transformation), the solid built construction of which would be hard to dismiss as purely inconsequential here. On the contrary, the bi-directional interrelationship of each identity-corner further expands and strengthens the bi-directional interrelationship of the other identity-corner sited diagonally, from angle to angle. Together, the two congruent diagonals across the rectangle bisect each other at their point of intersection to frame the nucleus of the digital pedagogy the LTI structural area (two pairs of parallel sides, four right angles, two right triangles) here represents. Connecting the identity-corners, from a vertex to a non-adjacent vertex, stretches the cross-pollination of ideas, visions, and ideologies of identity-based constructs from one corner of the rectangle to the opposite corner through the center of the LTI area upon which the pentad digital pedagogy dialogic circles, rising like giant granite columns, is securely anchored into the bedrock.

Said another way, there can be no meaningful learning (practice) without concerted effort (investment), just as there can be no focused input (reflection) without purposeful output (knowledge). Similarly, there can be no resourceful exploration (imagination) without personal labor (struggle), just as there can be no material change in internal understandings (transformation) without subjective engagement (agency). Simply put, there is a symbiotic connection between Practice-Investment and Reflection-Knowledge. The former exerts much influence on the latter and vice versa. And while the quantity of effort and time invested rarely, if ever, guarantees the quality of awareness and understandings attained, they nonetheless exert significant influence on the aftereffects learners are sure to experience. Analogously, the reciprocal relationship between Imagination-Struggle and Transformation-Agency is not in dispute. Here, too, each cognitive-psychological construct (concept) of interest informs and exposes the fluid state of the other via the propositions asserted and the constituent conditions (variables) commonly subjected to investigation and analysis. Abstractly defined always, these interactive constructs aim to provide coherent explanations (both intermediate and end outcomes) to related (pre-)suppositions whose collective value (currency) is only as valid as the experiences in which these perceived and ideal conditions are to be evaluated heuristically to account for known facts or conjectures and, ultimately, accepted, rejected, or replaced with other planned constructions or philosophical positions propagating the (re-)discovery of new ideas and their associations.

It is important to observe here that the nourishment of ideas, visions, and ideologies of identity-based constructs is not restricted to connecting the identity-corners only—far from it. It can occur in a bi-directional flow along the perimeter (the sum of all sides of the rectangle), further influencing the internal-external connections between the adjacent identity-related notions. For example, similar to a falling row of dominoes, investment (upper left corner, from left to right) can impact development, which, in turn, can influence integration, and so on, until the cumulative force-motion effect produced is completed end-to-end. Said linked sequence can equally commence at any one of the remaining three corners. It can also run in any direction (left to right, right to the left, upwards, downwards) and begin with any LTI notion in either direction along the perimeter path. Worth noting here is the apparent Domino Effect, that is, any "change" made to a single identity-related notion will activate, in a linear sequence, a chain reaction of similar changes and cause a shift in the notion flanking it, which will then cause another similar change or action, and so on. The cascading effect of potential and kinetic energy ends when the last standing LTI notion is toppled at the end of the line. Alternatively, any single notion with its pair of adjacent notions on either side can become the focus of attention. For example, knowledge (lower right corner) can be examined with either Procedure or Reflection in a triangular action-reaction-interaction fashion. But knowledge can also be entangled in a web of relations with other notions between and across all parallel sides independent of its local positioning in the whole of the LTI area, thereby decreeing novel "frames of reference" not previously surveyed. More than a dozen such interrelationships are thus attainable for each notion, creating in the process a dynamic, ever-evolving network of meaningful connections and interactions amidst the remaining notions; in short, a dynamic yet flexible web of intricately interwoven knowledge triggered ever so readily in real-time semiotic processes.

Awaiting linkage within the system, all twenty identity-related notions along the quadrilateral perimeter underscore the continually shifting nature of LTI. Amenable to change across contexts and over time, an interactive system of interconnected and co-dependent notions warrants a reexamination and reconceptualization of the initial nexus of their ascribed interrelationships and their interdependence within the larger emblematic unity of the digital pedagogy dialogic circles hitherto propositioned.

Conclusion

This article established The Dialogic Circles of Digital Pedagogy as a dynamic conceptual framework upon whose structure future research and teaching practices in ELT may be reconceptualized for the benefit of pre-service and in-service teachers, respectively. Because teachers and students both engage in identity exploration and negotiation, often in defiant discursive spaces, they not only cultivate and transform their multiple identities, significantly, they combine or overlap their intersecting social identities and related cultural experiences to voice their shared characteristics conjointly in varying configurations and identity-making processes deemed appropriate for their local educational and social contexts. And it is through such poignant value-laden discourses that pre-service and in-service teachers and students negotiate and enact their respective roles, find and express their voices with adaptable degrees of emotional intensity, and develop and affirm their collective agency in various local contexts too numerous to address here (see, for example, Le & Yeo, 2016; Le, 2015; Too, Vethamani, & Kabilan, 2020). Throughout, they develop the requisite motivation and self-affirmation to sustain their individual and professional development. As a

result, both their self-presentation (perception of their image) and self-completion (display of the ideal self) expressed through verbal and non-verbal communication, combined with cognitions, beliefs, ideas, or values about the self, are regulated and controlled by the information (perception of input) made available in discursive spaces in which egalitarian dialogic learning is highly prized. In turn, said information is dependent upon the time, place, and audience in which the shared interactions emerge, often contradictory, the combination of which directly impacts and determines their personal growth and progress made through the ever-evolving process of self-evaluation (the critical self-sense of who one is across time and space and how others perceive one). Their self-concept (self-image, self-esteem, ideal self) is thus fluid and shifts throughout one's life and professional career (Martel, 2015).

Indeed, how teachers, both individually and collectively, define themselves in their professional work and lives while employing multiple meaning-making systems of knowledge, beliefs, and values that continuously evolve over one's career impacts a multitude of dimensions not easily captured in any one of the LTI definitions offered to date. These dimensions, they are intricately interwoven as they are interrelated, comprise a fluid network of variables that include, but are not limited to, the teaching-learning theories and practices they theorize and transact, the theoretical, curricular, and practical knowledge and resources they apply in teaching settings, and the pedagogical perceptions and conceptions they pursue in learned communities. In turn, these ever-changing constructs of individual and social perspectives are further refined by the professional activities and sociocultural-political contexts in which they engage, the dialogical relationships they develop in their chosen communities of practice, and, increasingly, the effort and energy they invest in problem-solving settings mirroring imagined or lived experiences meriting serious consideration (e.g., Akram, 2017; Tsui, 2020; Wen & Zhang, 2020; Zein, Sukyadi, Hamied, & Lengkanawati, 2020). Finally, the conceptions and expectations other people have of their professional selves, both real or perceived, and the emotions they invest in critically assessing their self-reflections and assumed responsibilities, manifold and fluid as these may ultimately be, largely determine the professional growth they experience and, as a consequence, the multiple personal and professional identities they develop, transform, and enact across time and space (Bashiruddin & Qayyum, 2014; Song, 2016; Widodo, 2016).

