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SPELT
Society of Pakistan English Language Teachers

HABIB UNIVERSITY

42nd SPELT International Conference 2026

BRIDGING LANGUAGE AND LEARNING:

DESIGNING EQUITABLE PRACTICES FOR DIVERSE CLASSROOMS



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SPELT also extends its profound thanks to the following Academic Partners and Sponsors, without whom this event would not have been possible.

SPELT appreciates and acknowledges the continuous support of all electronic and print Media personnel, stall holders, the technical staff & volunteers of the Academic Partners and most especially all **SPELT** office staff, SPELT members and **SPELT** volunteers!

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Dear Colleagues in Pakistan:

On behalf of TESOL International Association, it is my distinct honour to welcome you to the 42nd SPELT International Conference! TESOL and SPELT share a deep, longstanding partnership built on mutual support and a shared commitment to continuous professional development.

This year's theme, "Bridging Language and Learning: Designing Equitable Practices for Diverse Classrooms," calls us to create spaces where every learner feels seen, valued, and empowered. These conversations will challenge and inspire us, continuing SPELT's proud tradition of connecting educators worldwide.

So be fully present, absorb every insight, connect with new colleagues, and engage with distinguished speakers. This is your moment to grow and be transformed. I applaud you for investing in yourself and our profession. Wishing you an unforgettable and successful conference.

Sincerely



Okon Effiong

TESOL President, 2026-2027

FOREWORD



Dear Colleagues,

It is my distinct honour and pleasure to welcome you to the 42nd SPELT International Conference 2026. Under the theme "Bridging Language and Learning: Designing Equitable Practices for Diverse Classrooms", we gather as a community of educators, researchers, and practitioners united by a shared commitment to meaningful, inclusive, and transformative English language teaching. In a country as richly diverse as Pakistan, this theme invites us to reflect that equity in language education is not merely an aspiration; it is an urgent professional responsibility. This conference is our collective response to that call.

Day One takes place across four Academic Partner venues, each hosting a symposium exploring a distinct dimension of equitable ELT practice. Durbeen leads on *Multilingual Language Education: Research, Practice, and Policy*; Habib Public School hosts *Innovations in English Language Education*; Happy Home School (HHS School System) convenes *Digital Literacies and Language Development*; and IUSS School System presents *Making ELT Work in Diverse Classrooms*. Together, these symposiums reflect the breadth and depth of ELT challenges and possibilities in diverse Pakistani classrooms.

Day Two moves to Habib University, where a Keynote Address opens a rich programme of plenary sessions, featured presentations and workshops. We are privileged to welcome Dr Harry Kuchah Kuchah, Dr Hemanthi Hiddellaarachchi, Dr Fauzia Shamim, Dr Subhan Zein, Judy Wren, and Dr Fatima Dar — scholars and practitioners shaping the global ELT landscape.

I extend my deepest gratitude to our Academic Partners, the British Council, our sponsors, and the dedicated SPELT team whose tireless efforts have made this conference possible.

To all joining us — whether for the first time or as a returning member of our SPELT family — I invite you to engage fully, connect meaningfully, and leave with renewed purpose. Let us build together the bridges that language and learning deserve.

Wishing you an inspiring and enriching conference experience.

Warm regards,

Raabia Hirani
Chair, Conference Professional Council 2026

General Information

Welcome to the 42nd SPELT International Conference!

This conference is bigger, better, and different in many ways, and therefore, we would like you to go through this page carefully. There are five venues for the conference, four on Day 1 for the symposiums, and Habib University on Day 2. With multiple keynote addresses, plenary and featured sessions, and panel discussions, and parallel sessions in the form of interactive talks and hands-on workshops, it would be helpful if we all keep the following information in mind:

You can only attend the symposium you have signed up for. The registration is non-transferable to other venues.

1. Your name badge allows you to access and enter the Conference venue. For security reasons, please wear your badge at all times while you are at the conference venue.
2. Please note that if you have registered for the full conference (Days 1 and 2), you will receive a separate name badge in a different colour. Please ensure that you bring it to the venue on Day 2 to enter the premises at Habib University.
3. Also, please remember to bring your **conference payment receipt** with you in order to enter the venue, get your name badge and conference material. For onsite registration, you must show your **CNIC** at the gate; otherwise, you may be denied entry to the venue.
4. All session rooms have limited capacity. So, be sure to arrive early to secure a good place in the session of your interest; entry to all sessions is on a first-come-first-served basis.
5. Tea will be served at the venue during the scheduled "**tea breaks**" at all venues. Thanks to our sponsor 'Tapal Tea' that will provide free tea throughout the day for all conference participants.
6. If you'd like to give a social media shout-out to SPELT while you're attending the conference, you may use the following social media handles:

Facebook:http://www.facebook.com/headofficespelt
Instagram:https://www.instagram.com/speltheadoffice/
LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/headofficespelt **Website**: spelt.org.pk

Catering: Food will be on sale during the lunch break for participants. Some snacks and munchies will also be on sale throughout the day.

SPELT Information Desk: The SPELT information desk will be staffed by the SPELT office staff and volunteers throughout the symposiums on Day 1 and the conference on Day 2 to assist with general information and queries. The registration desk will be located at a prominent place at the conference venue.

ELT Resources Exhibition (Day-2 Only): The ELT resources exhibition will be open to all for the duration of the conference, displaying the latest published materials, teaching resources and equipment, computer software and services. Do take time out to visit the exhibition stands during the conference. Be on the lookout for discounts and, maybe, freebies!

General

- Please turn your mobile/ cell phones to silent mode during the sessions.
- Smoking is prohibited at all conference venues.

Please note: We regret that no responsibility can be taken by SPELT for loss of personal belongings or for accidents during the conference.

Session Timings: The conference is offering several sessions during the two days. Please help us maintain punctuality in starting the sessions and in the smooth running of all sessions by:

1) vacating the session rooms immediately after the completion of each session;
2) taking time to select the session of interest and not leaving the room once it has started;
3) cooperating with the volunteers.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Certificates of Attendance: Conference certificates of attendance will be available in your conference bags.

No certificates will be issued after the conclusion of the event.

Conference Credits

Conference Professional Council

Conference Chair: Raabia Hirani
Past Chair: Dr Maliha Ahmed
Associate Chairs: Faiqa Baig and Bushra Taqi
Members: Mehreen Masood, Taghrid Ahmed, Sana Noor, Dr Tania Laghari, Dr Abdullah Laghrai, Sabahat Ansar

Abstract Reviewers

Dr Fauzia Shamim, Dr Tania Laghari, Amna Ghulam Hussain, Aneesa Mumtaz

Symposium Focal Persons

Durbeen: Sana Noor
HHS School System: Taghrid Ahmed
Habib Public School: Faiqa Baig
IU School System: Mehreen Masood

Conference Logistics and Onsite Management

Lead: Mansoor Naz Vindhani, Mehreen Masood, Raabia Hirani and Sadia Jamil
Team: Yameen Burney and Harris Khan

Hospitality

Dr Maliha Ahmed and Dr Fatima Dar

Masters of Ceremony

Mehwesh Rehman, Sania Iqbal and Amna Mustafa

CEC Liaisons

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SPELT Conference Outreach and Media Coordination

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Conference Promotional Material

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Conference Day 1: GECE, Durbeen
Programme

Time	Room	Title
9:00 am - 9:30 am		Registration
9:30 am - 10:00 am	Audio Visual Room	Opening Ceremony
10:00 am - 10:50 am	Audio Visual Room	**Plenary Address: Building Linguistic Bridges in ELT: Lessons from Multilingual Learners in Cameroon** **Dr Harry Kuchah Kuchah**, *Associate Professor of Languages, Social Justice, and Education at the University of Birmingham, UK*
10:50 am - 11:20 am	**Tea Break**	
11:20 am - 12:10 pm	Audio Visual Room	**Plenary Address: Building Resources for Multilingual Education** **Salma Alam**, *CEO, Durbeen*
Concurrent Sessions 12:20 pm - 1:10 pm	Audio Visual Room	**Workshop: Escape, Redesign, Engage: Inclusive ELT through UDL and Translanguaging** **Syeda Minaal Ali,** *Commonwealth Scholar, J. Hansen Fellow and a British Council Education Consultant*
	Room 201	**Workshop: Before They Can Speak: Building Bridges to English Participation** **Syed Hassan Abid**, *GBSS Farqleet, Nazimabad*
	Room 202	**Interactive Talk: Bridging Two Worlds: Code-Switching as a Pedagogical Strategy in Multilingual Science Classrooms** **Rimsha Khan**, *Biology Educator, PACE International School*
1:10 pm - 2:00 pm	**Lunch and Namaz Break**	
Concurrent Sessions 2:00 pm - 2:50 pm	Audio Visual Room	**Workshop: Barriers to Bridges: Harnessing Translanguaging in the Inclusiv English Classroom** **Irum Saleem**, *Consultant, British Council*
	Room 201	**Workshop: Teaching English Through Pakistan's Multilingual Classrooms** **Wardah Bukhari,** *Early Years Educator, DHACSS, Phase IV Campus* **Nazia Israr Shaikh**, *Primary Teacher, DHACSS, Creek Campus*
	Room 202	**Paper Presentation: Multilingual Practices in English Language Education: Perceptions of Students and Teachers in Pakistani Classrooms** **Erum Nazir**, *B.Ed. Student, AKU-IED*
Concurrent Interactive Talks 3:00 pm - 3:45 pm	Room 201	**Paper Presentation: From Research to Practice: Exploring the Effectiveness of Corpus-Refined Urdu Texts in the Context of Reading Comprehension: Evidence from Grade 3 District Central Public-School Karachi** **Nighat Shaheen**, *Senior Lecturer, Durbeen*
	Audio Visual Room	**Workshop: English Only or English Mainly? Rethinking Classroom Language** **Hamza Abbasi**, *Lecturer, Qatar University*
3:50 pm - 4:20 pm	Audio Visual Room	Closing Ceremony

Plenary Address



Dr Harry Kuchah Kuchah

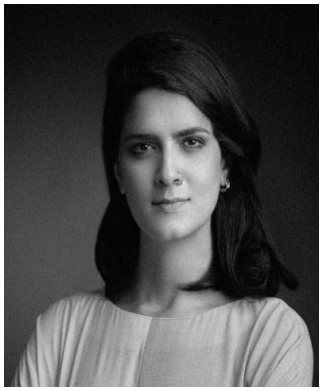
Associate Professor of Languages, Social Justice and Education
University of Birmingham, ***United Kingdom***

Building linguistic bridges in ELT: Lessons from multilingual learners in Cameroon

While language in education research in Sub-Saharan Africa has mainly focused on the important role of local languages in ensuring quality education, there has been little focus on how the agentic languaging practices of learners in English language classrooms and English medium school contexts can be a resource for both learning and teacher education. In this presentation, I examine the ideological complexities around English language in a multilingual African context where the promotion of official bilingualism (in French and English) at the expense of local languages has led to a sharp rise in the number of learners from predominantly 'Francophone' homes learning English as a subject and/or attending English medium schools. I discuss English language policy in state English medium and French Medium schools as well as teachers' perceptions and their classroom enactments of the policy. Then, drawing from data generated through student interactions around unsupervised tasks, I show how learners are strategically using their multilingual resources to transgress monolingual norms in their learning. The talk concludes with examples of how engaging teachers with such data can potentially inform their practices and enhance meaning making in the English language classroom.

Dr Harry Kuchah Kuchah is *Associate Professor of Languages, Social Justice, and Education* at the University of Birmingham, UK. His research interests include English Medium Education in schools, Language Teacher Education and professional development and Teaching languages to Young Learners, and he has published widely in these areas. He is co-editor of *International Perspectives on Teaching English in Difficult Circumstances* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018); *Ethical and methodological issues in researching young language learners in school contexts* (Multilingual Matters, 2021) and *Teacher Research in Africa: Voices from the Africa ELTA Mentoring Project* (IATEFL 2022)

Plenary Address



Salma Alam

CEO, Durbeen

Building Resources for Multilingual Education: A Corpus-Based Approach to Graded Vocabulary in Sindhi and Urdu

Mother-tongue-based multilingual education can support children's learning, participation and foundational literacy, particularly when instruction is accompanied by appropriately designed learning materials, qualified teachers and supportive learning environments. Recent research and policy work in Pakistan, including the DARE-RC project (2026) and globally (UNESCO, 2025), has highlights the aforementioned. However, translating such policy aspirations into classroom practice requires contextually relevant resources that teachers and material developers can use to support children's language and literacy development.

This paper presents a corpus-based initiative undertaken to address a critical resource gap in multilingual education in Pakistan: the lack of systematically graded age-appropriate vocabulary resources in Sindhi and Urdu for primary education.

The paper argues that corpus-informed vocabulary development can provide an important bridge between multilingual education policy and pedagogical practice. It demonstrates how research-generated linguistic resources can support teachers, curriculum developers and material writers in creating more age-appropriate and contextually responsive learning experiences in indigenous languages.

References:

- DARE-RC. Project report (2026).
- ASER Pakistan. (2025). *ASER Pakistan 2025: National presentation*. Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) Pakistan.
- UNESCO. (2025). *The right multilingual education policies can unlock learning and inclusion*. Global Education Monitoring Report. https://www.unesco.org/gem-report/en/publication/right-multilingual-education-policies-can-unlock-learning-and-inclusion
- Graded vocabulary corpus Urdu and Sindhi (2026)

Salma Ahmed Alam *has been working in the public education sector of Sindh since 2008. She holds a Masters in Education Policy from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and qualified as a primary school teacher from the National Institute of Education in Singapore in 2016.*

In 2017, Salma was appointed as the CEO of Durbeen, to lead a public-private partnership in the Government Elementary College of Teacher Education, Hussainabad in Karachi, with the goal to make it Pakistan's leading teacher education program.

Workshop

Escape, Redesign, Engage: Inclusive ELT through UDL and Translanguaging

ELT classrooms in their conventional forms, particularly in postcolonial contexts quite often tend to dictate an unforgiving subject, and not a skill to impart and master. What ensues quite naturally from such an environment is; low learner engagement, and unmet learning objectives. This 50-minute experiential workshop uses an educational escape-room model to literarily escape such a classroom, and explore how Universal Design for Learning (UDL), translanguaging, and Project Zero's Visible Thinking Routines can support more inclusive and learner-centred ELT.

Employing Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle, this workshop will allow participants to critically understand how linguistic repertoires, prior knowledge, and learner diversity can be leveraged as instructional assets rather than treated as barriers. The workshop emphasises that inclusive pedagogy does not necessarily require additional resources; it, rather requires intentional and flexible instructional design.

Towards the end participants will leave with practical, low-resource strategies and redesigned classroom activities that can be adapted and implemented within diverse ELT scenarios.

Keywords: *UDL; Translanguaging; Visible Thinking; Inclusive ELT*

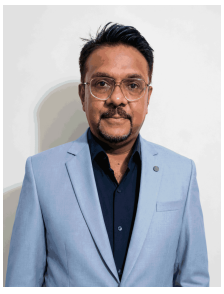


Syeda Minaal Ali *is an international education strategist who builds improvement ecosystems, particularly through Curriculum Development, Quality Assurance, and Teacher Training. A Commonwealth Scholar, J.Hansen Fellow and a British Council Education Consultant, she has worked for diverse clients within the inter/national education sector and brings her repertoire of experience to the SPELT 2026.*

Before They Can Speak: Building Bridges to English Participation

What happens when we ask learners to participate in English before they are ready to do so independently? This workshop explores practical ways of building a bridge from multilingual learners' existing linguistic resources to meaningful English participation. It draws on classroom experience with Grade 6 learners in a government school in Karachi, where some students enter English lessons with significant gaps in foundational language skills and limited confidence, despite using multiple languages in everyday life.

Participants will first experience a speaking task without sufficient linguistic support, reflecting the frustration many learners face when communicative activities are introduced without considering their starting point. Through a sequence of modelling,
strategic use of learners' existing languages, gesture, chunking, repetition, supported rehearsal and gradual release, participants will experience how small changes in teacher support can make participation possible. They will also examine when correction supports learning and when it may interrupt emerging confidence and fluency.



In the final stage, participants will adapt an existing speaking activity from their own context, identifying the barriers, the minimum support required, and how that support can gradually be withdrawn.

The workshop aims to help teachers rethink equity not as lowering expectations, but as designing accessible routes towards independent English use.

Syed Hassan Abid *is an Elementary School Teacher and English Language Educator with the Government of Sindh, Pakistan. His professional interests include multilingual classrooms, inclusive ELT, reflective practice, and practical approaches to supporting learners in resource-challenged contexts. He has participated in international ELT professional development, including IATEFL.*

Interactive Talk

Bridging Two Worlds: Code-Switching as a Pedagogical Strategy in Multilingual Science Classrooms

In Pakistani classrooms, our students are remarkable, they walk in carrying rich linguistic worlds, yet are asked to learn photosynthesis, enzymes, and cell biology entirely in English. This session, rooted in real experience from Science and Biology classrooms, explores how embracing code-switching between Urdu and English can transform confusion into clarity and hesitation into confidence.

Rather than treating Urdu as a hurdle, we can use it as a bridge. Two simple strategies make a big difference in practice: "Say it in Urdu First" inviting students to express what they already know in their mother tongue before introducing the English term, and Code-Switch Check-ins, brief mid-lesson moments where the teacher switches to Urdu to ensure students have truly understood, not simply memorized. Both strategies honour students' linguistic identities while keeping English as the language of academic growth.

Attendees will walk away with practical, classroom-ready tools that make multilingual teaching feel less like a compromise and more like a strength.



Rimsha Khan: *I am a Biology and Science educator at Ecole System for Success, Karachi, with over three years of teaching experience across Grades 6–8 and Cambridge O-Level/IGCSE. I also serve as Deputy Cambridge Coordinator at my school. Passionate about inclusive, language-responsive teaching, I explore how strategic code-switching between Urdu and English can make complex scientific concepts truly accessible for multilingual learners in Pakistani classrooms.*

Workshop

Barriers to Bridges: Harnessing Translanguaging in the Inclusive English Classroom

Pakistan's classrooms are inherently multilingual, yet learners' home and community languages are often positioned as barriers to English learning rather than as resources for learning. This interactive workshop explores how translanguaging can enable teachers to harness learners' full linguistic repertoires while maintaining clear and purposeful English-learning outcomes.

Drawing on research on translanguaging and multilingual pedagogy, the workshop moves beyond the simplistic opposition between ‘English-only’ and ‘mother tongue’approaches. Participants will explore how strategic use of learners' existing languages can support comprehension, vocabulary development, idea generation, collaboration, critical thinking and participation, while creating meaningful opportunities for learners to communicate in English.

Through a series of practical activities, participants will first examine their own assumptions about language use in English classrooms. They will then analyse classroom scenarios, experience multilingual learning strategies, and explore practical strategies including multilingual brainstorming, think–discuss–express, multilingual mind mapping, dual-language glossaries and translate–transform–communicate tasks. Working collaboratively, teachers will redesign familiar primary and secondary English activities to incorporate purposeful multilingual support.



Irum Saleem *is an accomplished educationist with 20+ years of experience as a teacher, teacher educator, curriculum specialist, and school leader across Pakistan, the UK, and the Middle East. She is a British Council Training Consultant, Academic Writer, and Professional Development Trainer with Khan Academy. Her expertise spans English language education, digital pedagogy, teacher development, and curriculum reform. She*

contributes to English language curriculum reform in Pakistan and serves as a tutor/assessor for international teacher educator courses.

Workshop

Teaching English Through Pakistan's Multilingual Classrooms

Pakistan's multilingual landscape presents both opportunities and challenges for English Language Teaching (ELT). It explains how multilingual education can improve English language learning by recognizing students' mother tongues as valuable educational resources rather than barriers. Drawing upon translanguaging theory and inclusive classroom practices, the study demonstrates how strategic use of Urdu, Sindhi, Punjabi, Pashto, Balochi, and other regional languages can enhance comprehension, participation, confidence, and academic achievement in English classrooms. It discusses practical classroom strategies implemented in pre-primary and primary settings, including bilingual storytelling, vocabulary bridging, collaborative learning, and culturally responsive teaching materials. It also examines policy implications for integrating multilingual approaches into teacher education, curriculum development, and assessment systems across Pakistan. Findings suggest that learners develop stronger language proficiency when their linguistic identities are acknowledged and respected. Furthermore, multilingual pedagogies foster inclusion, reduce language anxiety, and create equitable learning environments for students from diverse backgrounds. It recommends stronger collaboration among policymakers, curriculum developers, and teachers to promote multilingual education that aligns with international best practices while preserving Pakistan's rich linguistic heritage.



Nazia Israr Shaikh *is an educator and Montessori-trained professional currently serving as a Primary Teacher at DHACSS Creek Campus, Karachi. With a Montessori Diploma and qualifications in Business Management and Computer Science, she brings strong communication, coordination, and classroom experience to professional learning and educational workshops.*



Wardah Bukhari *is an Early Years Educator and Montessori-trained teacher with experience in English and Pre-Primary classes. She specializes in literacy development, child-centered learning, and teacher training. She is a literacy advocate passionate about learner-centered classrooms. A NUHE award-winning workshop facilitator, she has conducted teacher training for 2.5+ years.*

Paper Presentation

Multilingual Practices in English Language Education: Perceptions of Students and Teachers in Pakistani ClassroomS

Multilingualism is a significant characteristic of English language classrooms in Pakistan, where students come from diverse linguistic backgrounds and frequently navigate between English, Urdu, and regional languages during learning. This study explores students' perceptions and teachers' practices regarding the use of multiple languages in English language teaching (ELT), with a particular focus on translanguaging. Translanguaging refers to the flexible use of learners' linguistic repertoires to support understanding, participation, and meaning-making in educational settings (García & Wei, 2014). Previous research suggests that multilingual practices can enhance learner engagement, comprehension, and confidence in language classrooms (Cummins, 2007).

A small-scale mixed-method approach was employed for this study. Data were collected through a structured Likert-scale questionnaire administered to secondary school students and semi-structured interviews conducted with English language teachers. The findings indicate that the use of students' home languages alongside English positively supports classroom participation, conceptual understanding, and learner confidence. Teachers also viewed translanguaging as a useful pedagogical strategy; however, challenges such as institutional expectations and English-only practices were highlighted.

The study emphasizes the need to recognize multilingualism as an educational resource rather than a barrier and recommends greater pedagogical flexibility in English classrooms within Pakistan's diverse educational contexts.

****Keywords:** Multilingual education, translanguaging, English language teaching, multilingual classrooms, Pakistan**



Erum Nazir, *an aspiring educator with a Master's degree in English and over seven and a half years of experience as a teacher and trainer. Currently, I am pursuing a B.Ed. from Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development. I have a strong interest in educational research and am passionate about creating meaningful learning experiences. My professional interests include teacher development, reflective practice, and innovative approaches to education.*

Exploring the Effectiveness of Corpus-Refined Urdu Texts in the Context of Reading Comprehension: Evidence from Grade 3 District Central Public-School Karachi

This action research study examined the effectiveness of corpus-informed instructional materials in improving reading comprehension among Grade 3 students in a public school in District Central, Karachi. The study was motivated by the researcher's professional experience in Urdu language teaching, teacher education, and curriculum development, which identified persistent challenges related to vocabulary development and reading comprehension at the primary level.

Using the Action Research framework of Kemmis and McTaggart (1988), the study followed the stages of planning, action, observation, and reflection. Twenty-four Grade 3 students participated, with 18–20 students

regularly attending the intervention sessions. Diagnostic assessments revealed that most students were performing below grade level in vocabulary recognition, word identification, and reading comprehension.

Based on these findings, selected Grade 3 Urdu texts were adapted using a corpus-informed graded vocabulary framework developed through an emerging Urdu–Sindhi corpus initiative. The intervention included vocabulary activities, reading comprehension tasks, collaborative learning, and interactive literacy games.



Data were collected through diagnostic and post-assessments, classroom observations, student responses, and reflective records. Findings showed improvements in vocabulary recognition, reading comprehension, classroom participation, and reading confidence. The study concludes that corpus-informed instructional materials can effectively support literacy development and enhance Urdu reading instruction at the primary level.

Nighat Shaheen *is an Urdu educator with 27 years of teaching experience. She serves as a Senior Lecturer at GECE, Hussainabad (managed by Durbeen), and teaches A-Level Urdu at Beaconhouse College Programe. She previously worked as an Urdu Curriculum Coordinator at Beaconhouse School System for 16 years. She is a member of the NCP-Urdu Expert Group, a Cambridge Pakistan Urdu trainer, and is currently pursuing her MPhil degree.*

Workshop

English Only or English Mainly? Rethinking Classroom Language

English-only instruction is often presented to new teachers as a feature of effective English language teaching. However, research increasingly challenges the assumption that excluding learners' other languages necessarily improves English development (Hall & Cook, 2012; Conteh, 2018).

Designed for pre-service and early-career teachers, this interactive workshop provides a brief overview of research on own-language use, code-switching, and translanguaging in ELT. Participants will examine classroom scenarios and consider when learners' own languages can support comprehension, participation, vocabulary development, task preparation, and confidence. They will also explore potential concerns, including overuse and reduced opportunities to communicate in English.

Rather than replacing English, the workshop promotes purposeful and context-sensitive language choices. Through discussion and practical examples, participants will develop guiding principles for deciding when own-language use supports learning. They will leave with practical strategies for drawing on learners' linguistic resources while maintaining clear English-learning goals.



Hamza Abbasi *is an experienced English language educator at Qatar University with more than 18 years of experience across international contexts. His professional interests include curriculum, assessment, teacher development, and multilingual pedagogy. He holds an MA TESOL and is pursuing doctoral studies in Educational Leadership at Western University.*

Conference Day 1: HHS School System

Programme

Time	Room	Title
8:30 am - 9:00 am		**Registration**
9:00 am - 9.30 am	Society Campus Outer/Main Ground)	Opening Ceremony
9:30 am - 10:20 am		**Plenary Address: The Promise and Peril of Personalized Learning in the Age of AI** **Judy Wren**, *Lecturer, Foundation Program, Qatar University*
10:20 am - 11:00 am	**OLS Ground**	**Tea Break**
Concurrent Interactive Talks 11:00 am - 11:45 am	Society Auditorium	**Interactive Talk: From Prompt to Playlist: Using AI-Generated Songs for Language Learning** **Conan Kmiecik**, *Course Lead, English Lecturer, Qatar University*
	OLS Auditorium	**Interactive Talk: Making and Using AI Agents in the ELT Classroom** **Charles Fullerton,** *Co-lead of Reading Workshop Program, Qatar University*
	OLS Computer Lab 2	**Interactive Talk:Designing for Inclusion: Empowering Every Learner in the English Classroom** **Samra Adeel,** *Member, Professional Development Professional Council, (PDPC) Cambridge Certified School Leader ELT Trainer, HHS School System*
	OLS Computer Lab 1	**Paper Presentation: Rethinking Feedback Literacy for Human–AI Writing Classrooms** **Saira Mahmood,** *Senior Lecturer, GECE, Hussainabad (Durbeen)* **Manal Fatmi,** *Lecturer, GECE Hussainabad (Durbeen)* **Deenar,** *Senior Lecturer, Durbeen*
	OLS Room First Floor	**Interactive Talk: The Missing Curriculum: Where Does SEL Fit in the Digital Classroom?** **Farheen Hasan,** *Educational Consultant, GradFolio Consulting & Holistic Wellness Coordinator, The Learning Tree School*
	Society Computer Lab 1	**Workshop: AI, Language, and the Future of Literacy** **Syed Fawwad Hussaini,** *Head of IT, HHS School System*
Concurrent Sessions 11:55 am - 1:10 pm	Society Auditorium	**Workshop: Scrolling with Sense: Leveraging Social Media Texts for Critical Language Development** **Bushra Taqi,** *Principal, HHS School System*
	OLS Auditorium	**Workshop: From Information to Understanding: Teaching Digital Reading Skills** **Alefiyah Hoshangabadwala,** *Head of Academics and Assessment, ALFAAZZ Online School*
	OLS Computer Lab 2	**Workshop: Using Digital Literacy to Engage Language Learners: A Practical Guide for the English Classroom** **Hina Altaf,** *Teacher, HHS School System, Clifton*
	OLS room First Floor	**Workshop: Motivating Learners in the Digital Age** **Sobia Haroon,** *Professional Development Specialist, OUP*
	OLS Computer Lab 1	**Workshop: Grammar, Giggles and Growth: Making English Lessons Fun** **Taghrid Ahmed,** *English Design Manager, TCF*
	Society Computer Lab 1	**Workshop: English for Every Classroom: Teach Your Subject with Confidence** **Beenish Chaudhary,** *Educational Consultant, British Council*
1:10 pm – 2:00 pm	**Society Campus**	**Lunch and Namaz Break**
2:00 pm - 3.30 pm	Society Outer Ground	**Interactive Session: Reviving the Art of Literary Appreciation** **Mehwesh Rehman, Amna Mustafa, Hamza bin Wasi, Nusrat Waqar,** *HHS School System*
3:30 pm - 4:00 pm		Closing Ceremony

Plenary Address



Judy Wren

Lecturer, Foundation program,
Qatar University

The Promise and Peril of Personalized Learning in the Age of AI

Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) has the potential to transform education by making personalized learning for diverse classrooms both practical and scalable. In traditional classrooms, developing differentiated materials and learning experiences is time-consuming, often resulting in students receiving the same, or only slightly modified, instruction. With the advent of GenAI, however, learning activities can be tailored to students' proficiency levels, interests, and learning goals. Used thoughtfully, GenAI offers the promise of creating more engaging, inclusive, and equitable learning experiences.

Yet realizing this potential requires mindful implementation. Like every significant educational technology before it, GenAI's value depends on how it is used. Without careful planning, it may unintentionally widen existing inequalities through unequal access to technology, differences in digital literacy, and inconsistent teacher preparation.