In closing, The Dialogic Circles of Digital Pedagogy, metaphorically speaking, is the practice-centered toolbox of ideas ELT professionals may choose to use to help their learners maximize opportunities for collaborative real-world learning with their peers. Reconceptualizing research and teaching practices in ELT worldwide is a necessary first step toward a future full of promise and explorations awaiting discovery still. The didactic cycles of critical reflection and informed professional practice are all but certain to advance the impetus for change and agentive action in language education. LTI explorers willing to answer the call for engaging research in ELT may find in the digital pedagogy dialogic circles the nourishing soil they seek to begin planting the seeds of change, a dynamic, transformative process filled with the promises of a brighter tomorrow. With time, as the seeds begin to germinate in the rhetorical public sphere, they grow progressively hardy able to supplant dated "theories" and "practices" with new "discursive spaces" and "digital creations" intended to interconnect with and further enrich and nurture the "conceptions," "values," and "beliefs" that underlie an array of novel understandings of and first-hand connections with "LTI," "knowledge constructs," and "communities of practice." In these dialogical biomes, following copious investments of time and effort, precise amounts of nutrients, sunlight, shade, and water aside, the seeds of change and transformation continue to thrive and propagate still more with every new action enacted, a perception shared, critical consciousness attained. A veritable cornucopia of knowledge indeed. To foresee and appreciate the organic potential in something yet to emerge is the transformative power not yet fully enacted. The voice not yet heard, the seed not yet planted, the flower not yet pollinated. The end is truly the beginning. The beginning of the end. The Alpha (A or α) and Omega (Ω or ω). The first and the last. The dialogic circle. There we shall start to transform the ELT field, a green oasis in the middle of a vast and arid desert. An island of life in an ever-changing ocean of rippling dunes that LTI so clearly is for so many of us the world over. There we shall quench our thirst for engaging research in ELT. And there, we shall plant our date palm trees seeds, one one-seeded fruit at a time. After all, to see things in the seed is genius (Lao Tzu).

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Using Mobile Phone in English Language Teaching Classrooms in Pakistan

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Abstract

The study explores the potential of using mobile phones in English Language Teaching classrooms in the Pakistani context to help Second Language Learners to improve their English Proficiency skills through mobile phone language Apps. The study surveys mobile phone usage among school, college, and university students. Thirty (30) participants participated in the project; fifteen each in control and the experimental group. The targets of the study were to develop the pronunciation, vocabulary, spelling, tense, and syllable knowledge of the students in English and engage them in activity-based learning for developing the listening speaking skills of the students at a broader level through the language apps like Hangman, Vocabulary, SAT vocabulary App, Syllable Structure App, Google Translator. The control group received teaching through traditional techniques, whereas the Experimental group received language teaching through language apps on the mobile phone for four weeks of one-hour daily class. The post-test results show that the experimental group, taught language through mobile phone applications, significantly improved their language skills. However, the control group that was taught through traditional methods did not improve.

Keywords: Mobile Phone, English Language Teaching, Language Applications, Activity-based learning (ABL)

Introduction

Pakistan English language teachers need to be multidimensional. English is taught as a subject rather than a language, and students focus on passing the exam and secure good scores.

It is normative to teach English as a subject. As it is a second language, teachers find it challenging to teach English as a language. Teachers using novel techniques for developing students' vocabulary face challenges such as covering the syllabus and meeting deadlines. Mansoor (2019) stated that teachers also use old traditional methods like GTM for teaching language and do not bother to develop students' communicative skills like pronunciation, vocabulary, and proficiency. Because of the traditional language teaching methodology, students remain passive and unable to develop their language proficiency in L2 (English). In the classroom, language teachers face issues, such as large classes, lack of ELT Trainings, lack of awareness of language teaching methodology, inadequate teaching facilities at the institutions, and lack of technology for language skills, which affects their teachings. Bell (2018) argues that, while learning a language, students often face problems in deciding their aim for learning the second language. Teachers find it difficult to motivate. It has been observed that students do not take an interest and do not cooperate with the language teachers. A general perception in Pakistan is that students take English, Urdu, and Arabic as easy subjects and do not study these as seriously as sciences such as physics and chemistry. In the Pakistani context, English language teachers mostly use traditional teaching techniques including, lectures and engaging students in language drills for language structures. Raza (2018) reports numerous instructors concluding that project-based tasks minimize this behavior by permitting pupils to use their fancy and originality and allowing them to vigorously express themselves in a range of stimulating and entertaining tasks. Mansoor (2019) concludes that an activity-based task, guided by students' interests, also supports allocating the limited facilities of the schoolroom setting to the real world, where students are freer to use separate learning styles and make individual selections. In the modern era, when everyone is technology-dependent, mobile phone technology can be helpful if utilized for language teaching in Pakistan.

However, Pakistani teachers do not allow students to use a cell phone in class. Bringing phones to classrooms and schools is highly discouraged; ELT students are no exception. Their pet phrases include "No Cell Phone" and "Switch Off your Phone." This disdain is guided by the common belief that students will use their cell phones for sexting, playing games, video calling friends, using social media, and wasting time. Hence, they commonly consider cell phones as tools for wasting time. The current research explores how these challenges can be turned into opportunities by utilizing mobile phones. It can contribute towards effective classroom language teaching and improved language skills of the students. This paper argues how English language instructors can have their students use Cell phone technology—which is not a stereotypical, well-thought-out and instructive device—to develop English language skills and gain language knowledge and effective teaching practices in the classrooms Pakistani context. Moreover, the paper also tests the hypothesis that using cell phones in language classrooms negatively affects students learning process.

The importance of the English Language in the Pakistani context

In Pakistan, many researchers are working on Language teaching and are trying to follow the modern standards of language teaching. Richards (1985) & Mansoor (2019) state that "achieving communicative competence in a second language involves not only knowing the grammatical rules of a language but also knowing when, where, and with whom to use the language in a contextually appropriate way." Hasan (2015) stated that, in Pakistan, language teachers only focus on the structural development of the L2, ignoring other critical aspects such as usage, contextual considerations, and communicative choices.

For the last couple of decades, ELT and learning have gained momentum all over Pakistan, an outcome of the country's increasing HE Subdivision. Functioning in the four provinces, it has attracted public and private instructive amenity breadwinners looking to enter the sector. More than a mere acquaintance of English syntax and jargon, it entails target language usage in social and academic situations. For example, a graduating student would know how to perform core functions in English—such as buying, requesting guidelines, encouraging someone, and articulating personal feelings—and would also be able to communicate politely in the language. Hasan (2015) stated that English is taught as a subject in Pakistan but not a language. Hence teachers use GTM and other outdated methods for language teaching.

English Language Teaching in Global Scenario

Bell (2018) argues that, in the current global ELT scenario, most schools and colleges are transforming their teaching methodology and are incorporating technology in classroom teaching. Language teaching has become more interactive; the focus has shifted on developing students' language skills and making classroom teaching more fun. The world is changing, and teaching has changed from lecturing to Technology-assisted classrooms around the globe. According to Brown (1994), Hasan (2015), CLT techniques of language teaching permit beginners to exercise English. It is essentially used in a language communal and prepares them with the philological skills they will need when they consent to teach space for the actual world. Richards (2001) & Mansoor (2019) argue that English language teachers shall also think about the challenges such as large classrooms and developing students' language skills through communicative techniques. Raza (2017) stated that an additional barricade to CLT is when pupils may sense too cautious or uncomfortable to express in class or accomplish in front of spectators, particularly in English. In the Pakistani classroom context, teachers never allow their students to carry or use cell phones during the lecture; they believe that using phones will affect the teaching-learning process. As a result, students will not pay full attention to lectures (Mansoor, 2019). Thus, an authoritative approach is used in the classroom, and most of the language teachers dictate to students.

Objectives of the Study

The study aims to:
1. Find out the use of the mobile phone by the students in their routine matters.
2. Develop language skills through mobile phone language applications.

Research Questions

1. How do the students use a mobile phone in their routine matters?
2. What are mobile phone language applications useful for language skills development?

Materials and Methods of the Study

The following methodology is used for the collection of the data and analysis of the study.

Nature of the study

The current study uses the experimental technique for the collection of the data. The controlled and experimental groups were used for the data collection and experiment.

Data Collection Procedure

A pre-test was conducted to gauge students' previous knowledge about mobile apps for developing language skills. Both experimental and control groups participated in the study. In addition, a survey was conducted on checking the use of the mobile phone for different purposes.

Participants of the study

The current study adopted a convenient sampling technique. Thirty (30) participants were selected and were divided into two groups, the controlled and experimental groups, with fifteen respondents for each. In the teaching phase, the control group (CG) was taught English through traditional methods, whereas the experimental group (EG) through mobile phone language applications. The duration for classroom teaching was 30 hours. In addition, a post-test was conducted after the teaching stage to check the difference between pre-test and post-test results and language proficiency improvements in the participants.
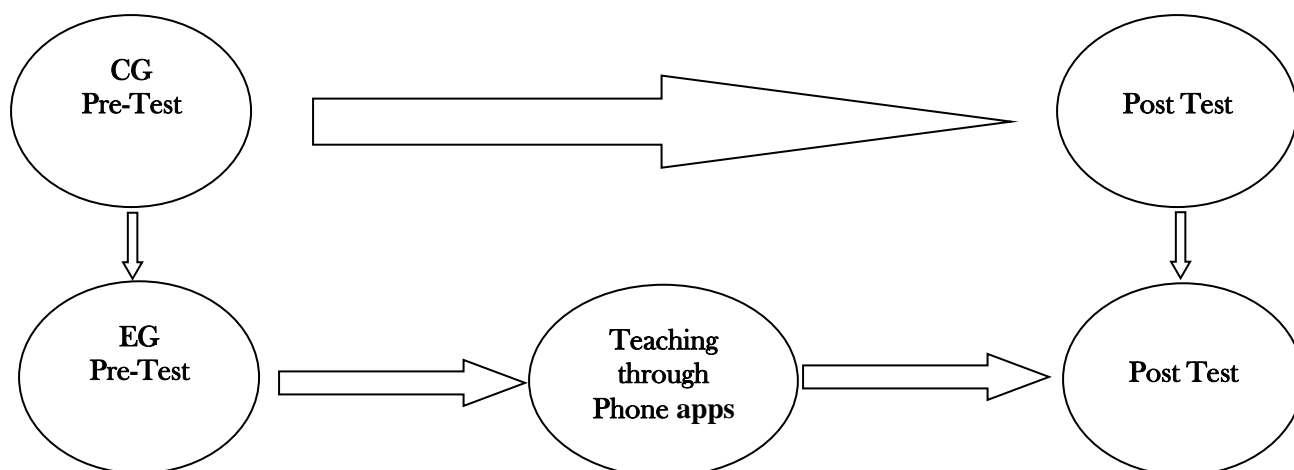
Data Analysis and Discussion

A survey was conducted, before the intervention, to know the purpose of mobile phone usage among the students and how the students use the phone for different daily life purposes; the survey asked students about the usage of phones. The data section consists of two subsections; in the first one, the survey data is discussed, whereas the second discusses the pre-test and post-test.

Table 1.
Survey Questionnaire Analysis: Cell Phone Usage by Students

Purpose of Cell Phone Use	School Students (50)	College Students (50)	University Students (50)
Playing a Video	80%	90%	88%
Using Facebook	90%	85%	90%
Using WhatsApp	55%	85%	90%
Checking Bank Balance Online	0%	2%	16%
For English Language Learning	0%	5%	15%
Use for Spoken Purposes	0%	0%	10%
Use for Preparing Language Tests	0%	0%	5%
Sending/ Receiving Text Messages	78%	82%	92%
Taking a Picture	65%	87%	94%
Accessing the Internet	76%	78%	89%
Sending/ Receiving an E-mail	5%	15%	35%
Downloading an App	18%	45%	75%
Playing a Game	80%	60%	35%
Playing Music	85%	75%	45%

The survey results reveal interesting points about cell phone usage by youth at school, college, and university levels. The most common uses of cell phones are taking pictures, making calls to friends, sending text messages for chatting, using social media using Facebook, and listening to music. The above table shows that students were asked about using a cell phone for language development. The data given in Table 1 showcases stimulating figures about the cell phone usage at university, college, and school level and reflects that 78 % of students at school level use cell phones for sending or receiving text messages, whereas 82 % of students at college and 92 % students at university level use the mobile phones for sending and receiving text messages; they have developed this habit of chatting through mobile phones. The data shows that as students grow from school age to college and then university, the percentage of cell phones use for sending or receiving text messages increases. The data also shows that school, college, and university students are accessing the internet through cell phone is 76 % by the school going, 78 % by college-going children, and 89 % by the university students. It is perceived that in the era of globalization when everyone depends on technology, students want to use mobile phones to access the internet. The percentage increases as students develop their academic qualifications. The data shows that school-going children use cell phones for playing games and listening to music. The ratio is 83 % and 79 %, whereas when students move to college and university, playing games and listening to music declines. The statistics also show that students also use cell phones for listening to music, playing games, and taking pictures. This number increases when we move from school to college and to university. As students grow, the number of users for listening to music, playing games, and taking pictures also increases. The statistical data reveals that the users of language development apps are very little or unfamiliar with such apps, which may be helpful for proficiency development among the students at school, college, and university levels.
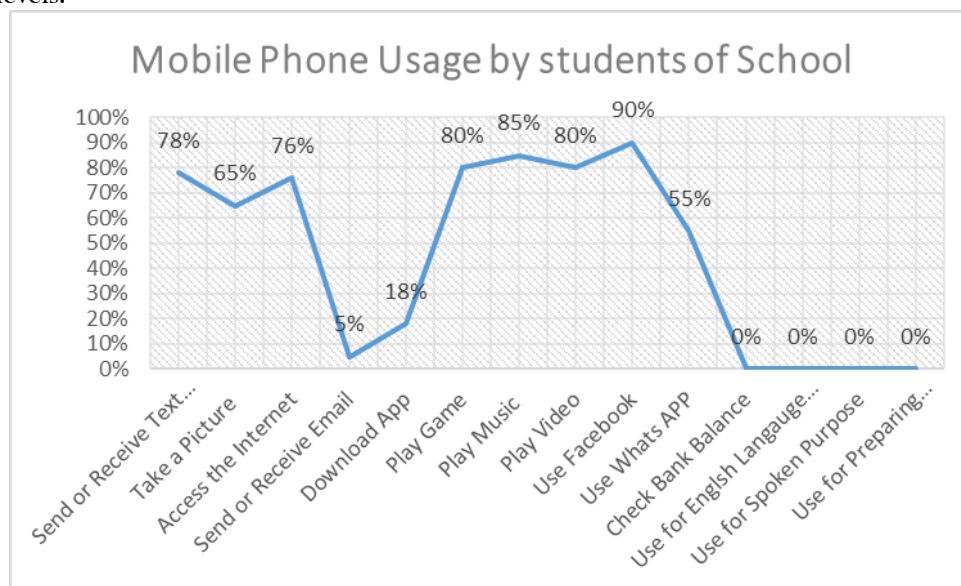

Figure 1.2. Statistics of Cell Phone Usage for Various Purposes by the Students of School

The survey also shows that in the teenage group, playing games, listening to music, and texting are common purposes for which students keep cell phones and use them to meet their daily interests. The data also depict that very few students were using phones for sending or receiving email at the school level. University data shows that the number increases as university students use emails for formal communication with professors and university administration. The above figures depict that school students mostly use mobile phones for texting and social media apps such as WhatsApp and Facebook. The given statistics also show interesting trends. In schools, language apps are not used for developing language skills. The respondents did not report using mobile phones to check bank balance, develop spoken English, or prepare for language tests like SAT or GAT. The survey results show that at the school level, the students lack awareness about mobile phone usage for language development or developing spoken English, and the ratio is 0% at the school level. The students mostly use mobile phones for playing games or social media purposes like Facebook or What's App.