This plenary explores both the promise and the potential peril of GenAI. Rather than viewing AI as a panacea or the end of education, it argues that the future of equitable education will depend less on the technology itself and more on the pedagogical expertise, professional judgment, and human values that educators bring to its use. In doing so, it invites educators to reimagine how GenAI can support more personalized, inclusive, and equitable learning environments for an increasingly diverse world.

Judy Wren (MA TESOL, Delta) is a Lecturer in the Foundation Program at Qatar University. With more than 25 years of international experience in English language teaching, she specializes in the practical integration of technology, most recently of generative AI, to enhance teaching, learning, assessment, and professional development.

Interactive Talk

From Prompt to Playlist: Using AI-Generated Songs for Language Learning

This session introduces a practical approach to using AI-generated songs to support grammar development and listening skills in English language classrooms. While many teachers are interested in integrating AI tools, there is often a lack of clear, classroom-ready methods. This workshop demonstrates how teachers can use tools such as Suno to generate level-appropriate songs that target specific grammar structures, including modals, conditionals, and verb tenses.

Participants will explore a simple three-step process. First, teachers design focused prompts to generate songs aligned with a specific language objective and proficiency level. Next, they generate songs using AI tools such as Suno and evaluate the output for genre, quality, and suitability for classroom use. Finally, they adapt the lyrics into cloze activities and implement listening tasks that promote engagement, comprehension, and form-focused learning.

The session includes hands-on practice in creating prompts, editing AI-generated lyrics, and designing cloze exercises suitable for B1–B2 learners. Sample materials and student responses will be shared to demonstrate classroom impact. By the end of the session, participants will leave with ready-to-use strategies and adaptable materials that combine creativity, technology, and effective language instruction.



With over 15 years of experience in higher education, **Conan Kmiecik** is a Course Lead and English Lecturer at Qatar University. His work focuses on ESP, entrepreneurial education, materials design, and the integration of emerging technologies into language instruction. He has held leadership roles in curriculum development and international projects, including serving as a U.S. Department of State English Language Specialist in Tunisia in 2025.

Making and Using AI Agents in the ELT Classroom

According to Google, AI agents are "software systems that use AI to pursue goals and complete tasks on behalf of users." As users, how can we as teachers leverage the power of AI to help our students inside and outside the classroom? This presentation will give you the opportunity to experience AI agent 'teachers' as a student would, using agents created for the presenter's university foundation-level ESL reading and writing classes. Attendees will then be taught how to create their own agents on Microsoft's co-pilot, which they can tailor to their own specific classroom needs. A good AI agent, imbued with the knowledge you have given it, allows you to extend your teaching outside classroom hours, giving students the opportunity to ask as many questions as they want and do as much practice as they need.



Charles Fullerton *has been an EFL teacher for 25 years. He has lived and worked in Costa Rica, South Korea and, currently, in Qatar where he is the co-lead of Reading Workshop at Qatar University. His research interests include digitally enhanced education and innovative ways to teach reading and writing.*

Designing for Inclusion: Empowering Every Learner in the English Classroom

This interactive workshop offers English language teachers practical, evidence-based approaches to build genuinely inclusive classrooms. Mixed-ability ELT classrooms present a common challenge: standard, uniform instruction often leaves struggling students behind while failing to stretch advanced learners. This session connects inclusive teaching theory directly to everyday classroom practice, offering actionable methods that keep every student actively engaged.

Participants will examine four core classroom practices:

- Tiered Task Design: Crafting reading and writing activities at differentiated challenge levels to ensure accessibility while preserving academic rigor.
- Multimodal Scaffolding: Using graphic organizers, visual anchors, and contextual cues to deepen comprehension for developing language learners.
- Flexible Grouping Protocols: Structuring peer collaboration so students learn from one another without feeling singled out.
- Targeted Formative Checkpoints: Applying low-stakes, ongoing checks for understanding to adjust instruction on the spot.

Through practical material adaptation exercises, participants will rework standard lesson plans into responsive, equitable teaching tools. Teachers will leave with an adaptable, ready-to-use toolkit designed to build learner confidence, encourage meaningful participation, and narrow achievement gaps in diverse English classrooms.



Samra Adeel *is a CIEDL Cambridge-certified educational leader with over a decade of experience in English Language Teaching (ELT), curriculum design, and teacher training. Serving in key academic leadership roles, she specializes in Cambridge international qualifications and active pedagogy, driving impactful professional development across Pakistan's ELT community.*

Paper Presentation

Rethinking Feedback Literacy for Human–AI Writing Classrooms

Peer feedback is an important component of writing improvement (Cui et al., 2021). However, its efficacy is mediated by students' feedback literacy, i.e, the ability to judge and manage feedback (Carless & Boud, 2018). While also effective, GenAI feedback is more expansive and authoritative sounding (Kohnke et al., 2023). Its uncritical adoption into a fragile English as a Foreign Language (EFL) feedback ecology risk producing AI overreliance. For responsible AI-integration.

We draw on part of a mixed-methods study comparing the efficacy of AI- and peer feedback among pre-service teachers in Pakistan. Participants (n=21) were asked to identify if the feedback they received on their writing was from a peer or ChatGPT (Mahmood, 2025). Nearly all were able to identify the use of AI for reasons that indicate that they drew on pre-existing models of human and AI writing to infer authorship, making use of a combination of communicative cues and performance cues While AI was associated with greater analytical capability and helpfulness, human feedback was flagged as imperfect but friendly.

This paper argues that responsible AI integration reconceptualises feedback literacy based on the principles of heutagogy and hybridity, equipping learners to critically evaluate the affordances of different feedback partners and strategically orchestrate 'hybrid human–AI' (Cukurova, 2025) feedback loops.



Saira Mahmood *is a Senior Lecturer at the Government Elementary College of Education (Hussainabad) where she teaches English proficiency and pedagogy courses. Saira holds an MSc in Applied Linguistics for Language Teaching from the University of Oxford. Her research interests include AI ethics and governance in education, and GenAI for language teaching and learning.*



Manal Fatmi *is a Lecturer at GECE, Durbeen, where she teaches Functional English. She is currently pursuing an M.Phil in English Literature at the University of Karachi. Her research interests include academic integrity, and the operationalisation of Critical AI Literacy across HEIs in Pakistan.*



Deenar *is a Senior Lecturer at the Government Elementary College of Education (Durbeen), where she teaches TESOL courses to student-teachers. Deenar holds an M.Phil. in Education from the Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development (AKU-IED). Her research interests include teacher education, English language pedagogy, and generative AI in assessment and teaching and learning.*

Interactive Talk

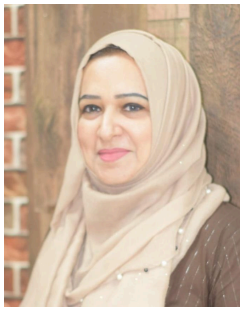
The Missing Curriculum: Where Does SEL Fit in the Digital Classroom?

As technology, artificial intelligence, and digital innovations continue to transform education, teachers are increasingly challenged to rethink what and how they teach. While digital tools are reshaping language learning, communication, and classroom engagement, an important question remains: Are we giving enough attention to the social and emotional dimensions of teaching and learning?

This interactive talk invites educators to reflect on the role of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) in today's technology-driven classrooms. It will explore whether teachers intentionally integrate SEL strategies into their lessons, how schools support students' social and emotional development, and whether teachers' own emotional well-being receives equal attention. After all, how can educators nurture emotionally intelligent learners if their own well-being is overlooked?

Through reflective questions, collaborative discussions, and practical classroom scenarios, participants will examine the connections between SEL, language learning, empathy, effective communication, and meaningful human relationships. The session will also challenge educators to consider how digital innovations can complement, rather than replace, the human connections essential to education.

It aims to encourage teachers to look beyond technological proficiency and academic outcomes and recognise that nurturing emotionally healthy learners begins with emotionally supported educators.



Farheen Hasan *is a seasoned educator, Cambridge Certified Trainer, Career Coach, and Educational Consultant with over a decade of experience in educational leadership, teacher training, and student development. She holds an MS in Educational Leadership & Management and specialises in remedial teaching, inclusive education, SEL, technology integration, and professional development. She serves at The Learning Tree, Al Murtaza College, EDLAB Foundation, and GradFolio, a US-based educational consultancy guiding students towards admissions at American universities. She is also the founder of SkillSynQ.*

Workshop

AI, Language, and the Future of Library

Generative AI and Large Language Models (LLMs) have become increasingly common in education. In this scenario, language teachers face a pivotal question: how do these statistical systems reshape what it means to read, write, speak, and think? This interactive 45-minute workshop, grounded in Digital Literacies and Language Development, translates core AI concepts into classroom-ready pedagogy for English language educators.

The session opens by demystifying LLM mechanics—token prediction, probability, and the limits of machine "creativity"—explained in plain language and classroom metaphors. A live micro-lab lets participants interact with a pre-configured AI agent on computer systems to experience real-time diagnostic feedback and learning analytics using Bloom's Taxonomy as a scaffold, the workshop shows how offloading routine, lower-order tasks (grammar checks, vocabulary drills, pronunciation practice) to AI frees teachers to focus on higher-order goals: interpretation, evaluation, synthesis, and authentic voice.

By the end of the workshop participants will:

- Understand the basic mechanics of LLMs and what "creativity" means for a statistical model.
- Identify concrete ways AI can accelerate reading, speaking, and writing practice while strengthening critical thinking.
- Apply Classroom activities that integrate AI as a co-pilot.
- Adopt assessment and ethical practices that preserve student agency and academic integrity.



Syed Fawwad Hussaini *is an EdTech professional and Senior Technical Manager with over 18 years of experience bridging technologies and operational ecosystems. Currently serving as IT Head for HHS School System, he leads digital transformation, learning integration, and continuous faculty training initiatives. His sessions focus on empowering educators to harness AI as a pedagogical co-pilot—optimizing routine tasks and enhancing critical thinking, reading, writing and assessing in modern classrooms.*

Workshop

Scrolling with Sense: Leveraging Social Media Texts for Critical Language Development

This interactive workshop responds by transforming familiar social media content—captions, comment threads, memes, clickbait headlines, and algorithm-driven posts—into catalysts for critical language development.

In Pakistan, where students are among the highest consumers of social media globally, the gap between their digital lives and classroom learning is particularly pronounced. Yet formal language classrooms often privilege conventional print literacy while overlooking the rich linguistic and critical possibilities embedded in digital discourse. This workshop addresses that disconnect by presenting social media as a relevant, accessible site for developing inferential reading, audience awareness, critical interpretation, and the ability to recognize manipulation and bias.

Participants will be introduced to the 5S Framework (Scroll–Stop–Study–Speak–Script) , a practical pedagogical model for moving learners from passive scrolling to active, critical participation. Through collaborative analysis of authentic digital texts, participants will examine lexical choices, tone, persuasive intent, and implied meanings. They will then engage in text transformation activities and design adaptable classroom tasks relevant to their teaching contexts.

By the end of this 90-minute experiential session, participants will leave with ready-to-use strategies, a curated digital resource pack, and a lesson plan template for immediate classroom implementation—bridging students' out-of-school digital realities with meaningful ELT practice.



Bushra Taqi *is an award-winning educational leader, principal, teacher trainer, and action researcher with extensive experience in instructional leadership, teacher development, and innovative literacy practices. She has led numerous professional learning initiatives focusing on critical thinking, project-based learning, reflective practice, and future-ready pedagogy. Her work centers on bridging contemporary digital realities with meaningful classroom instruction and empowering educators to create engaging, student-centered learning experiences. She is passionate about helping teachers connect emerging literacies with authentic language development in today's classrooms.*

Workshop

From Information to Understanding: Teaching Digital Reading Skills

In today's classrooms, students can locate information within seconds, yet many struggle to evaluate its credibility, synthesize ideas across multiple sources, and transform information into meaningful learning. As digital texts become increasingly multimodal, nonlinear, and interactive, traditional reading instruction alone is no longer sufficient.

Teachers across all subject areas must equip learners with the skills needed to navigate the online world critically and purposefully.

This highly interactive 50-minute workshop explores how reading on screen differs from reading on paper and introduces practical, classroom-ready strategies for teaching digital reading. Drawing on the work of Wendy Sutherland-Smith and Larry Lang, participants will engage in hands-on activities that demonstrate the challenges of online reading,including information overload, hyperlink navigation, source evaluation, and critical thinking. Rather than focusing on theory, the workshop emphasizes simple, adaptable practices such as think-alouds, structured online inquiry, source evaluation routines, and collaborative synthesis tasks that teachers can implement immediately.

Designed for teachers of all disciplines, the session encourages participants to rethink online reading as an active process of locating, evaluating, synthesizing, and communicating

information. By the end of the workshop, educators will leave with practical tools to help students become thoughtful, discerning, and confident readers in an increasingly digital world.



Alefiyah Hoshangabadwala *is an educator and curriculum specialist with expertise in assessment design, English language teaching, and educational technology. She has presented research at national conferences on AI-supported pedagogy and hybrid learning and currently leads academics and assessment at ALFAAZZ Online School*.

Workshop

Using Digital Literacy to Engage Language Learners: A Practical Guide for the English Classroom

In today's world, teaching English goes far beyond textbooks and whiteboards. Our young learners are growing up with screens all around them. As teachers, our main goal isn't just to get their attention, but to keep them truly interested in learning. This workshop shows how to turn everyday technology into a helpful tool that makes language Learning fun and meaningful.

We will look closely at the four main language skills—reading, listening, speaking, and writing—and see how technology can bring each one to life. Instead of focusing on boring theories, we will look at real, easy-to-use digital tools. You will see how interactive stories can make kids love reading, how fun audio tools improve listening, how simple voice recorders help quiet students speak up, and how online sharing spaces make writing a fun team activity.

The workshop covers exactly which free websites and apps work best for young learners. We will walk through real classroom examples and show how to fit these tools into your daily lesson plans without feeling overwhelmed. Finally, we will look at how to deal with common tech problems and keep kids focused so that the technology actually helps them learn English rather than just distracting them.



Hina Altaf *is a dedicated pre-primary educator and the current Academic Coordinator at HHS Clifton Campus. She holds a qualification in Montessori Training and is currently pursuing her B.Ed. degree from the Virtual University. With over a decade of teaching experience, Hina combines her strong background in graphic design with interactive, digital strategies to engage young language learners.*

Workshop

Motivating Learners in the Digital Age

Technology continues to transform the language learning landscape, creating new opportunities to engage, motivate, and empower learners. However, the successful use of technology is not determined by the tools themselves, but by how thoughtfully they are integrated into teaching and learning. When technology is aligned with learners' needs, interests, and real-world experiences, it can significantly enhance motivation by fostering autonomy, competence, and meaningful connections.

This session explores how language teachers can use technology purposefully to create engaging and motivating learning experiences. Participants will examine practical strategies for incorporating digital tools that support communication, collaboration, creativity, and learner independence. Drawing on research and current classroom practice, the session will highlight how technology can extend learning beyond the classroom, connect formal and informal learning spaces, and encourage learners to take greater ownership of their language development.

The session will also address the importance of context-sensitive implementation, emphasizing that effective technology integration requires careful planning, appropriate support, and alignment with pedagogical goals. Through examples, discussion, and reflection, participants will explore ways to overcome common motivational challenges and maximize the benefits of digital learning environments. By the end of the session, teachers will leave with actionable ideas and practical approaches for using technology to cultivate sustained motivation, engagement, and confidence among language learners in today's digital age.



Currently serving as a Professional Development Specialist at Oxford University Press Pakistan, ***Sobia Haroon*** *designs and delivers teacher-training programmes, webinars, and online courses, while leading digital professional development initiatives that leverage technology to enhance teaching and learning. With over 16 years of experience in education, spanning teaching, academic management, teacher training, and educational leadership, she is committed to empowering educators and improving learner engagement through innovative and effective teaching practices*

Workshop

Grammar, Giggles and Growth: Making English Lessons Fun

Contemporary English language classrooms are increasingly shaped by learners who have grown up in highly digital environments. Gen Z and Gen Alpha learners' extensive engagement with screen-based media presents teachers with the ongoing challenge of sustaining attention, fostering interpersonal interaction, and encouraging active participation in face-to-face learning. This context calls for pedagogical approaches that are both purposeful and responsive to changing learner needs.

Grammar, Giggles and Growth: Making English Lessons Fun explores humour as a pedagogical resource for enhancing engagement and interaction in English language teaching. Drawing on principles of affective learning, learner engagement, and communicative language teaching, the workshop demonstrates how humour can be strategically incorporated into the teaching of grammar and other language skills without compromising instructional objectives. The participants will explore humorous activity-based tasks to equip themselves with practical and adaptable strategies that can be transferred to their own classrooms.

Participants will reflect on how purposeful humour can create a supportive classroom climate, reduce learners' apprehension about using English, stimulate interaction, and make language input more memorable. The session uses humour not merely as entertainment, but as a deliberate pedagogical tool for promoting participation, communication, and meaningful language learning.



Taghrid Ahmed *is currently working at The Citizens Foundation (TCF) as the English Design Manager. She holds a Master's degree in English Literature from KU and has more than 25 years of experience in English Language and Literature teaching. She has also held the position of Principal at Karachi Public School for 2.5 years. She has conducted various workshops at school and at SPELT's International Conference held annually. She has done her ICELT through SPELT and attends various workshops and conferences yearly as she believes learning is an ongoing process.*

Workshop

English for Every Classroom: Teach Your Subject with Confidence

As English increasingly functions as a medium of instruction and professional communication, teachers of non-English subjects are often required to explain concepts, give instructions, ask questions, provide feedback, and interact with students in English. Yet professional development opportunities frequently focus on English teachers, leaving subject teachers with limited support in developing the functional English required for their specific classroom contexts.

Informed by research on language awareness and professional language development, this interactive workshop focuses on practical ways to strengthen teachers' use of English within their subject classrooms. The workshop aims to develop greater confidence and awareness in using clear, purposeful, and context-appropriate English for classroom instruction, explanation, questioning, interaction, and feedback. Through practical, subject-based activities, participants will identify their existing language needs, develop useful classroom expressions, practise their use, and apply them directly to their own teaching contexts. (Words 138)



Beenish Chaudhry*, is an Assistant Professor of English at a Public College for Women, in Karachi and an English and School Education Consultant of the British Council Pakistan. With over a decade's engagement in the U.S. Consulate Karachi's English Language Programs, she has led the English Works! Program. She had the honor of representing Pakistan, wherein she showcased her teacher training prowess and shared her innovative teaching practices in the Connecting Teachers, Innovating Learners Symposium, at the University of Nebraska (PIESL), U.S.A. She facilitated the "Teaching Grammar Communicatively", an e-course sponsored by RELO Pakistan of the U.S. Embassy, Islamabad. Holding an M.Phil. In Applied Linguistics, she has been teaching English for the last eighteen years, including a decade at Karachi's top-notch universities as a Visiting Faculty, besides excelling in teacher and corporate training.*

Interactive Talk

Reviving the Art of Literary Appreciation

This interactive session explores how English and Urdu poetry engage with shared human experiences, emotions, and ideas while reflecting the distinct cultural and philosophical perspectives of the Eastern and Western worlds. Through a selection of celebrated poems in both languages, participants will examine how poets express universal themes through diverse literary traditions, voices, and sensibilities.

Participants will engage in close reading and collaborative analysis of selected poems, identifying key themes, literary devices, imagery, symbolism, tone, and other elements that shape meaning. They will compare the poets' treatment of similar ideas, discuss cultural influences on their expression, and share personal reflections and interpretations. The session will encourage participants to move beyond linguistic boundaries and appreciate how different literary traditions can offer complementary, contrasting, and enriching perspectives on the human experience.

The session aims to foster a deeper appreciation of English and Urdu literature through comparative exploration, critical thinking, and meaningful dialogue. By connecting literary analysis with personal response, participants will experience poetry as a medium for intercultural understanding and reflection, while exploring possibilities for bringing comparative literary study into their own teaching practices.



Mehwesh Rehman *has been associated with the field of teaching for the last 20 years and is currently working as the Head of the Quality Enhancement Cell at the HHS School System. She is committed to enhance teaching quality, align the curriculum with modern educational trends and nurture the holistic growth of students. With a Masters' degree in English Literature from University of Karachi, she has been teaching Literature courses at the Karachi University and has taught Communication and Academic Writing at SZABIST. She is also pursuing her M.Phil. in English Literature.*



Amna Mustafa *has over 9 years of experience teaching English Language and Literature. She holds a Bachelor's degree from IoBM and recently completed her B.Ed. With an interest in literature, poetry and arts, she values the role of creative expression in education. Alongside her teaching work at HHS School System, she currently serves in the Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC), as the English Coordinator for the O Level Stream. Her role includes curriculum development, assessment planning, and teacher training.*



Nusrat Waqar *is an AMI Montessori Diploma Holder with over 33 years of experience in Early Childhood Education and more than 15 years in teacher training with London Montessori International. She has conducted numerous workshops and seminars in Pakistan and internationally. Currently serving as Pre-Primary Academic Coordinator at the Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC) of HHS School System, she is passionate about empowering teachers, promoting innovative teaching practices, and creating meaningful, child-centred learning experiences.*



Hamza bin Wasi *is an Urdu writer, researcher, curriculum developer, translator, and publisher. Wasi's work spans Urdu literature, children's literature, philosophy, and publishing. Hamzah Ibn e Wasi contributes to curriculum development, literary creation, and the promotion of Urdu and religious philosophy through Maktab-e-Ibn-e-Wasi. Currently working as QEC Urdu Coordinator at the HHS School System.*

Conference Day 1: Habib Public School Programme

Time	Room	Title
9:00 am - 9:30 am		Registration
9:30 am - 10:00 am	Auditorium	Opening Ceremony
10:00 am - 11:00 am		**Plenary Address: Before Innovation: What is Worth Preserving? - *Innovating with purpose*** **Abbas Husain,** *Chair, Outreach Council, SPELT and Managing Director, Teachers' Development Centre*
11:00 am - 11:30 am		**Tea Break**
Concurrent Sessions 11:30 am - 12:20 pm	Room 6	**Interactive Talk: From Classroom to Broadcast: Authentic Communication in ELT** **Christina Rivera,** *English Lecturer, Qatar University*
	Room 7	**Featured Session: Beyond the Definition: A Practical Framework for Vocabulary that Lasts** **Faiqa Baig,** *Academic Coordinator & Teacher Trainer, The Indus Academy*
	Room 8	**Featured Session: Leading for Innovation: Turning Leadership Theory into Educational Change** **Issaam Affaneh,** *Course Lead, Coordinator, Qatar University, Doha, Qatar*
	Room 9	**Workshop: Innovating Narrative and Descriptive Writing through Story Forge.** **Leena Samuel,** *Head of Year VII – Karachi Grammar School*
	Room 10	**Paper Presentation: English Beyond Four Skills** **Sanober Farooq,** *Academic Advisor, Regional Education Office, South* **Tasneem Amin,** *Principal, Aga Khan School, Garden*
12:20 pm - 1:20 pm		**Lunch and Namaz Break**
Concurrent Sessions 1:30 pm - 2:20 pm	Room 6	**Workshop: Silence: A Powerful Tool for Reading and Writing** **Aasia Imran,** *Principal, Azeemi Public Higher Secondary School*
	Room 7	**Workshop: See it. Feel it. Write it. Reimaging Descriptive Writing through Digital Experiences** **Tabassum Ali,** *Instructional Development Specialist, Habib Public School*
	Room 8	**Workshop: From Scrolling to Learning: Teaching English through Social Media** **Maheen Fatima Zaidi,** *Karachi Public School, Gulshan Secondary Campus*
	Room 9	**Workshop: A Day in the Life of a Middle-Schooler: Rethinking English Lessons in Resource-Challenged Classrooms** **Najia Raza,** *Faculty Member, University of Karachi*
	Room 10	**Workshop: Blending Voices: Teaching Hybrid Writing through Poetry** **Farheen Rehan**, *Teacher, Ladybird School*
2:30 pm - 3:30 pm	Auditorium	**Featured Session: FIKR 2.0: AI as a Thinking Partner? Opportunities and Challenges** **Dr Fauzia Shamim,** *CAO Durbeen; Former Vice President SPELT* ***Facilitator*: Dr Nancy Lobo,** *Dean of Studies; HPS*

3:30 pm - 3:45 pm	Auditorium	Closing Ceremony	

Plenary Address



Abbas Husain

Chair, Outreach Council, SPELT and Managing Director, Teachers' Development Centre

Before Innovation: What is Worth Preserving? - Innovating with purpose

As English language teaching embraces new technologies, digital platforms, and artificial intelligence, a prior question deserves our attention: what is worth preserving? This plenary explores the human capacities that give educational innovation its purpose: sustained attention, imagination, thoughtful expression, generous listening, and independent judgement. Through an encounter with a short text and reflection on classroom practice, participants will consider how these capacities grow through the teacher's choices and the relationships that make learning possible. What happens when efficiency displaces reflection, or ready access to answers diminishes the willingness to wrestle with a question? How might new tools deepen our engagement with language, literature, and one another? The session invites teachers to develop thoughtful criteria for embracing change, keeping the intellectual and human formation of learners at the heart of English language education.

Abbas Husain *is the Managing Director of Teachers' Development Centre (Pvt) Ltd, Karachi. His education and training span prestigious institutions, including the Universities of Karachi, Manchester, Toronto, Pittsburgh, Louisville, and Chicago. As one of the founding members of SPELT, he has actively participated in several national and international conferences since 1987.*

In 2020, Abbas Husain was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the ROOTS MILLENNIUM SCHOOLS' 12th Teachers' Development Conference, presented by Mohsin-e-Pakistan, Dr. A. Q. Khan. In 2022, he received the

EDUCATION ICON Award from Mohammad Azfar Ahsan, Minister of State, GoP. In 2024, he was awarded the EDUCATION LEGEND AWARD by the Federation of Private Schools Pakistan, presented by the Caretaker Minister of Education and Literacy of Sindh, Mrs. Rana Hussain.

Having reached over 88,000 teachers nationwide through specialized training programs for school leaders, Abbas Husain has gained significant clarity on the challenges they face, if not always the solutions. He brings a unique perspective on the dynamics of change and resistance to change within Pakistan's education system.

Interactive Talk



From Classroom to Broadcast: Authentic Communication in ELT

Traditional speaking activities in EFL classrooms often lack authentic purpose, resulting in limited student engagement and reduced confidence in real-world communication. This interactive talk presents a project-based broadcast activity developed for university-level Mass Communication students in collaboration with Business students during a semester showcase event. The project required students to prepare and conduct live interviews focused on business ideas, encouraging authentic interaction through speaking, listening, questioning, and spontaneous communication.

The session demonstrates how the project scaffolded language development through multiple stages, including question design, interview preparation, collaborative practice, and live interaction. Attention will be given to how the activity supported shy or lower-confidence learners by creating meaningful communication opportunities connected to students' academic interests and future professional contexts. The talk also explores how interdisciplinary collaboration increased student motivation and participation while helping learners develop transferable communication skills relevant beyond the classroom.

Participants will leave with a practical framework for designing authentic interview-based projects adaptable to different proficiency levels, disciplines, and teaching contexts. The session will demonstrate how the project can be implemented across both low-resource and technology-enhanced learning environments using flexible preparation and presentation formats. Examples of preparation activities, classroom strategies, and student outcomes will be shared throughout the session.

Christina Rivera *is an English Lecturer at Qatar University with over 20 years of teaching experience in the United States, Mexico, China, Oman, and Qatar across universities, colleges, and private language schools. Her professional interests include student-centered learning, project-based instruction, educational technology, and future-focused ELT practices. She has contributed to curriculum development projects in English for Mass Communication and English for Business Communication and is particularly interested in developing authentic communication opportunities that increase student engagement, collaboration, and learner confidence.*

Featured Session

Word Power Unlocked: Teaching Vocabulary with Research, Routines and AI

A strong vocabulary is the foundation of confident communication and school success. Yet many students meet a new word once, copy its meaning, and forget it within days. Research tells us why.

This interactive workshop gives teachers practical, evidence-based tools to close that gap. Participants will learn the meaning of unlocking through context clues, building student-friendly definitions with word parts, mapping words with the Frayer Model, and keeping words alive through short retrieval games.

Participants will also see how free AI tools on an ordinary phone can do the heavy lifting of preparation: generating follow-up stories that recycle target words, levelled definitions, Frayer examples, and daily quizzes in minutes. Teachers leave with a toolkit of active learning strategies.



Faiqa Baig *is an Academic Coordinator at The Indus Academy in Karachi, Pakistan. She holds a Master's degree in English and a Postgraduate Diploma in Education from EIU and has a professional interest in student-centred learning, project-based instruction, educational technology, AI tools for lesson planning, and future-focused ELT practices. She guides teachers in developing curriculum and creating lesson plans and activities to increase student engagement, collaboration, and learner confidence.*

Featured Session

Leading for Innovation: Turning Leadership Theory into Educational Change

English language courses should give students opportunities to use English beyond the textbook. This presentation shares an entrepreneurship project designed for B1+/B2 university students that combines English language learning with digital literacy and employability skills. Students work in teams to develop a business idea, conduct market research, create a business plan, use different digital tools, and finally pitch their business. Along the way, they use English to communicate, collaborate, solve problems, make decisions, and present their ideas to others. They also gain practical experience using digital tools that they may encounter in their academic and professional lives. Instead of completing separate language activities, students use English to develop something of their own from an idea into a business project. The presentation will share how the project works, examples of student tasks, and practical ideas that other English teachers can adapt for their own classrooms.



Issam Affaneh *is a Lecturer and Course Coordinator at Qatar University, where he teaches English for professional and academic contexts. He is currently pursuing a doctorate in Educational Leadership. His interests include business English, entrepreneurship, digital literacy, and employability skills, with a focus on connecting language learning to students' professional goals.*

Workshop

Innovating Narrative and Descriptive Writing through "Story Forge”



Bridging structural story arcs with vivid descriptive language often poses a challenge in secondary English pedagogy.