College-level respondents also report not using mobile phones for improving spoken English skills or preparing for language tests. The college education in Pakistan is also traditional, and most students study to secure good grades. Hence, language teachers do not pay much attention to students' proficiency; students do not take
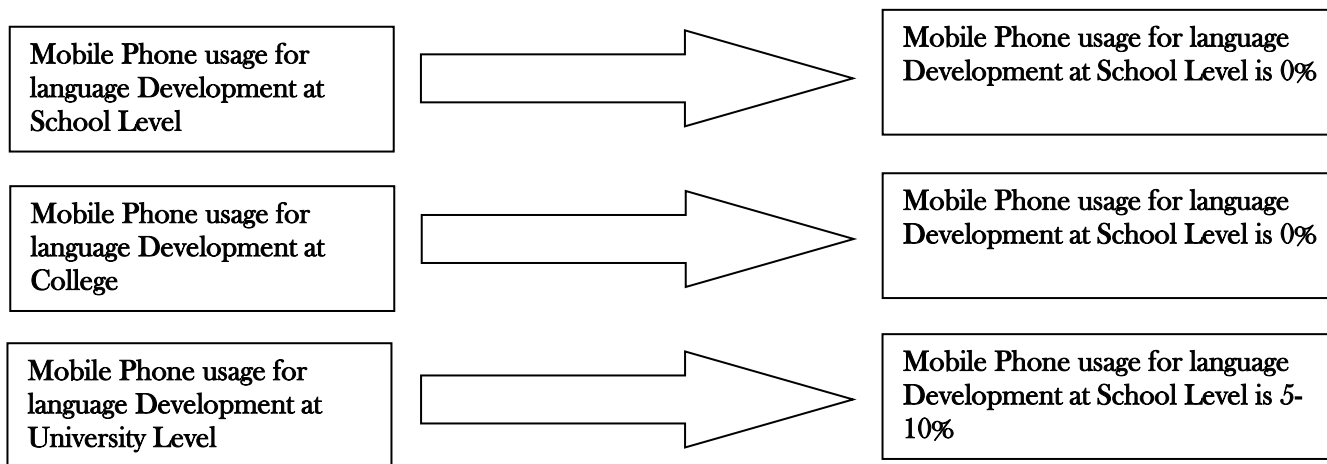
language apps seriously.

The college students also use mobile phones for downloading apps 45 %, Playing games 60 %, 80 % students use it for listening to music, the most common cell phone usage trends. The data also depict that very few students, at the college level, use phones for sending or receiving emails. This number increases at the university level; students use email to communicate with their professors and other academic stakeholders. The above figures depict that school students tend to use mobile phones for texting and social media apps like WhatsApp, Facebook. College students do not prefer using language apps to develop language skills, check bank balances, and prepare for language tests such as SAT or GAT. The survey results show that at the school level, the students lack awareness about mobile phone usage for language development or developing spoken English, and the ratio is 2 % at the school level. The students mostly use mobile phones for playing games or social media purposes like Facebook or What's App.

College cohort results show that students do not use mobile phones to improve spoken English skills or prepare for language tests. The college education in Pakistan is also traditional, and most students study to secure good grades. Hence, language teachers do not pay much attention to students' proficiency, and students do not take language apps seriously.

The statistics show that 92% of university students use a mobile phone to send or receive text messages, 94 % to take pictures, 89 % to access the internet, 35 % to send or receive email. It shows that college-level students do not have email accounts, or they do not use this system of sending or receiving messages from their college teachers. The college students also use mobile phones to download apps 75 %, Playing games 35 %, and 45 % students use it to listen to music. These are the reasons for which students use cell phones. The statistics show that the university level students do not use mobile for listening to music or playing games as at school or college level this ratio is more.

The data also depict that 35% of university students use phones for sending or receiving email, which is more than school or college levels. University students need mobile phones for formal communication, such as email. The above figures depict that college students mostly use mobile phones for texting and social media apps like WhatsApp, Facebook. However, mobile usage for social apps or music decreases at the university level. It is insightful that university students do not use language apps to develop language skills. The respondents did not report using mobile phones for this purpose; only 5-10% of students used apps for language development. The data shows that only 15% of students were using the mobile phone for checking bank balance. The survey depicts that university students lack awareness about mobile phone usage for language skills development; the usage ratio is 5-10 % at the university level. Students tend to use mobile phones for playing games or social media purposes like Facebook or WhatsApp. University students do not use mobile phones to develop their spoken English skills or preparing for language tests. In Pakistan, pedagogical choices are traditional, even at the university level. Students' efforts are grade-oriented, and language teachers do not prioritize the proficiency development of the students. Students do not take language apps seriously. Moreover, the lecture method is preferred at the university level. Students do not get a chance to reflect on their language skills. Even teachers do not allow students to use mobile phones for any academic purpose in the class. The survey results show the following figures for the usage of mobile phone for language development in Pakistan at school, college, and university level:

Mobile Phone usage for language Development at School Level	→ Mobile Phone usage for language Development at School Level is 0%
Mobile Phone usage for language Development at College	→ Mobile Phone usage for language Development at School Level is 0%
Mobile Phone usage for language Development at University Level	→ Mobile Phone usage for language Development at School Level is 5-10%

The pre-test was designed to specifically check the familiarity and usage ability of the students to use the

language learning applications by both the experimental and control groups. In the pre-test, all the participants of the study were given tasks on the cell phone language applications and were asked to complete the language tasks in the allotted time, and the language apps that were used for the pre-test were Pronunroid, SAT Vocabulary app, English Syllable, Hangman for vocabulary check and spelling, etc.

Table 2.
Pre-Test Statistics

Language Applications	Control Group (15)	Experimental Group (15)
Learn Cards	10%	10%
Hangman	0%	0%
Speak English Fluently	5%	5%
Wikipedia Mobile	2%	5%
Vocabula	13%	12%
Pronunroid	21%	18%
Quizlet	12%	10%
English Syllables App	13%	11%
Ted Talks	13%	12%
Grammar Word Challenge	16%	14%
Google Translate	25%	30%
Socrative	12%	11%
SAT Prep App	10%	12%

     The pre-test mandated participants to complete tasks on the selected language apps. The aim was to check participants' familiarity, their ability to use the app, and the completion of the given assignment. The grading is based on accuracy and timely completion of the tasks. In the first task, to learn a card game, only 10 % of the participants could complete the task within the given time. The second task was on the Hangman game for vocabulary completion tasks and identification. This app appeared new for the participants as it was never introduced to them or used them for vocabulary purpose. The third task was the Grammar word challenge. Only 5 % of the respondents could complete the activity, hinting that they were not familiar with the app but were also not good at English Grammar. The fourth task was on the Vocabula app, which is about vocabulary check. 12 % of students were able to complete the activity successfully. The next activity was pronunciation-based, using an app, Pronunroid. Only 18 % of students were able to do it successfully. The syllable structure familiarity is vital for correct pronunciation.

     However, only 11 % of students could complete the activity successfully within the given period. Google Translate results were better than all other apps; students commonly used it for translation in a bilingual teaching scenario. The students did a word challenge of SAT Vocabulary; 11 % could guess the meaning correctly. The pre-test results of the control and experimental group on the language applications can be used for language development; English syllable apps can help L2 learners understand the syllable structure of English, which, in turn, can improve their pronunciation and stress placement.   The data shows that the participants lack awareness of language applications such as Speak English Fluently, Wikipedia Mobile Vocabula, Pronunroid, Quizlet, Ted Talks, Grammar Challenge, Google Translator, and Socrates. Students of both groups do not have linguistic knowledge about learning cards, Hangman, and Pronunroid. Across both the groups, learners only know about some common apps; 12-18 % knew Pronunroid app, whereas 12-13% knew Vocabula.