This workshop introduces Story Forge, an innovative, gamified framework designed to elevate both narrative and descriptive writing in English language education. By guiding students through a five-stage story trail—Hook, Build-Up, Turning Point, Climax, and Resolution—the approach seamlessly integrates key descriptive craft challenges like sensory detail, similes, and metaphors into plot progression.

Set across immersive settings like Mystery, Dystopian, Ghost Story, and Survival worlds, learners explicitly apply sensory imagery to construct atmosphere while advancing narrative tension. Attendees will explore how timed writing challenges, live teacher feedback, and examiner-aligned self-assessment checklists empower students to evaluate sentence rhythm and descriptive impact.

Educators will leave with actionable strategies to scaffold dual writing styles, enhance creative mastery, and digitize classroom instruction.

*For over 20 years, **Leena Samuel** has been helping young people find their voice, both in the classroom and beyond it. As Head of Year and English Language and Literature teacher at Karachi Grammar School, she is known for her warmth, her creativity, and her belief that every student has a story worth telling.*

An innovative teacher and a lifelong learner, Leena is always curious about new and advanced ways of learning, and she loves bringing fresh ideas into her lessons. Her work has taken her from supporting student well-being and designing peer-mentoring programmes to founding a teacher training department and collaborating on international research-based interventions.

At SPELT, Leena will lead a workshop on advanced approaches to story writing. Participants can expect practical, inspiring techniques they can take straight back to their own classrooms.

Paper Presentation

English Beyond Four Skills

Rethinking What It Means to Be Competent in English language teaching has traditionally focused on four main skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These four skills continue to provide an important foundation for language learning.

However, they may not fully capture what learners need to do when they use English in real communication. In many situations, learners need to negotiate meaning, understand implied messages, adapt their language to different people and situations, connect ideas, manage interaction, and repair communication when misunderstandings occur. These abilities are closely connected to the four skills, but they are not always treated as separate areas of language competence.

This study explores whether the traditional four-skills framework is enough to describe contemporary English language competence. Using a mixed-methods classroom-based design with secondary-school English learners, the study examines learner performance in different communicative tasks.

The study aims to identify aspects of language ability that may remain less visible when English proficiency is viewed mainly through the four traditional skills. It does not suggest replacing the these. Instead, it proposes

looking at them as the foundation on which other communicative abilities operate. The study considers how these additional abilities can be made more visible in ELT curriculum, classroom practice, and assessment.

Sanober Farooq *Academic Advisor – English, Regional Education Office, South. Sanober Farooq is an Academic Advisor overseeing the English Department across eight schools in the South Region. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and has been working in the education sector for the past 10 years. Currently based at the Regional Education Office, South, she works in academic leadership with a focus on English language teaching, curriculum, assessment, teacher development, and strengthening teaching and learning practices across schools.*

Tasneem Amin *Principal, Aga Khan School, Garden Tasneem Amin is an experienced educational leader with over 20 years of professional experience in the education sector, having served in various capacities throughout her career. She holds a Master's degree in Education and has been associated with the Aga Khan Education Service, Pakistan (AKESP) since 2009. Currently serving as the Principal of Aga Khan School, Garden, Ms. Tasneem brings extensive experience in educational leadership, school management, and teaching and learning.*

Workshop

Silence: A Powerful Tool for Reading and Writing

Silence in the English language classroom is often interpreted as a sign of disengagement, hesitation, or lack of understanding. Yet, purposeful silence can be a powerful pedagogical tool for developing comprehension, reflection, critical thinking, and meaningful participation. This session explores how teachers can transform silence from an uncomfortable gap into an intentional part of the learning process.



Participants will examine different forms of classroom silence, including reflective silence, wait time, attentive listening, silent reading, and individual thinking time. Through practical examples and interactive activities, the session will demonstrate how strategically used pauses can give learners time to process language, formulate ideas, build confidence, and participate more thoughtfully. Particular attention will be given to second-language learners and quieter students who may need additional processing time before speaking.

The session will also challenge the assumption that effective English teaching requires continuous teacher-student interaction. Participants will explore how reducing teacher talk and allowing purposeful silence

can encourage learner autonomy and deeper engagement.

By the end of the session, teachers will have practical strategies for incorporating purposeful silence into questioning, reading, speaking, writing, and reflection activities, creating a more inclusive, thoughtful, and student-centred English language classroom.

Aasia Imran *is an experienced educational leader, principal, teacher trainer, Lead Auditor and educational consultant with a passion for reflective practice and innovative pedagogy. She combines school leadership experience with research-based approaches, design thinking, Sufi wisdom, and character education to inspire teachers, strengthen educational systems, and create meaningful learning experiences.*

Workshop

SEE IT. FEEL IT. WRITE IT.

Reimagining Descriptive Writing Through Digital Experiences

In today's rapidly changing educational landscape, writing classrooms have new opportunities to inspire learners to observe, imagine, and express ideas in meaningful ways. Descriptive writing, in particular, can move beyond familiar classroom routines to become a richer experience that encourages learners to engage with the world around them and communicate their ideas with greater purpose.

"See It. Feel It. Write It" explores how contemporary learning experiences can bring descriptive writing to life and create more engaging opportunities for students to develop their voices as writers. The workshop invites educators to reconsider how learners experience, interpret, and transform the world around them into language.

Through an interactive and reflective experience, participants will explore how engaging learning environments can encourage curiosity, observation, imagination, and thoughtful language choices. The session will also consider the evolving role of digital experiences in creating meaningful contexts for language learning while keeping creativity, personal expression, and the learner at the heart of the writing process.

The workshop aims to inspire teachers to view descriptive writing not simply as an exercise in adding detail, but as an opportunity for learners to communicate experiences, create atmosphere, and help readers enter the worlds they create.

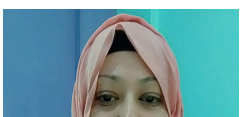


Tabassum Ali *is an Instructional Development Specialist at Habib Public School with over 25 years of experience in English language teaching, teacher education, curriculum development, and instructional innovation. An M.Ed. graduate from Aga Khan University, she leads professional learning initiatives and explores research-informed approaches to active learning, reflective practice, and innovative language pedagogy, with a strong focus on meaningful, future-ready learning experiences.*

Workshop

From Scrolling to Learning: Teaching English Through Social Media

This workshop explores how short-form social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts can be leveraged to enhance English language learning in both formal and informal educational settings. With the increasing dominance of visual and micro-content, learners are already exposed to authentic language input through daily scrolling habits. The session demonstrates how educators can transform passive consumption into active learning by integrating short videos for vocabulary building, listening comprehension, pronunciation practice, and contextual grammar awareness. Participants will engage in practical strategies for curating, creating, and analysing short-form content to support communicative competence and learner engagement. The workshop also addresses challenges such as digital distraction, content reliability, and attention span management. By bridging social media culture with language pedagogy, this approach empowers teachers to meet learners in their digital environments and promote meaningful, continuous English language development in an engaging, modern, and accessible way for future classrooms globally.



Maheen Fatima Zaidi *is an accomplished educator with 20+ years of experience in teaching, school leadership, curriculum development, and teacher training. Holding an MBA in Educational Leadership, she is a certified Curriculum Developer, Master Trainer, and Digital Trainer. Founder of 12th Dimension, she specialises in AI integration, soft skills, and neuroscience-informed leadership.*

Workshop

A Day in the Life of a Middle-Schooler: Rethinking English Lessons in Resource-Challenged Classrooms



What happens when we design an English lesson not from the teacher's desk, but from the perspective of a middle-school learner? This interactive workshop invites educators to step into "a day in the life" of a student in a government school with limited resources and explore the realities that shape learning—large classes, mixed language abilities, limited exposure to English, minimal teaching aids, and competing academic and social demands.

Moving from empathy to innovation, participants will examine how these realities can influence attention, confidence, participation and language development. They will then take on a practical challenge: designing an engaging English lesson using only the resources realistically available in their classroom.

Through learner-perspective activities, classroom scenarios and collaborative lesson-design tasks, participants will explore low-cost approaches such as storytelling, peer learning, role play, questioning, classroom objects, board work, movement and student-generated materials.

The workshop culminates in a "Zero-Budget Lesson Challenge," where teachers transform a conventional textbook lesson into an interactive, inclusive and learner-centred experience.

The session ultimately reframes innovation: effective teaching does not begin with more resources; it begins with seeing the learner differently and using what we already have more creatively.

Najia Raza *completed my Master's degree with double distinction and later pursued my MPhil in Public Administration from the University of Karachi. Over the years, she has had the opportunity to serve in diverse academic and leadership roles, including English Language Instructor, Visiting Faculty Member at the University of Karachi, Head of the Co-Curricular Department, and currently as Vice Principal at Public School and College,*

Central. These experiences have allowed her to understand education from multiple perspectives — as a teacher, mentor, administrator, and decision-maker.

Workshop



Blending voices: Teaching Hybrid writing through poetry

This presentation explores how poetry can be used to teach hybrid writing in middle and secondary English classrooms. Hybrid writing allows students to combine features of different writing styles such as narrative, persuasive, reflective, and discursive writing into one meaningful response. The session focuses on practical and creative teaching strategies that encourage students to think critically, express ideas confidently, and engage deeply with texts.

Through poetry-based activities, guided discussions, and scaffolded writing tasks, learners develop creativity, interpretation skills, and stronger written expression. The presentation also highlights how hybrid writing promotes student voice and makes writing instruction more interactive and engaging.

Participants will gain classroom-ready ideas and lesson approaches aligned with contemporary English language teaching practices. Real classroom examples will demonstrate how poetry can transform traditional writing lessons into dynamic learning experiences that support creativity, communication, and learner confidence in diverse classrooms.

Farheen Rehan *an educator with experience teaching English at the secondary level. I concentrate on improving students' writing, reading, and critical thinking skills through novel approaches such as hybrid writing and student-centered learning. I actively participate in professional development and give presentations on contemporary literacy practices in education.*

FIKR Session

AI as a Thinking Partner? Opportunities and Challenges

Technology companies increasingly promote AI as a *thinking partner*, but what does that really mean for teachers and learners? Does AI simply recommend the next movie to watch or song to listen to, or can it genuinely support planning, problem-solving, creativity, and critical thinking? At what point does AI enhance human thinking, and when does it begin to replace it?

This discussion session invites participants to critically examine their own use of AI and reflect on its implications for teaching, learning, and assessment. Together, we will explore how educators can encourage learners to engage thoughtfully with AI-generated content rather than accepting it uncritically. Rather than seeking definitive answers, the session aims to stimulate dialogue, challenge assumptions, and identify questions that participants can continue to explore with colleagues in their own institutions and professional communities.

Discussion Questions

- What does *AI as a thinking partner* mean in the context of teaching and learning?
- When does AI support deeper thinking, and when does it encourage cognitive offloading?
- What knowledge, skills, and dispositions do teachers and learners need to use AI critically and responsibly?
- How can classroom activities and assessments encourage students to question, verify, and improve AI-generated outputs rather than simply accept them?
- What role should teachers play in helping students develop Critical AI Literacy in an AI-rich educational landscape?





Dr Fauzia Shamim *is Professor and Chief Academic Officer at Durbeen, an NGO committed to improving teacher quality in Pakistan. She has over 40 years of experience as a TESOL teacher, teacher educator, and researcher. Her current research interests include teacher research, AI in higher education, and language-in-education policy for equity and social justice.*

Facilitator:

Dr. Nancy Lobo*, with 38 years of experience and a PhD, is the Head of Training and Development at Habib Education. A former English teacher, she is dedicated to improving educational practices and staff development, conducting workshops for teachers and middle managers to enhance their skills and effectiveness.*

Plenary Address

Zarina Yusaf

Lecturer, Foundation Department, Qatar University

More Than Words: Teaching Cultural Context in the English Language Classroom

Language does more than communicate ideas; it provides us with ways of expressing, organising and understanding our experiences of the world. The words we use, the meanings they carry and the distinctions they make, reflect particular cultural perspectives which are reflected in broader concepts around social organisation, family relationships and our place in the world. Yet in English language teaching, the cultural context that shapes these meanings is not always made explicit.

Texts and materials used in the classroom inevitably reflect particular ways of seeing and interpreting. Even when textbooks are adapted for international contexts, the cultural dimensions of the language itself can remain unexplored. This plenary argues that bringing diverse cultural contexts into language teaching can help students engage more deeply with both the language and the deeper cultural ideas expressed (or not) through vocabulary and grammar.

Drawing on research from intercultural theorists and sociopragmatics, the talk explores how teachers can help students examine the relationship between language, meaning and cultural perspectives. This process enhances classroom experience through the comparison of different expressions and realities, and provides students with the opportunity to create texts that communicate their own personal, cultural perspectives.

By making these connections explicit, teachers can create a richer, more relevant and engaging experience of English with their students.



Zarina Yusaf *has extensive experience teaching English as a second language in New Zealand, Australia, Europe and the Middle East. She is currently a lecturer in the Foundation Department at Qatar University. Her interests include intercultural theory and the increasing impact of English on local socio- cultural contexts.*

Plenary Address

Dr Hemanthi Hidellaarachchi,

Senior Lecturer, Department of English Language Teaching, University of Ruhuna Matara

Safe Spaces, Strong Voices: Promoting Student Wellbeing in the English Language Classroom

Student wellbeing is an important part of effective education, especially in language learning where communication, participation, and self-expression play an important role. Therefore, in addition to learning communication skills, it should provide opportunities to build confidence by getting over their fears and inhibitions.

This presentation explores how an English language teacher can create a safe, inclusive, and supportive classroom environment that promotes both student wellbeing and meaningful language learning. Therefore, it focuses on initiating strong teacher–student relationships built on trust, respect, and empathy. Through collaborative learning, pair and group interaction, and student-led communication, teachers can encourage voluntary responses from students. In this presentation, practical classroom strategies will be presented to demonstrate how student wellbeing can be integrated naturally into everyday English language teaching.

Finally, the presentation demonstrates that creating a pleasant and relaxed classroom atmosphere conducive to learning is an integral part of effective language learning. When students are recognized, respected, valued and made to feel accepted, they are motivated and inspired to participate with enthusiasm. Such an English

language classroom can be an ideal place for effective language learning, as well as for the overall development and empowerment of learners.

Dr. Hemanthi Hidellaarachchi is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka. She began her teaching career as a school teacher and has over twenty-five years of experience in English Language Teaching (ELT). Prior to joining the University of Ruhuna, she served as a teacher educator at the National Institute of Education, Sri Lanka, and as a teacher trainer at the Teachers' College, Maharagama, Sri Lanka. Since 2022, she has also served as a Career Mentor at Queensland University of Technology (QUT), Brisbane, Australia, where she completed her PhD. She has held the positions of Assistant Secretary and Membership Secretary of the Sri Lanka English Language Teachers' Association (SLELTA). Her research interests include English for Academic Purposes (EAP), English Medium Instruction (EMI), and educational psychology.

Featured Talk

From CALL to AIALL: Humanizing Technology in the English Language Classroom

The field of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) has fundamentally transformed English Language Teaching, evolving from drill-based software to intelligent, interactive ecosystems. Today, with the advent of Generative AI and Natural Language Processing, we are witnessing a paradigm shift from CALL to AI-Assisted Language Learning (AIALL).

This featured talk examines how English language teachers can leverage this shift to create more personalized, inclusive, and sustainable learning experiences, particularly in resource-constrained contexts like Pakistan. While AI offers powerful affordances for teaching all four skills, automated feedback, text analysis, and fostering learner autonomy, it simultaneously poses critical challenges related to digital equity, ethics, data privacy, and the de-professionalization of teachers.

Drawing on extensive research in CALL, TESOL, and teacher education, this session will demonstrate practical, low-cost to advanced strategies for integrating AI tools into lesson planning, materials development, and assessment without losing the human touch. It will introduce a Pedagogy-First Framework that places teacher agency, critical digital literacy, and ecological sustainability at its core.

The central argument is that technology should not replace the teacher but re-define the teacher as a designer, facilitator, and critical thinker. The talk will conclude with a roadmap for teacher professional development, advocating for a future where we teach learners not just English with technology, but also about technology through English, fostering responsible global citizenship.



Dr Sahiba Khatoon *is an administrator, teacher, supervisor and HEC, NAHE master trainer. She has received the best thesis award on her PhD thesis and best researcher award as well from University Sains Malaysia. She has authored 5 book chapters including TF and Springer publications. Currently, she is Director, CELL at MUET.IO*

Workshop

From Awareness to Action: Equitable ELT practices for diverse classrooms

Diversity is the main challenge that every teacher comes across around the world. But in Pakistan, what makes it more challenging is teaching English as a second language, where students have varying levels of English language proficiency, diverse educational backgrounds, and distinct learning needs, compounded by large class sizes and limited resources. While the topic of inclusivity is widely addressed and educators are becoming aware of the term, they still struggle to apply the knowledge in their classrooms to ensure equity.

Therefore, this workshop is made for teachers, coordinators and school heads who want to create more equitable and inclusive classrooms. It will help them turn their awareness into action by focusing on practical, contextual strategies to ensure every student feels heard and seen. Rather than treating equity as an abstract value, the workshop will address knowledge gaps through practical, evidence-informed approaches, including case studies, collaborative and reflective tasks, and a toolkit applicable to their own teaching contexts.

The workshop is organised around the Notice-Understand-Adapt-Act framework and focuses on three key areas;

1: using reflective practice to identify learners' needs and barriers to learning,
2: supporting mixed-ability classrooms through differentiation
3: designing and practising contextual strategies to promote equity.



Taqdees' Hira *experience in teaching, leadership and as a master trainer has helped her create practical, inclusive and impactful learning experiences that promote continuous growth in education. Her interactions with thousands of teachers across Pakistan have helped her identify the challenges of mixed-ability classrooms and steps to promote inclusion.*

Workshop

The Silent Teacher: How Reducing Teacher Talk Can Double Student Learning

In many English language classrooms, teachers carry the primary burden of communication, often assuming that effective teaching requires extensive explanation. However, research in communicative language teaching and active learning suggests that meaningful learning occurs when students are cognitively and linguistically engaged. This interactive workshop challenges traditional assumptions about teaching by exploring the impact of Teacher Talking Time (TTT) on learner participation, motivation, and language development.

This workshop will introduce practical strategies for increasing Student Talking Time (STT) without compromising lesson objectives, even in large and diverse classrooms. Participants will experience techniques such as guided discovery, information-gap activities, peer instruction, think-pair-share, and reflective questioning that promote learner autonomy and engagement.

Drawing on principles from communicative language teaching, translanguaging, and learner-centered pedagogy, the session will also demonstrate how multilingual resources can be leveraged to support English

language learning. By the end of the workshop, participants will have a toolkit of adaptable classroom strategies and a transformed perspective on their role—not as the primary source of knowledge, but as facilitators of meaningful learning experiences. This workshop is particularly relevant for teachers seeking practical, research-informed approaches to creating more interactive, inclusive, and effective English language classrooms.



Ikhlas Saeed *is a CELTA-certified educator, NLP Master Practitioner, and Founder of English Language Consultants. She holds a B.Ed. from Hamdard University and a B.E. in Mechanical Engineering from NED University. A former English Lecturer at AKHSS-K, she received the Outstanding Teacher Award and has extensive experience training learners and professionals in IELTS, TOEFL, PTE, OET, TEFL, and TESOL.*

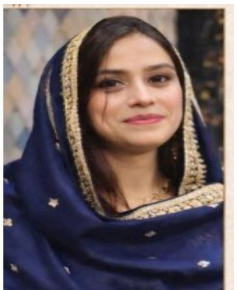
Workshop

Universal Design for Learning in Practice

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an inclusive approach to teaching that recognizes learner diversity and aims to remove barriers to meaningful participation and achievement. This 50-minute interactive conference session, "Universal Design for Learning in Practice," will explore how educators can translate UDL principles into practical classroom strategies. Participants will examine the three core principles of UDL—multiple means of engagement, representation, and action and expression—and understand how these principles can address varied learning needs, abilities, interests, and preferences. Through practical examples, brief activities, and classroom-based scenarios, the session will demonstrate how teachers can design flexible lessons, use accessible instructional materials, incorporate assistive technologies, and provide diverse ways for students to demonstrate learning. The session will also highlight how UDL can support inclusive classrooms without requiring separate lesson plans for individual learners. By the end of the session, participants will be able to identify barriers in their teaching practices and apply simple, practical UDL strategies to create more engaging, accessible, and learner-centered learning experiences.



Mehreen Masood *is an accomplished educationist, trainer, and facilitator with over 30 years of experience in renowned educational organizations, serving in key leadership positions. She is currently working as a Principal and Visiting Faculty at a university. She holds M.A., B.Ed., and M.Ed. degrees and has completed an Administration and Training Program from TESOL, Washington, D.C. Passionate about teaching and learning, she is committed to empowering educators and fostering meaningful learning experiences.*



Tabassum Khan*, educationist, trainer, and coordinator. With extensive experience across both public and private sectors, she specializes in educational planning, classroom management, and institutional coordination. In addition to conducting workshops and professional development sessions for teachers and students, she actively engages in*

educational research focused on refining teaching practices and improving overall educational quality.

Workshop

Dialogic Teaching: Nurturing Thinking Through Purposeful Classroom Talk

This interactive workshop explores how dialogic teaching can transform classroom learning by promoting meaningful conversations, critical thinking, and active learner engagement. Drawing on the work of Robin Alexander, Lev Vygotsky, and Jerome Bruner, the session demonstrates how purposeful questioning and high-quality classroom dialogue encourage learners to construct understanding rather than simply receive information.

Participants will experience practical strategies that can be implemented across different age groups and subject areas, including effective questioning techniques, think-pair-share, exploratory talk, scaffolding, and formative assessment through dialogue. Real classroom examples from the Early Years will illustrate how structured conversations enhance language development, confidence, collaboration, and problem-solving skills.

The workshop also addresses common barriers to productive classroom talk and provides practical solutions for creating an inclusive learning environment where every learner's voice is valued. Through interactive activities, reflection, and collaborative discussion, participants will leave with ready-to-use strategies that foster learner agency, deeper understanding, and improved learning outcomes. This session is suitable for educators seeking evidence-informed approaches to create engaging, learner-centred classrooms where dialogue becomes a powerful tool for teaching and learning.



Maha Karim i*s an Early Years educator at Roots Millennium School with a PGCert in Education (Distinction) from the University of Hertfordshire. She is an IB certified Educator, passionate about dialogic teaching, learner-centred pedagogy, and evidence-informed classroom practice, with experience in teacher training and professional development.*

Paper Presentation

From Barriers to Resources: Reimagining Native and Regional Languages in English Language Teaching in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

English language holds a significant position in professional and educational life in Pakistan despite considerable cultural and linguistic diversity in English language classrooms. This research explores how students' native/regional languages can be re-imagined as resources rather than barriers to English language learning. Building on interviews with three English language teachers working in boarding school and university contexts, my research examines their beliefs and teaching practices in relation to linguistic diversity and the role of students' native/regional languages in English language learning. The findings show that although teachers recognize the importance of English for employment, global communication, social

inclusion, and academic success, they also acknowledge that its dominance can diminish students' confidence, create linguistic insecurity, and marginalize native/regional languages. Moreover, teachers identify strategic use of students' native/regional languages as a linguistic resource to promote participation and inclusion in their classrooms. The study recommends culturally responsive pedagogy as a resource for English language learning, as it values students' linguistic and cultural diversity for developing their English language proficiency. Finally, the research advocates a more inclusive vision of English language teaching that values Pakistan's linguistic diversity alongside the global, professional, and educational importance of English.



Beenish Asmat Ullah *is Assistant Professor of English at Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University, Peshawar, and Coordinator, Eleanor Roosevelt Corner. She is a British Council-certified English and School Education Consultant and 2016 IVLP alumna, she has coordinated U.S.-funded English Access and English Works! programs.*

She completed professional development at the University of Oregon and serves as an HEC resource person and NACTE External Evaluator.

Workshop

Design for Learning: Differentiated Instruction for Neurodiverse Classrooms

When we talk about modern classroom practices, it is important to mention inclusive classroom practices that facilitate all kinds of learners, including the neuro-divergent ones. Neurodiversity is a compound word; a mixture of 'neuro' and 'diversity'. This term represents those individuals who think, process, act, and express themselves through ways which are not considered as typical by overall society (Hub, 2019). In the current era, it is essential to create an environment where all kinds of students (including the neuro-divergent) thrive. By implementing tailored and inclusive strategies, educators can ensure that all students are given equal opportunities to succeed. In this workshop, ELTs will be introduced to an inclusive teaching method called 'Universal Design for Learning' (UDL), by linking it with the needs of neuro-divergent learners in English classrooms. The main goal of the workshop is to let the participants know how to identify barriers to learning faced by neuro-divergent students by applying Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles in lesson planning. The structure of the workshop will be hands-on where the participants will learn about UDL (multiple means of engagement, representation and action) by participating in activities like reflective quizzes, lesson redesign exercise, and learning through pictures/videos.



Tehmina Kalwar *is a Lecturer at Government College University and an English language educator with interests in applied linguistics, inclusive education, language assessment, and teacher professional development. She facilitates workshops on differentiated instruction and Universal Design for Learning, advocating for accessible, equitable, and learner-centered teaching practices across diverse educational contexts.*

Interactive Talk

From Bias to Better Feedback - Reflective Talk for Equitable Classrooms

Through reflection, scenario analysis, feedback makeovers and peer discussion, participants will practise an acknowledge–specify–next step approach. The workshop positions constructive feedback not as "being nice," but as a deliberate equity practice that protects learner dignity, maintains academic challenge, strengthens voice and participation, and helps teachers make fairer, more thoughtful classroom decisions across English learning contexts. BIAS->PERCEPTION->JUDGEMENT->LANGUAGE->LEARNER IMPACT->REFLECTION-> BETTER FEEDBACK Feedback is shaped not only by what teachers notice, but also by the assumptions through which they interpret learners. In diverse classrooms, unconscious biases (different types of biases) such as affinity, anchoring, negativity, confirmation bias, the halo effect, groupthink and the "curse of knowledge" can influence who is praised, corrected, interrupted, challenged or quietly overlooked. This interactive workshop connects critical thinking, reflective practice and constructive feedback to explore how teachers can recognise these patterns before they become inequitable classroom habits.

Drawing on teacher-development work and programmes supporting girls and learners in marginalized and resource-challenged communities, the session invites participants to examine common feedback statements, identify the possible bias behind them, and transform negative or person-focused criticism into respectful and actionable guidance. Participants will use three critical-thinking lenses—a magnifying glass to question first impressions, a mirror to examine assumptions, and scales to consider alternative perspectives and evidence.



Saadia Shahid *is a Curriculum Lead and education specialist with more than a decade of experience in English language education, teacher development, curriculum design, and community-based programmes. She has been associated with prestigious educational organizations, including the British Council, Developments in Literacy, and Beaconhouse School System. Her work includes teacher capacity building and girls' education initiatives across Pakistan, with a focus on inclusive, context-sensitive learning in marginalized and resource-challenged settings.*

Workshop

Teaching at the Right Level: Rethinking Remedial Learning

Learners in the same grade can have very different levels of foundational literacy, yet classroom instruction and learning materials are often organised around grade-level expectations. When learners are consistently taught beyond their current level, remedial learning can become repetitive without necessarily addressing the gaps that prevent progress.

This interactive workshop introduces Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL), developed by Pratham International, as an approach to making remedial literacy instruction more responsive and equitable. Drawing on experience as a TaRL materials developer and lead trainer, the session explores how identifying what learners can currently do can inform grouping, targeted instruction and meaningful progression.

Participants will engage with a sample learner profile, interpret assessment information, explore grouping by learning level, and examine activities designed for different stages of reading development. The workshop will also consider how TaRL principles can be adapted to multilingual and resource-constrained classrooms, including implications for English literacy development, materials, classroom organisation and teacher support.

By the end of the session, participants will have practical strategies for moving beyond one-size-fits-all remediation towards responsive literacy instruction that starts from learners' actual abilities and supports meaningful progress.



Rabia Shafi *is a teacher educator, materials developer and ELT consultant with extensive experience in teacher professional development, foundational literacy and remedial learning in Pakistan and internationally. Her work with the British Council, and other education organisations includes designing learning materials, training teachers and supporting the implementation of evidence-informed approaches in diverse classroom contexts.*

Workshop

Using Acronym-Based Strategies to Support Multilingual Learners in English Language Classrooms

In multilingual classrooms such as those in Pakistan, learners often face challenges in understanding and retaining English language structures. This workshop explores the use of acronym-based strategies as effective cognitive tools to support language learning and classroom inclusion.

Drawing on classroom practices at the elementary level, the presenter demonstrates how acronyms such as OSASCOM for adjective order and SAIL (Safe, Accepted, Included, Ready for Learning) help learners simplify complex grammatical concepts while fostering a supportive learning environment. These strategies not only enhance memory and comprehension but also bridge learners' existing linguistic knowledge with new language input.

The session will be interactive and hands-on, allowing participants to experience acronym-based teaching techniques and collaboratively design their own classroom-friendly acronyms for grammar, writing, and speaking skills. The workshop also highlights how such strategies align with multilingual pedagogies by making learning accessible, engaging, and inclusive.

By the end of the session, participants will gain practical tools to integrate acronym-based learning into their teaching, thereby promoting both language development and learner confidence in diverse classrooms.



Mehwish Ashraf *is a dedicated teacher, researcher, and professional writer, and a member of SPELT. She writes stories in both English and Urdu, reflecting her passion for language and expression. Her work has been shared as teaching realia on the British Council platform. In November last year, she conducted a workshop for teachers, presented at the 41st SPELT Conference. She believes in sharing practical, classroom-based experiences to make learning meaningful and engaging.*

Workshop

The Ripple Question Model: Advancing Equity and Thinking in ELT

In many English language classrooms, participation is mistaken for learning. A small group of confident students often dominates discussion, while multilingual learners, hesitant speakers, and students with emerging proficiency remain intellectually under-engaged. This interactive session introduces the Ripple Question Model, a five-stage questioning framework designed to make deeper thinking and language production more accessible in diverse ELT classrooms.