     The most known app to all the participants was Google Translate, which is 20-30%.
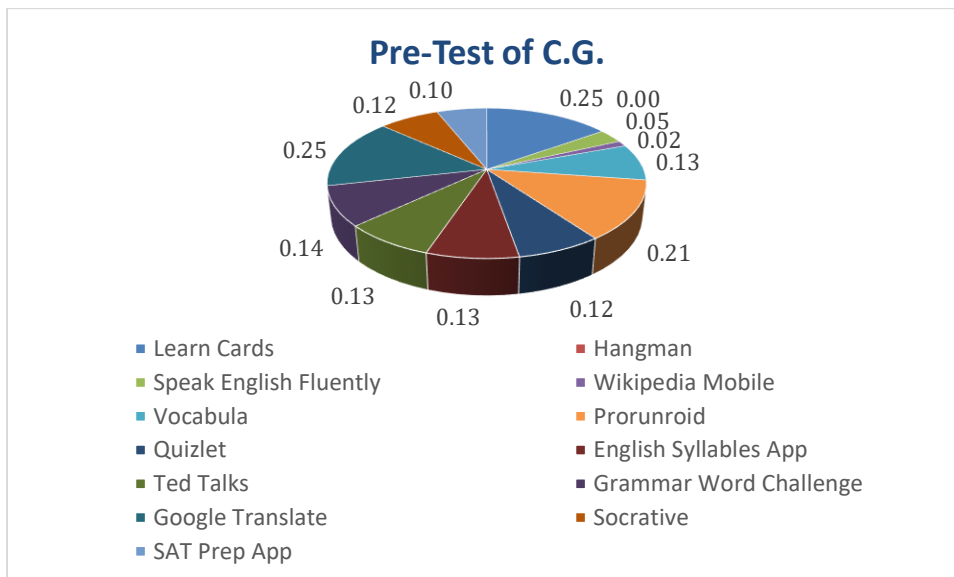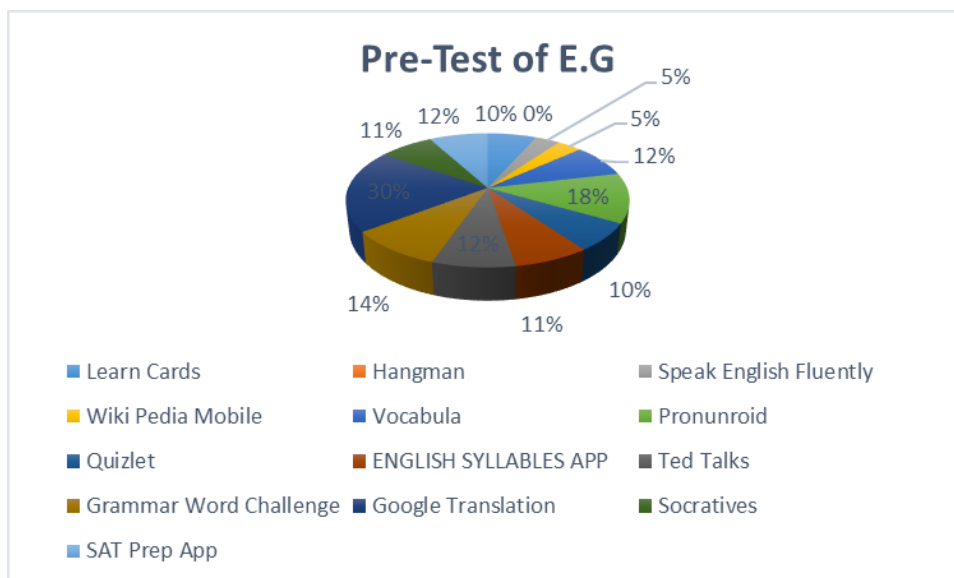
Figure 2. Pre-Test Statistics of CG

Figure 3. Pre-Test Statistics of EG

The data depicts that the students could not perform well in the pre-test due to their lack of knowledge on the language development applications like Pronunroid for the development of pronunciation, SAT preparation application for the development of vocabulary result was only 10-12 % which means students do not use the app for developing their vocabulary.

A Substantial vocabulary is imperative for an improved fluency in L2. The survey of the app indicates that students of the region do not take SATs; they lack awareness. Teachers ban phones in classroom settings. Students are never encouraged to use phones for language development. The pre-test results depict that students performed well in the activity of Google translator, as it is easy to use, and students have some awareness of this language application due to bilingual teaching techniques used in English classrooms. Students use this application in their language classrooms to find the word meanings from Urdu to English. The statistics show that 20-30 % of students were able to complete the task on google translators, and this application is effective in the countries where a bilingual system of education prevails. Teachers give assignments of translations to L2 learners.

Classroom Teaching Procedure

The experimental group was taught for 30-hours through mobile phone language applications for developing their English language proficiency skills like vocabulary development, pronunciation correction and practice, spelling improvement and tense corrections, listening, and speaking. For this purpose, a daily one-hour class was offered to fifteen (15) students of the experimental group where the participants used mobile phones. All the participants had language applications like Hangman, learn Cards, Ted Talks, SAT Vocabulary App, Vocabulary, Pronunroid app, Google Translator on their cell phones. All the participants were briefed about the language applications, the activities, the procedure, and the assessment methodology. In addition, the participants were informed about the ultimate targets of these language applications on their phones and how they would benefit their language skills. The researcher mandated the participants to maintain a journal for noting down their progress after each activity.

Table 3.
Post-Test Statistics

Language Applications	Control Group (15)	Experimental Group (15)
Learn Cards	10%	70%
Hangman	0%	60%
Speak English Fluently	5%	85%
Wikipedia Mobile	2%	75%
Vocabula	13%	72%
Pronunroid	21%	88%
Quizlet	12%	90%
English Syllables App	13%	82%
Ted Talks	13%	62%
Grammar Word Challenge	16%	74%
Google Translate	25%	70%
Socrative	12%	68%
SAT Prep App	11%	89%

In the post-test, both the groups were tested again on the same language application. The table depicts the post-test results of the experimental and controlled groups. It indicates that the Experimental group had made progress in using language applications for their language proficiency development. Post-test results show that the experimental group performed better and improved, which could be due to the teaching based on mobile phone activities. The enhanced language skills could be attributed to the effectiveness of mobile phone applications such as Ted Talks, Hangman, card games, English fluency application, and SAT vocabulary enhancer applications and Vocabula for the development of vocabulary. The data shows that the learn cards activity was 70 % more productive for the experimental group than the control group who received traditional teaching.