The model moves learners through five progressive stages: Notice, Reason, Justify, Apply, and Extend. Each stage provides a structured entry point that supports comprehension, develops academic language, and gradually increases cognitive demand. Teachers can use the model with texts, images, discussions, speaking tasks, and problem-based activities without requiring expensive technology or extensive resources.

Through practical examples, participants will examine how the model can be adapted for mixed-ability, multilingual, and resource-constrained settings. They will also explore ways to scaffold responses, distribute participation more equitably, and move learners beyond one-word answers toward explanation, evidence, application, and original thinking.

By the end of the session, participants will be able to design Ripple Question sequences for their own lessons and use questioning as a tool for inclusion, critical thinking, learner agency, and meaningful language development.



Javeria Rana *is an education leader, teacher educator, and incoming PhD student in Curriculum and Instruction at Texas A&M University. She serves as Director Academics at Unique International Educational Services in Pakistan, overseeing academic quality and professional development across 500+ schools, and is actively engaged in global education initiatives as a Global Schools Program Mentor and Scientix Ambassador.*

Conference Day 2: Habib University Programme

Time	Room	Title
8:00 am - 9:00 am	HM Auditorium (E215)	Registration
9:00 am – 9:45 am		Opening Ceremony
9:45 am - 10:30 am		**Keynote Address: Beyond Gendered Textbooks: Helping English Teachers and Learners Engage with Gender Biases** **Dr Harry Kuchah Kuchah**, *Associate Professor of Languages, Social Justice and Education, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom*
Concurrent Sessions 10:40 am – 11:30 am	HM Auditorium (E-215)	**Plenary Address: From Policing to Managing Learning with AI** **Dr Fauzia Shamim**, *Professor and CAO, Durbeen, former Vice President SPELT*
	Tariq Rafi Hall (E220)	**Panel Discussion 1: Beyond Grade Level: Teaching Children Where They Are (The TaRL Approach)** **Panelists: Dr Farid Panjwani**, *Professor and Dean, Institute for Educational Development, Aga Khan University*; **Dr Fatima Rehan Dar**, *President, SPELT and CEO & Managing Partner, Oak Consulting*; **Baela Raza Jamil**, *CEO, Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA)* **Moderator: Mazhar Siraj**, *Director, English and School Education, Pakistan, British Council*
11:30 am - 12:30 pm	**Courtyard**	**Networking Brunch**
Concurrent Featured Sessions 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm	Mansoor Habib Seminar Room (N-219)	**Featured Talk: Using AI Effectively Through Structured Prompting for ELT** **Farah Kamal**, *Director of the Youth Exchange and Study (YES)*
	Kassim Parekh Classroom (C-200)	**Featured Talk: Southern Knowledge in ELT: Implications for Research and Pedagogy in Pakistan** **Waqar Ali Shah**, *Assistant Professor at Mehran University of Engineering and Technology*

	Mahmood Nensey Classroom (W-234)	**Featured Workshop: Beyond the Chatbot: Building Diversified Learning Experiences With Gemini Gems And Canvas** **Judy Wren** - *Lecturer, Foundation Program, Qatar University*
	HM Auditorium (E-215)	**Presentation: SPELT | British Council - TeachingEnglish Connect: Empowering English Teachers in Pakistan** **Rabia Sultan Malik**, *Senior Academic Advisor, English and School Education, British Council, Pakistan;* **Dr Bushra Ahmed Khurram**, **Raabia Hirani and Bushra Taqi,** *SPELT*
1:30 pm - 2:00 pm	**Namaz Break**	

Concurrent Sessions 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Mansoor Habib Seminar Room (N-219)	**Interactive Talk: Same Lesson, Different Learners: Rethinking Fairness in ELT** **Azra Qazi**, *Consultant, British Council*
	Mahmood Nensey Classroom (W-234)	**Interactive Talk: Same Classroom Different Worlds: Bridging the Gap-Managing Gen Alpha** **Lubna Panjwani,** *Managing Director PROWESS Pakistan*
	Javat Seminar Room (W-242)	**Plenary Follow-up Workshop: Developing Critical AI Literacy for Meaningful Learning** **Dr Fauzia Shamim**, *Professor and CAO, Durbeen, Former Vice President, SPELT* **Manal Fatimi**, *Lecturer, GECE, Hussainabad (Durbeen)*
	Standard Chartered Classroom (N 220)	**Workshop: Mediation in English Language Classrooms** **Neda Mulji**, *Senior Manager, Oxford University Press*
	Arif Habib Seminar Room (C-109)	**Workshop: Inclusive Assessment in English Language and Literature** **Seema Khalid**, *Visiting Faculty, Institute of Business Management (IoBM)*
	Kassim Parekh Classroom (C-200)	**Workshop: From Prompt to Pen: Strengthening Student Writing with SFL - Informed AI Models.** **Dr Kamran Ali,** *Associate Professor of English, Bahria University, Karachi*
Concurrent Sessions 3:10 pm - 3:55 pm	Tariq Rafi Hall (E220)	**Plenary Address: Embedding Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Sustainability (DEIS) in Language Education** (online) **Dr Subhan Zein** - *Professor at Sunway University, Malaysia, and Visiting Professor at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Indonesia*

	HM Auditorium (E215)	**Panel Discussion 2: AI for Equitable Classrooms: Empowering Teachers, Supporting Diverse Learners** **Panelists: Riffat Jabeen** – *Project Director, NIETE, MoFEP*; **Zeeshan Hasan** – *CEO, Khan Academy Pakistan*; **Rehana Kazi** – *Lead – EdTech and AI, LUMS*; **Saira Mehmood** – *Senior Lecturer, Durbeen* **Moderator: Talha Chishti**, *Head of English and School Education, Head of Lahore Office, British Council, Pakistan*
Closing Plenary 3:55 pm - 4:30 pm	HM Auditorium (E215)	**Plenary Address: Beyond Rote Learning: Transforming Primary English Classrooms in Pakistan** **Dr Fatima Dar** - *President, SPELT and CEO & Managing Partner, Oak Consulting*
4:30 pm – 5:00 pm	HM Auditorium (E215)	Closing Ceremony and Photographs

Keynote Address



Dr Harry Kuchah Kuchah

Associate Professor of Languages, Social Justice and Education University of Birmingham, United Kingdom

Beyond Gendered Textbooks: Helping English Teachers and Learners Engage with Gender Biases

Despite sustained international commitment to gender equality in education, the relationship between English language pedagogy and gender in classroom contexts remains underexplored, particularly in the Global South. While researchers have focused on analysing textbooks to identify issues with gender representation and bias, very little has been done to examine the role of the interpretive community of teachers and students in doing and undoing gender biases.

In this presentation, I start by inviting participants to examine the important relationship between the textbook, school and students' gendered attitudes based on examples from my earlier work with young language learners in Cameroon. Then I take participants beyond the textbook to examine how five English language teachers (and their students), from two Global South contexts, engage with gendered texts and how prevailing gender norms are promoted through the teachers' classroom practices.

Drawing on examples from a recently completed teacher mentoring programme funded by the British Council ELTRA Scheme, I reflect on the critical gap in teacher education, where critical discourse awareness and gender-responsive pedagogy remain absent as core professional competencies, and underscore the need for structured, inquiry-based interventions which help teachers and students to engage critically with texts in the language classroom.

Dr Harry Kuchah Kuchah *is Associate Professor of Languages, Social Justice, and Education at the University of Birmingham, UK. His research interests include English Medium Education in schools, Language Teacher Education and professional development and Teaching languages to Young Learners, and he has published widely in these areas. He is co-editor of International Perspectives on Teaching English in Difficult Circumstances (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018); Ethical and methodological issues in researching young language learners in school contexts (Multilingual Matters, 2021) and Teacher Research in Africa: Voices from the Africa ELTA Mentoring Project (IATEFL 2022)*

Plenary Address



Subhan Zein

Professor at Sunway University, Malaysia, and Visiting Professor at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Indonesia

Embedding Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Sustainability (DEIS) in Language Education

The discourse of sustainability has long been associated with environmental protection, but recent additions include economic health and societal equity. This presentation draws on an upcoming Special Issue in the journal AILA Review 2026, focusing on a diversity, equity, inclusion and sustainability (DEIS) framework where diversity, equity, and inclusion are seen as indispensable for sustainability. The underpinning principle of the study is that there is no sustainability without celebration of diversity, and there is no sustainability without equity and inclusion.

This presentation argues that amalgamating DEIS in one comprehensive framework is vital to create powerful, holistic strategies that promote a resilient language classroom where students thrive and their voices heard. Teaching language from a DEIS perspective helps break down the target language privilege associated with monolingual ideology. DEIS-underpinned initiatives in the classroom could turn projects into outcomes that bring about educational transformations. All these points are pertinent to the United Nation (UN's) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 4 (Reduced Inequalities) and 10 (Quality Education).

This presentation will show strategies on how teachers can successfully embed DEIS in the language classroom.

Subhan Zein *(PhD, Australian National University) is Professor at Sunway University, Malaysia, and Visiting Professor at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Indonesia. He is Routledge AsiaTEFL Book Series Editor-in-Chief and two-time winner of Australia's Best Researcher Award in English Language and Literature. He spent fourteen years teaching at higher education institutions in Australia, catering for the needs of local Australian students as well as international students, from 90 countries. His publications include 12 published and forthcoming books, appearing in Web of Science- and Scopus-indexed outlets such as Routledge, Springer, and Multilingual Matters, while his articles have been published in leading journals. His editorial Special Issue works are due for publication in AILA Review, The Journal of Asia TEFL, and TESOL Journal. He is editor and lead editor of six academic volumes, including The Routledge International Handbook of English Language Education. He has been invited to deliver keynote, plenary, and featured presentations, as well as international special lectures at conferences and universities in various countries around the world, including Australia, Brazil, Colombia, England, Georgia, Indonesia, Ireland, Malaysia, Turkey, etc.*

Plenary Address



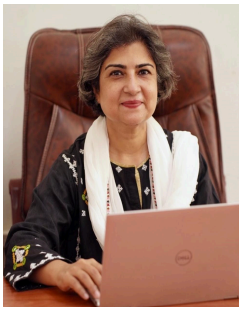
Dr. Fauzia Shamim

Professor and CAO, Durbeen, former vice President SPELT

From Policing to Managing Learning with AI

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is no longer an emerging technology—it is an integral part of everyday life and education. The question is no longer whether AI should be used, but how educators can manage learning through its ethical, responsible, and pedagogically meaningful use. As students increasingly rely on AI for assignments and homework, concerns about cognitive offloading, academic integrity, and authentic learning have intensified. At the same time, recent developments, including the recent University of Oxford declaration discourage the use of AI detection tools due to their unreliability; similarly, the emphasis on academic integrity in Harvard University's guidance, signal a shift away from policing AI use toward fostering responsible engagement. This plenary argues that teachers, educational leaders, and researchers must move beyond disclosures, codes of conduct, institutional policies, and AI detectors to cultivate **Critical AI Literacy** among learners. It will explore the concept of Critical AI Literacy and its implications for English language teaching, while the follow-up workshop will demonstrate practical classroom strategies and examples for developing these competencies.

Dr Fauzia Shamim *is Professor and Chief Academic Officer at Durbeen, an NGO committed to improving teacher quality in Pakistan. She has over 40 years of experience as a TESOL teacher, teacher educator, and researcher. Her current research interests include teacher research, AI in higher education, and language-in-education policy for equity and social justice.*



Plenary Address

Dr. Fatima Dar

President SPELT and CEO & Managing Partner, Oak Consulting

Beyond Rote Learning: Transforming Primary English Classrooms in Pakistan

Translating the primary English curriculum into daily classroom practice requires a grounded shift from traditional, rote-based grammar instruction to a skill-based, learner-centered model specifically tailored to Pakistan's sociolinguistic context. Recognizing that English is more of a Foreign Language (EFL) in Pakistan's context with young learners experiencing minimal exposure outside the school, the curriculum must empower teachers to build classroom environments rich in oral input, prioritizing early listening and speaking fluency through scaffolding before introducing heavy literacy tasks. As learners progress through Grades 1 to 5, instruction must guide a gradual, scaffolded transition toward an English as a Second Language (ESL) approach—moving from play-based learning and Total Physical Response (TPR) in lower grades to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), process writing, and Project-Based Learning (PBL) in upper grades to achieve CEFR-aligned targets (Pre-A1 to A2). By integrating grammar, vocabulary, and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) into authentic context tasks, and by embracing flexible strategies like strategic translanguaging and differentiated instruction, teachers can bridge local linguistic realities with functional communicative competence.

Dr Fatima Rehan Dar is an education specialist with 30+ years of experience and holds a PhD in Education from Asia e University, Malaysia, with Master degrees in Curriculum and English Language Education from Teachers College, Columbia University (USA) and Government College University (GCU) Lahore.

As CEO of Oak Consulting, she leads initiatives in English language curriculum reforms, teacher development, research and impact evaluations for local and global organizations. She advises governments and institutions on multilingual policy, curriculum development, educational monitoring and has extensive publications and conference presentations to her credit.

She has held senior academic positions at various universities in the country including Aga Khan University, Beaconhouse National University, SZABIST, and Iqra University.

Dr Dar has extensively worked with international donor agencies on education reforms in Pakistan. She is also the President of the Society of Pakistan English Language Teachers (SPELT).

Panel Discussion 1

Beyond Grade Level - Teaching Children Where They Are (The TaRL Approach)

The session brings together academic, programme, policy and classroom perspectives, with the following contributors:

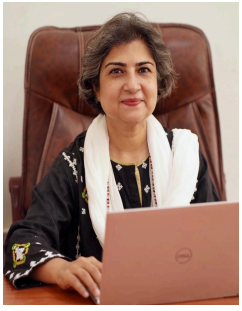
Panelists



Professor Farid Panjwani is the Dean of the Institute for Educational Development, Aga Khan University. He is also a faculty at the Institute of Education, University College London where he was working full time as the founding director of a research centre prior to moving to Pakistan in 2021. Professor Panjwani holds a DPhil in Philosophy of Education from the University of Oxford. He has published widely in the areas of philosophy of education, citizenship, teacher education, imagination, religious education, hermeneutics and Islamic Studies. His current researches are on the lived experiences of students from minority religious background in Pakistan and the relationship between economics and academic freedom.

He has worked on several educational projects around the world and has acted as a consultant to many research projects and organisations, including the International Baccalaureate, the Adyan Foundation in Lebanon, the Islamic Religious Council in Singapore, the Aga Khan Academies, and the government of Punjab, Pakistan. In 2016, Farid was appointed on the Commission on Religious Education, UK which was tasked to come up with policy recommendations for the future of religious education in the UK. Recently, he was appointed by Pakistan's Federal Ministry of Education to the National Curriculum Advisory Committee.

He is also extensively involved in voluntary work, where he serves both at the grassroots level as well as by being on the governing bodies of various organizations.