Similarly, as compared to the control group, Hangman activity resulted in up to 60 % improvement in the proficiency level of the experimental group. Although they were initially unaware of Hangman, it appeared to enhance language proficiency in the experimental group. Individuals improved up to 60 %, in contrast to the group taught through the traditional lecture method. The data also shows that Pronunroid helped the experimental group attain an estimated 88% improvement in pronunciation. The participants who have received traditional classroom teaching did not show any significant difference in pre and post-test pronunciation. The old method may have its

due share in that. The students of the experimental group, using the app Vocabula, showed a 72 % improvement in their vocabulary. Post-test results indicate a mere 13 %. progress in the vocabulary development of the controlled group.
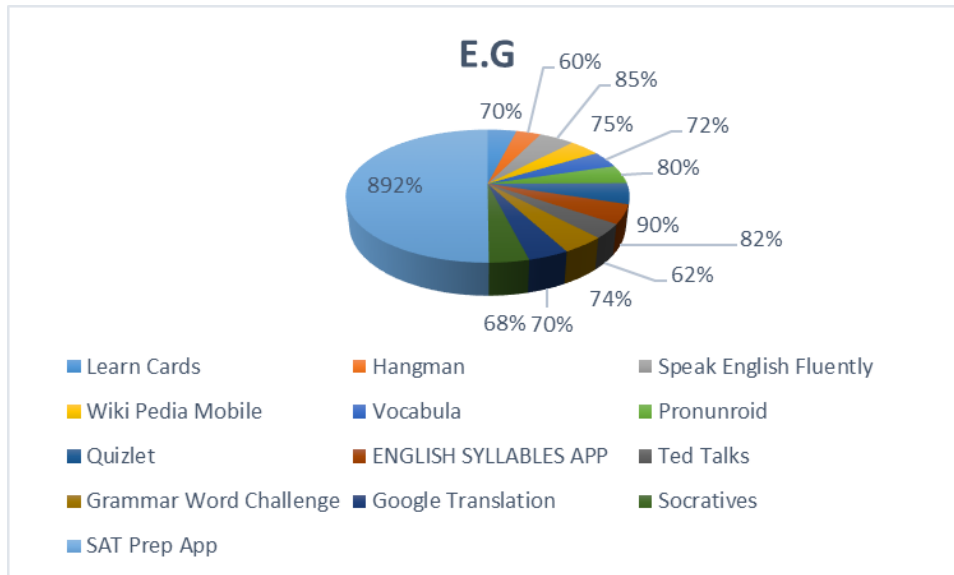

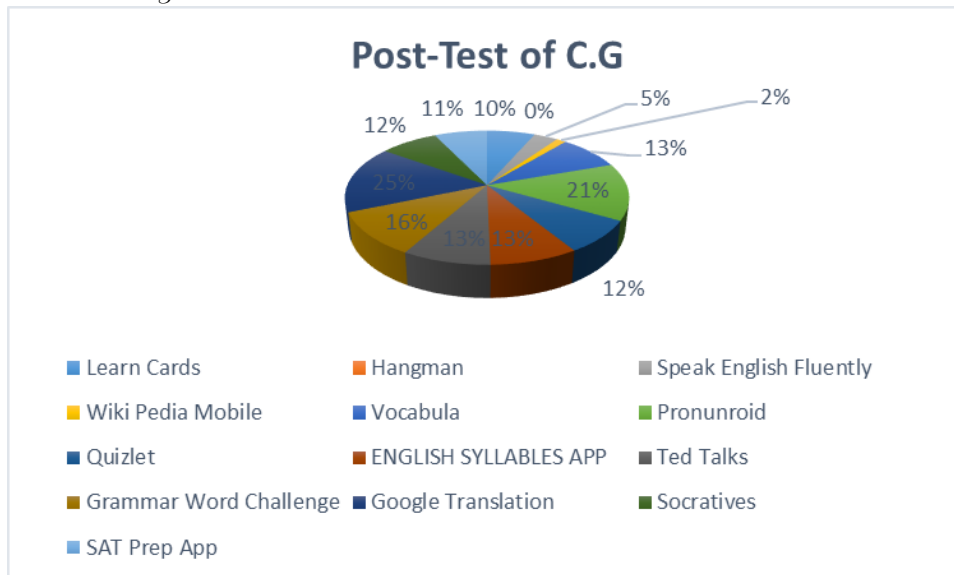*Figure 5.* Statistical Data Shows The Post-Test Results of EG

Figure 6. Statistical Data Shows The Post-Test Results of CG

The data depicts the language development of the Experimental group appears to be better than that of the controlled group. The breaking away from the traditional methods and adoption of novel techniques could be a reason.

The data indicates language skill improvement and productive use of the mobile phone in the language class are directly proportional. In such a classroom setting, teachers enable students to use mobile phones for language development. For example, Quizlet improved the student's understanding of sentence structure.

Since they were not aware of it in the pre-test phase, they could not use the app for the desired outcome. However, the post-test result shows that the experimental group improved up to 90 % compared to an insignificant improvement in the controlled group. The experimental group also improved in Ted Talk application usage, positively impacting their listening and speaking skills. As a result, they gained the desired proficiency level, which they could not attain in traditional classroom teaching. The controlled group did not improve their skills, most likely due to the lecture method, a technique not very useful for imparting language skills.
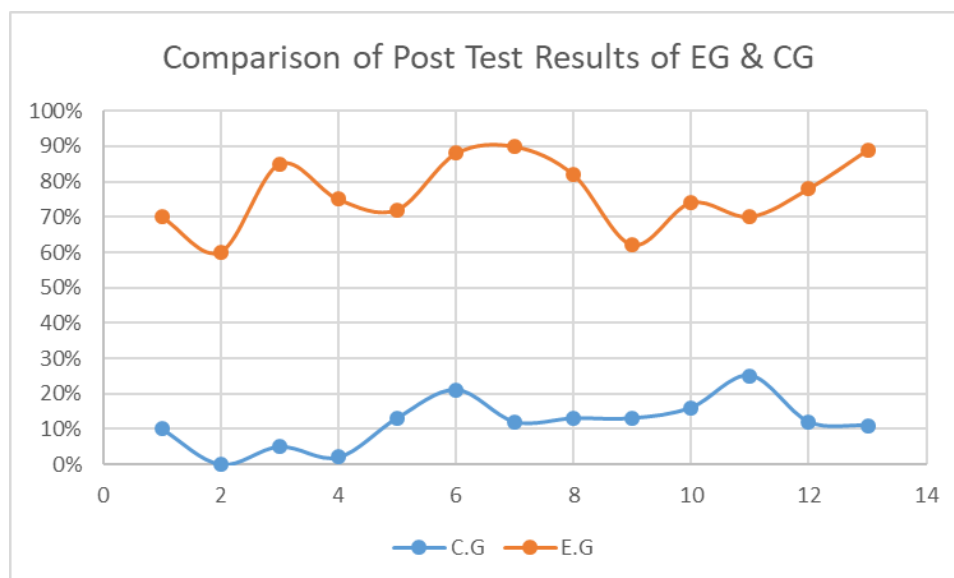
Figure 7. Post Test Comparison of EG & CG

The post-test shows a significant change in the participants of the experimental group (EG). It can be attributed to language development applications, change in teaching techniques, and changed language development targets. For example, in traditional classes, students were only directed to cram and prepare for the examination.

Traditional methods do not have the provision to incorporate such training for enhanced language skills. The statistics show that the EG has shown significant improvement in their vocabulary learning through Vocabula and SAT Vocabulary applications and better use of Google Translator with language instructor guidance. The participants of CG didn't improve their post-test results due to the traditional teaching in the language classroom.

Conclusion

The tasks-based activities using cell phones effectively develop speaking, listening, reading, writing, and listening skills in the English classroom. The results suggest that if teachers guide the students on how to use a cell phone for language development rather than banning the device, it can be a valuable tool of language development; it saves energy, is economical, builds confidence, creates a stimulating environment, enhances creativity, improves critical thinking and enables learning environment. The data also shows that the Controlled group received teaching of English through the traditional method. They did not show any improvement in skill development. They were not allowed to use language applications. The experimental group was offered language teaching through mobile phone and language applications while teaching in the classroom, showing significant improvement in their language proficiency skills like reading, speaking, listening, writing and vocabulary development, and other skills like spelling check and enhancement. The study also shows that teaching through mobile language help students become socially connected and updated from updated language knowledge and for pronunciation, building vocabulary mobile phones are effective, and it gives a new insight into language teaching in the current era when we are in a debate of language teaching as the subject or as language in Pakistan. The study shows that language applications on mobile phones and teaching language through these apps will foster L2 learning. Students feel comfortable in this non-traditional environment. English language teachers in Pakistan need to promote mobile usage for language development purposes. Such a classroom environment should be encouraged for getting better results in achieving language proficiency. It would also help overcome the stereotypes about mobile phone usage in the classroom. Students should be guided properly.

The study is a preliminary work limited to the language classroom. Future research has scope in ELT, ESL, and EFL classrooms to further investigate mobile phone effects on speaking, listening, writing, and vocabulary teaching. The current study is limited to language teaching through language applications in the L2 context. However, future researchers have a broad scope in the CAT (Computer Assisted Teaching); they can use the mobile phone for language development in remote areas of Pakistan where L2 teachers face technical issues.

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A Brief Review of Academic Dishonesty in Pakistani Academia

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Abstract

Academic dishonesty is not a new issue, but the cases have increased exponentially with the proliferation of technology. This includes but is not limited to plagiarizing, copying, buying assignments, incorrect referencing, limited summarizing skills, and hiring someone to do their assignment. Academic dishonesty can be intentional or unintentional; hence, hard to detect and classify. Also, academic integrity is intricately linked with the culture and ideology of the region, so what is plagiarizing for one region might not be for the others. One of Pakistan's many issues includes academic integrity, which is not taught at primary or secondary levels of education; when these students enter an undergraduate level, they have minimal understanding of academic dishonesty. This study is based on observation and reflection of educational dishonesty issues that involve university students and instructors. The paper highlights the new practices instructors need to employ to facilitate learning and help students evade academic dishonesty. There is a dire need to inform students about academic integrity and encourage them to learn rather than run in a race of grades. Though these methods are valid for all disciplines, they are handy for English Language Teaching.

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Introduction

Academic dishonesty is a complex term as it is intricately connected with culture and ideology and cannot be dealt with without context. Pennycook (1996), in his article, gives examples of Chinese and Hongkong students to show how' text, ownership, memorization, and plagiarism' are dealt with in the west cannot be replicated in other cultures. Every region has a different learning paradigm, so plagiarism for one country might not be for the other. Pennycook explains how the concept of plagiarism gradually developed in the west, and 'all language learning is to some extent a process of borrowing others' words and we need to be flexible, not dogmatic.'

Bloch (2008) also shares Chinese students' perspective in which there is a blurred line between 'originality, imitation, and plagiarism.' The research shows different perspectives of plagiarism in China, where both memorization and originality are highly appreciated.

The concept of academic dishonesty is also relatively new in Pakistan. The elementary and secondary education systems are based mainly on memorization and rote learning, so by the time students enter university, they have minimal awareness of academic dishonesty. Likewise, undergraduate students have significantly less understanding of academic dishonesty than graduate students (Ramzan, Munir, Siddique, & Asif, 2012). Also, the main objective of elementary and secondary level students is to secure good grades to get admission to better universities. When these students enroll in undergraduate programs, it is a big transition for them as they are used to rote learning, have minimal awareness of academic dishonesty, and are mainly concerned with GPA.

The students entering university are generally less eager to learn and are more concerned with completing the degree with an impressive GPA. Although the main goals of graduate and undergraduate studies are to provide the channel to learn, interpret, evaluate, and synthesize information, the misuse of the internet has changed the picture. As Mcallister and Watkins (2012) write, "one of the gloomiest recent reports about the nation's colleges and universities reinforces the suspicion that the students are studying less, reading less and learning less all the time." The internet has widely changed and broadened the learning horizon, so students prefer browsing rather than reading a book and are also inclined to copy-paste the material. Other factors contributing to academic dishonesty include limited writing skills, students not confident of their ideas, used to cramming material, not willing to adopt new methods of learning, not motivated, procrastinate, or too social to give time to the assigned task. Aroian and Brown (2015) succinctly state, "academic integrity is important in higher education, not only because it ensures the validity of grades and eliminates unfair advantages but also because academic dishonesty has been correlated to unethical business practices in the workplace."

Background

In 2007, when I started my career as a novice lecturer in a renowned university, I found it hard to identify and curb academic dishonesty. There were many challenges, including lack of experience, university policy, syllabus design, lack of awareness, and unmotivated students. After a few years, most of the issues were resolved, and I grew oblivious to the students' problems, expectations, observations, and academic dishonesty.

After teaching at a university for seven years, I took two years of sabbatical leave and joined the university as an MPhil student. This provided me with an opportunity to step down as a teacher and observe students' life and instructors with a new perspective. It not only provided me with the opportunity to learn but also helped me understand my deficiencies. Though I learned and observed many academic issues, the one that I regard as the most important is academic dishonesty. In this paper, factors contributing to academic dishonesty and ways to minimize such practices would be discussed.

How to Deal with Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty has been a significant concern for the teachers, and they diligently try to make every effort to prevent it. Unfortunately, there are numerous ways and reasons for students committing academic dishonesty due to which instructors must always be proactive in their approach to avoid it.

To minimize academic dishonesty, teachers should know the route students take to commit and evade the chances of being caught. During my studies, I observed that teachers and students were in a constant struggle; students intentionally or unintentionally fall into the trap of academic dishonesty, and teachers try to curb such practices.

Firstly, the exponential rise in the cases of academic dishonesty due to the availability of online resources, has forced teachers to use anti plagiarism software to detect plagiarism. In response to the software usage, students learned how to manipulate the plagiarism software to avoid being caught. Within no time, many agencies/institutions/companies mushroomed worldwide, which under the guise of helping students in their assignment, prepare their assignments. Another haven for students committing academic dishonesty involves senior students, who offer their services to write for a small sum of money.

Furthermore, some policies such as standardize syllabus in the universities/colleges and insufficient syllabus updates have made it easier for students to cheat. This, along with the stance of the teachers and institutions, has made it easier for students to cheat. This paper aims to highlight the new practices teachers need to employ to facilitate learning and help students evade academic dishonesty by understanding the factors that promote academic dishonesty, methods that could help minimize academic dishonesty, and the route students take to escape being caught.

Awareness of Academic Integrity

The students entering university have minimal awareness of academic integrity, academic dishonesty, and repercussions of committing academic dishonesty; the university should introduce these concepts on the orientation day. Students and instructors have different perspectives of what constitutes academic dishonesty, introducing the concept of academic integrity will not only create awareness but also clarify the importance and zero-tolerance policy of the university as (Higbee & Thomas, 2000) have concluded in their research based on case studies. This is the norm at our university; students are handed the university's academic policy and informed about the zero-tolerance policy on their orientation day.

Assignments

Teachers should be alarmed if unpunctual or less motivated students submit an assignment in time or the words do not resonate with students' skills. The teacher only needs to skim through the language, sentence structure, number of references, which may take a couple of minutes, to find if this is a student's work or someone hired by a student. Many agencies have mushroomed throughout the world, which charges a hefty amount to complete students' assignments.

While studying, it was surprising to see teachers accepting assignments from students who rarely attended classes. It was not just assignments when it came to submitting their thesis, students who rarely attended classes were able to submit within three months where it usually takes eight to nine months to do one. The teachers were oblivious and graded them generously without any scruples. The same students earned MPhil degrees but hardly knew anything as their hired academician completed all the academic work. This is now a common practice as students either hire an agent or seniors, to complete their assignments. (Soroya, Hashmi & Soraya, 2017)

To curb this practice, the method of assigning tasks must be revised. Students should be encouraged to brainstorm ideas and write several drafts before submitting the final version. Although writing the first draft in class may not sound good, it gives a better chance to rule out academic dishonesty. Students are usually not asked to write during the course as class time is believed to be the time for instruction and learning. What needs to be understood is, writing in class is also a part of learning. In addition, they could also be asked to submit a copy of sources they read. These steps should be followed in sequence: the students can brainstorm on their own; then sit in groups to discuss ideas; in the next class, they could be asked to either free- write or write the first draft.

This does not mean too much work for the teacher, as Cleary (2017) suggests that if you ask for multiple drafts, check only for main ideas, structure, and referencing. In addition, the peer review could be used to provide preliminary feedback before they write a second or third draft.

Ask Questions

As a novice teacher, I found it hard to spot and prove plagiarism, but I learned how to curb this kind of academic dishonesty by asking multiple questions and focusing on detailed critical analysis (Weber-Wulff 2002). During one of the book review sessions, I was convinced that some of my students have not read the books. The list of questions I had prepared to test their understanding allowed me to come to that conclusion. However, there was no way of

proving they had plagiarized.

Assignment weightage

It is recommended to include more assignments, each carrying fewer marks than few assignments carrying more weightage. Students get more chances to improve grades; hence pressure of marks significantly reduces. This way, students may not use academic dishonesty as coping mechanism.

At the starting of my teaching career, the last or the final assignment carried the most weightage. The final project was submitted at the end of the semester, had most issues of academic dishonesty, and as the campus was off, it was hard to inquire the student. To resolve these issues, multiple assignments were given, and the final assignment was not given at the end of the semester but at least one month before the semester break. It helped me reduce cases of academic dishonesty significantly as students were not under pressure and knew they would be held accountable or reported to the disciplinary committee.

Time Frame

The course outline should include the number of assignments and dates of submission. This helps students manage time efficiently as they do not panic and refrain from academic dishonesty. The course outline we prepared had a list of assignments and the day of submission, which provided students with a better opportunity to be ready for the task. Furthermore, Mcallister and Watkins (2012) recommend 'using consistent weekly deadlines' for assignment submission to avoid confusion.

Course Outline

The course outline must include the topic: academic integrity and dishonesty. The first topic of the English language course outline we prepared extensively explained what constitutes academic dishonesty and provided practice exercises to teach referencing, citation techniques, paraphrasing, and quoting. This way, students are aware of academic integrity and are less likely to commit academic dishonesty.

Also, the course outline should be upgraded, revamped, or revised every year. The teacher needs to come up with a different essay or research topic; else, it is easy for students to present the assignment of any senior, evade plagiarism charges, and secure good marks.

Students' Low Motivation

The other factor that may contribute to academic dishonesty is students' low motivation level. As English is usually offered as an elective course, students may not be interested in it if it does not facilitate them in the core courses. Their low motivation demotivates teachers, and increases chances of plagiarism amongst students (Chisholm, 1992). The curriculum should be revamped to include the topics that match the skills required for their core courses.

In our case, the old course outline mainly included grammar rules, whereas students required analytical, critical, and academic writing skills. Once we revamped the course outline, there was a marked improvement in the motivation level of both teachers and students (Bennett, 2017).

Standardize Courses

Our university introduced a new policy of standardized syllabus, according to which about 80% of the content was supposed to be the same for each course. It was a good practice but led to many cases of plagiarism. As a novice teacher, I failed to figure out that students across the classes can present the assignment to each other.

A standardized course is beneficial, but the teacher should make sure that the topics of the written assignment or oral presentations are different. It is unlikely to catch the student who submitted or presented a student's work belonging to another class.

Counselling Time

Many researchers believe that the main reasons for students committing academic dishonesty include incompetency, limited vocabulary, or fear of failing the course (Cleary, 2017). Teachers can have counseling hours to evade these possibilities, and students should be encouraged to ask questions or seek help during these hours. Our university mandated all   faculty members to inform students about counseling hours on the first day of instruction, post them online and on the office door. Teachers were required to be available during those hours irrespective of students' presence. This is essential for students looking for help and breaking the communication barrier between students and teachers. If many students are looking for feedback, the teacher could either call them by appointment or take teaching assistant help. I found this channel helpful in having a one-on-one conversation with students, which significantly reduced their fear of grades.

Deterrence

The consequences of committing academic dishonesty should be harsh, and it is vital to detect and curb it as early as possible. A teacher should inform and punish students as early as possible so that it does not result in a major loss. Teachers can detect and deal with academic dishonesty by giving minor assignments early in the semester. If students commit academic dishonesty, they will learn the harsh consequences and avoid this in the future.

This way, the teacher could create deterrence for the whole class and prevent students from losing marks in important assignments.

Some teachers are hesitant to take such strict actions, resulting in teachers getting a poor evaluation at the end of the semester. To prevent this, institutes and teachers should be on the same page, as a strict teacher regarding plagiarism, cheating, and copying; usually end up being least liked by the students (Aroian & Brown, 2015). A quantitative study shows the negative impact on teachers' end-of-year evaluation if they reported academic dishonesty cases. They reviewed the evaluation of thirty-two teachers who reported three or more cases of students cheating. The data was compared with the class in which students' cheating cases were reported versus the class in which students were not reported. The result indicated the class in which there was no cheating; the estimated mean index was 3.95, whereas, in those classes in which academic dishonesty was reported, the mean index was 3.75. This shows the negative impact on teacher rating, which is "one-fifth of a standard deviation lower." This is a major concern, and the institute should deal with these cases individually, so the teachers who promote honesty in education do not suffer.

Exit-Slip

During my studies, I observed miscommunication and communication barriers between students and teachers. There were lots of grievances and dissatisfaction on both sides, which caused academic dishonesty issues. At times, teachers unintentionally promote such behavior by either not giving enough information, enough time, not checking if the deadline of the assignment clashes with any other assignment, or by not giving credits for researching and reading. This could be dealt with by asking students to hand over an anonymous exit- slip at the end of the class, and they should be free to write anything regarding the class. This will allow teachers to get feedback from their students and at the same time allow students to discuss any of their major concerns regarding the teacher or the course. By doing so, students and their concerns will be heard, the teachers will get prompt feedback, and any problem will be solved. This was a constant practice in my class, which allowed me to solve matters and provide motivational feedback (Hutton, 2006).

Plagiarism detecting software

In one of the courses I attended, the teacher informed us about the strict plagiarism policy and Turnitin usage. In that specific course, the students were concerned about plagiarism, and to escape being caught by plagiarism software, students earnestly played with words. They used online software to help them effectively patchwork by paraphrasing, removing some words, changing the structure of sentences, changing every nth term, or writing synonyms; then checked through free plagiarism software if they could be caught or not. Once they were sure of successfully concealing their academic dishonesty, they submitted the assignment. Sometimes the Turnitin software caught them

by a very low percentage, but they were instructed to paraphrase some of the lines and submit the same assignment.

The teachers should be wary of the ways academic dishonesty could be committed and should not naively grade the assignment. It is important to punish the student caught plagiarizing as this would deter the students from such activities and prevent future occurrences. Another technique that Walker (2009) explains in her research that can reduce academic dishonesty is annotated bibliography and oral presentation. If the teacher is overworked, the teaching assistant can take over this task.

Conclusion

This paper highlighted the reasons for academic dishonesty and strategies found to detect and reduce academic dishonesty and facilitate learning. It is essential to ingrain the concept of academic integrity and learning, as students' understanding of academic dishonesty possibly be incongruent to teachers' beliefs (Higbee & Thomas, 2000). As intentional and unintentional factors contribute to academic dishonesty (Clearly, 2017), the teachers should have open communication through counseling hours or exit slips to facilitate learning and help students genuinely learn by reducing the pressure on grades. Along with creating awareness and deterrence, the improved pedagogy, which includes revamping or updating the course outline, asking students for several drafts, providing a time frame for assignments, and annotated bibliography, proved effective in minimizing cases of academic dishonesty.

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Mission Statement

SPELT's mission is to provide a professional forum for its members and practitioners teaching English as a Foreign/Second Language to facilitate effective communication and improve the teaching/learning standards of English in Pakistan.