Dr Fatima Rehan Dar is an education specialist with 30+ years of experience and holds a PhD in Education from Asia e University, Malaysia, with Master degrees in Curriculum and English Language Education from Teachers College, Columbia University (USA) and Government College University (GCU) Lahore.

As CEO of Oak Consulting, she leads initiatives in English language curriculum reforms, teacher development, research and impact evaluations for local and global organizations. She advises governments and institutions on multilingual policy, curriculum development, educational monitoring and has extensive publications and conference presentations to her credit.

She has held senior academic positions at various universities in the country including Aga Khan University, Beaconhouse National University, SZABIST, and Iqra University.

Dr Dar has extensively worked with international donor agencies on education reforms in Pakistan. She is also the President of the Society of Pakistan English Language Teachers (SPELT).



Baela Raza Jamil is CEO of Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA) and founder of Pakistan Learning Festival. She is a public policy, systems and innovations expert deeply committed to rights-based approaches in all her work. She was the technical adviser to the Ministry of Education to design and implement large-scale nationwide reforms through innovations.

Baela is the first winner of the World Education Asia Medal in 2024, with her work impacting over 20 million children and 250,000+ teachers through placements in tech-based innovations and leadership in Pakistan and in the USA. She champions Article 25A, foundational learning/TaRL, early years, girls' education, catch-up and livelihood programs as a leading national and global advocate, serving on provincial, national and global boards and Advisory Councils. Baela Jamil is a global Champion of the Learning Generation Initiative.



Shazia Naz is a Primary Teacher with the Sindh Education and Literacy Department at GBPS Orangi Public. With 17 years of teaching experience, including 10 years in the government sector, she brings extensive classroom experience along with expertise in Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL). As a TaRL practitioner and Master Trainer, she has conducted TaRL learning camps across Karachi West and trained multiple teachers in the TaRL methodology to adapt instruction to students' learning levels. She promotes engaging, activity-based classroom practices that strengthen foundational learning and improve learning outcomes.



Faiz Gul Chhalgri is a Head Teacher, TaRL Practitioner, Educator, and Master Trainer with over 15 years of classroom teaching experience. He specializes in the hands-on implementation of Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) in government schools across Hyderabad, Sindh. As a TaRL Master Trainer and focal person, Faiz supports teacher training, facilitates practical classroom implementation, and promotes learner-centered teaching practices to improve foundational learning outcomes.



Moderator

Mazhar Siraj *is Director of English and School Education at British Council, Pakistan. Prior to this, he worked in advisory and team leadership positions with the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), legacy Department for International Development (DFID), Save the Children UK, the Institute of Social and Policy Sciences and NGOs in Pakistan, with short-term assignments in Kenya, Ethiopia and Bangladesh. He brings over two decades of development and research experience in education, social development and inclusion.*

Featured Talk

Using AI Effectively Through Structured Prompting for ELT

As generative AI becomes increasingly accessible, many English language teachers are experimenting with AI tools but often receive generic or unhelpful responses due to ineffective prompting. This interactive workshop introduces structured prompting as a practical teaching skill rather than a technical one. Drawing on principles familiar to educators purpose, audience, context, and scaffolding, the session demonstrates how thoughtfully designed prompts can generate more relevant, accurate, and classroom-ready resources.

Participants will explore a simple prompting framework, compare weak and well-structured prompts, and engage in hands-on activities to refine prompts for authentic ELT tasks such as lesson planning, vocabulary development, reading comprehension, speaking activities, and formative assessment. The workshop also encourages critical reflection on the ethical use of AI, emphasizing that human judgment, pedagogical expertise, and contextual understanding remain central to effective teaching.

By the end of the session, participants will leave with a practical framework, classroom-tested examples, and greater confidence in using AI as a collaborative planning partner to enhance teaching while addressing the realities of diverse and resource-constrained classrooms.



Farah Kamal *is Director of the Youth Exchange and Study (YES) Program at the Society for International Education–Pakistan and leads iEARN Pakistan's collaboration with 140 countries. She teaches B.Ed. courses at Greenwich University, Karachi, holds a Master's in Education (Language and Literacy Education) from the University of British Columbia, Canada, and has over 35 years of experience in teacher education, curriculum development, school leadership, and educational technology.*

Southern Knowledge" in ELT: Implications for research and pedagogy in Pakistan

In the Global South, including Pakistan, ELT methods and research practices are historically rooted in Eurocentric and Anglo-American traditions. Consequently, ELT often functions as a colonial and neoliberal "apparatus" that privileges monolingualism, native-speakerism, standardization, standardized assessment, and the commodification of "language". Similarly, dominant research methods and theories of language learning – including behaviorism, structuralism, and cognitivism have informed pedagogies developed in the West and exported globally as universal models. These pedagogies frequently treat English as a homogenous variety, while neglecting its translingual and heterogenous nature. Within this framework, teachers are positioned as "passive technicians" who are expected to implement imported knowledge, theories and methods rather than "produce" new knowledge.

I will discuss the following questions:

How do and should teachers enact "praxis" particularly considering pedagogies of particularity, practicality and possibility to reduce the overdependency on Western knowledge and pedagogical systems?

What kind of "research" teachers are conducting in Pakistan, and what forms of transformative research practices can enable teachers to develop contextually grounded knowledge and theories that inform their practice?

Lastly, in what ways can "Southern knowledge" rooted in the country's diverse linguistic, cultural and epistemic traditions be integrated into ELT for more pluriversal just ELT futures?



Waqar Ali Shah *is an Assistant Professor at Mehran University of Engineering and Technology, Pakistan. He holds a PhD in Applied Linguistics from the University of Jyväskylä, Finland. Waqar's work has been published in top tier international journals. He*

has undertaken international research postings at the Penn State University, USA, University of Valencia, Spain, Centre of Discourse Studies, Spain, and Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, Germany. He has recently co-edited a volume titled "Decolonizing English Language Textbooks: Engaging in a South-North inter-epistemic dialogue" (Routledge) and "Routledge Handbook of Race and Equity in Applied Linguistics". His ongoing edited volumes include two titles: "Decolonial Turns in TESOL research: epistemologies, methodologies and pedagogies (co-edited with Leonardo Veliz and Suresh Canagarajah) and "Multilingual Tensions in polarized contexts" (co-edited with Paul Meighan, Bedrettin Yazan and Leonardo Veliz).

Featured Workshop

Beyond the Chatbot: Building diversified learning experiences with Gemini Gems and Canvas

Generative AI is rapidly becoming a valuable classroom assistant, but many educators still use it primarily as a chatbot for one-off conversations. While this approach is useful for brainstorming and lesson planning, newer AI tools make it possible to design reusable, customized learning experiences that better support both teachers and students.

This practical workshop introduces participants to **Gemini Chat, Gems, and Canvas**, exploring how each tool serves a distinct pedagogical purpose. Through demonstrations and classroom examples, participants will examine when to use each tool, how they complement one another, and how thoughtful tool selection can enhance teaching and learning.

Participants will see how **Gems** can be used to create persistent AI tutors, writing coaches, conversation partners, and personalized tutors, while **Canvas** enables educators to create engaging, interactive learning resources from simple text prompts.

Live demonstrations will show how to build both a Gem and a Canvas application from scratch, with accompanying prompt banks and screencasts, so participants can create and adapt their own AI-powered learning experiences after the workshop.



Judy Wren (MA TESOL, Delta) is a Lecturer in the Foundation Program at Qatar University. With more than 25 years of international experience in English language teaching, she specializes in the practical integration of technology, most recently of generative AI, to enhance teaching, learning, assessment, and professional development.

Presentation

SPELT | British Council - TeachingEnglish Connect: Empowering English Teachers in Pakistan

TeachingEnglish Connect: Empowering English Teachers in Pakistan is a six-month project by SPELT, funded by the British Council, that connects teachers across Pakistan with free, high-quality professional development resources on teachingenglish.org.uk. This session, led by SPELT and the British Council, introduces the project's aims and shows how teachers can join the various activities as part of this project, and use the TeachingEnglish resources to strengthen their classroom practice. These activities include Learning Circles, Classroom Innovation Challenge, Ambassador Program, Closing Conference, etc.

Participants will begin with a brief overview of the project, followed by a hands-on workshop in which they explore TeachingEnglish resources and consider how to adapt them for their own contexts. Voices from the project will then share lived experience. Teachers for different schools and regions, who are currently participating in the program, will share their experiences, in-person and through video conferencing.

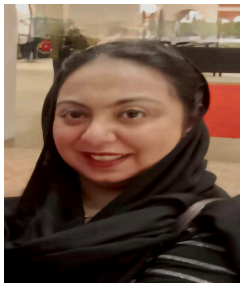
Attendees will leave with practical ideas, direct links, and a clear pathway to continue free professional learning.



Rabia Malik *is Senior Academic Advisor for English and School Education at the British Council Pakistan, with 19 years of experience spanning teaching, school leadership, school improvement, curriculum development and teacher education. Her expertise includes[MP1] large-scale education programme design and delivery, monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL), policy engagement, and the development of academic frameworks, standards and learning materials. She works with government and education partners to strengthen teaching and learning, advance foundational learning and English language education, and inform education policy through inclusive, evidence-informed approaches that support sustainable, system-level change.*



Dr Bushra Ahmed Khurram *obtained her PhD in English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics from the Centre of Applied Linguistics, University of Warwick, United Kingdom. She is currently working as an Associate Professor in the Department of English at the University of Karachi, Pakistan. She is also the Consultant for TeachingEnglish Project. Dr. Bushra has extensive experience of training English language teachers in a variety of settings in Pakistan and the United Kingdom.*



Raabia Hirani *holds master's degrees in English Literature (Karachi University), Comparative Literature (Queen Mary University of London), and Educational Leadership & Management (SZABIST). With over 15 years of experience in teaching, curriculum development, and assessment nationally and internationally, she works as a consultant for the AKU-EB, Alsama, and British Council, contributing to academic quality assurance Curriculum and assessment development. She's a member of TESOL International and Lifetime Member of SPELT, serving on the Conference Professional Council since 2023.*



Bushra Taqi *is an experienced educational leader and Principal of HHS School System – Society Campus, Karachi. She is passionate about teacher development, research-based practices, AI integration, and innovative learning approaches. With extensive experience in educational leadership, she actively contributes to professional learning.*

Interactive Talk

Same Lesson, Different Learners: Rethinking Fairness in ELT

This interactive talk explores a practical question at the heart of equitable ELT: how can teachers support learners with different levels of confidence, language exposure, prior learning, and classroom participation without creating separate lessons for everyone? The session challenges the assumption that fairness means giving every learner exactly the same task, support, and time.

Using a familiar classroom activity, participants will see how one learning objective can remain constant while access is adjusted. For example, a speaking task may offer sentence starters to learners who need language support, open-ended prompts to those ready for greater challenge, and additional thinking time for hesitant speakers. Similarly, grouping, scaffolding, and expected outcomes can be varied to increase participation without lowering expectations.

Through storytelling, audience interaction, and a short live demonstration, the talk connects inclusive pedagogy with realistic classroom practice. It presents differentiation as a manageable way to widen access rather than increase teacher workload. Participants will leave with practical strategies for adapting everyday ELT activities and a reflective question for future planning: does every learner have a meaningful way into the learning?



Azra Qazi *is an English language and education consultant with experience in teacher development, curriculum and materials design, foundational learning, and inclusive education. She has worked with the British Council, CARE International, Opportunity International, and other education organizations, supporting teachers, learners, and education programs across Pakistan and in diverse learning contexts.*

Workshop

Same Classroom Different Worlds Bridging the Gap-Managing Gen Alpha

Teachers and Gen Alpha share a classroom, but not the same world. Raised on screens and instant feedback, these learners bring new expectations about attention, authority, and communication. Drawing on ideas like cognitive load and social-emotional learning (SEL), this interactive session explores how to become champions, not controllers, through relationship-first management: co-created norms, clear routines, scaffolded tech use, and de-escalation. Participants solve real classroom challenges in groups and leave with a practical "Bridge and Manage" toolkit.



Lubna Panjwani *is a Cambridge Certified Teacher Educator, senior academician, and educational consultant with expertise in school development, monitoring and evaluation, educational leadership, and teacher education. Formerly associated with Oxford University Press, she is the CEO of The Prowess Consultants, a professional development and training firm. She is among the pioneers of introducing a Green Curriculum in Pakistan. She also leads a pilot project on alternative augmented devices for autistic*

learners in Karachi, integrating technology to promote inclusive education. A dedicated SPELTer for nearly three decades, she continues to contribute to professional learning communities and teacher development initiatives.

Plenary Follow-up Workshop

Developing Critical AI Literacy for Meaningful Learning

This interactive workshop will enable participants to critically evaluate AI-generated output and content such as texts for multilingual learners for bias, factual accuracy, ethical considerations, and their impact on learning. Participants will begin by exploring why Critical AI Literacy is now an essential competency for teachers and learners. Through hands-on activities, they will analyse AI-generated classroom materials and responses, identifying strengths, limitations, and opportunities for meaningful learning. The workshop will conclude with a self-audit of participants' and their learners' readiness to use AI responsibly and effectively.

Participants will leave with:

- A practical framework for evaluating AI-generated content.
- Classroom strategies for fostering Critical AI Literacy.
- A self-audit tool to guide ethical and effective AI integration into teaching and learning.



Dr Fauzia Shamim *is Professor and Chief Academic Officer at Durbeen, an NGO committed to improving teacher quality in Pakistan. She has over 40 years of experience as a TESOL teacher, teacher educator, and researcher. Her current research interests include teacher research, AI in higher education, and language-in-education policy for equity and social justice.*



Manal Fatmi *is a Lecturer at GECE, Durbeen, where she teaches Functional English. She is currently pursuing an M.Phil. in English Literature at the University of Karachi. Her research interests include academic integrity, and the operationalisation of Critical AI Literacy across HEIs in Pakistan.*

Workshop

Mediation in English Language Classrooms

This workshop explores mediation techniques in English Language Teaching (ELT) as a means of enhancing communication, collaboration, and deeper learning. Drawing on contemporary pedagogical approaches, participants will examine how teachers can act as mediators who bridge gaps in understanding by helping learners make sense of language, concepts, and tasks.

Emphasis will be placed on recognizing students' linguistic experience and using it as a valuable resource for learning. Participants will learn how to contextualise language input and classroom activities to make learning more meaningful, relevant, and accessible.

The workshop will demonstrate how effective teacher intervention can support learners in negotiating meaning, overcoming communication challenges, and developing confidence in real-world language use. Through practical examples and guided activities, attendees will explore a range of scaffolding techniques that promote comprehension, interaction, and independent learning.
The session adopts a hands-on student-centred learning approach, enabling participants to engage directly with mediation tasks, collaborative exercises, and classroom applications.
By the end of the workshop, participants will be equipped with practical strategies to integrate mediation into their teaching practice, fostering inclusive and interactive learning environments. The workshop is designed for English language educators seeking innovative ways to support diverse learners and strengthen communicative competence in the language classroom, without resorting to traditional methods such as explanation or translation into the native language.



Key words: linguistic experience, contextualise, intervention, scaffolding, student-centred, mediation.

Neda Mulji *is working with Oxford University Press as a Senior Manager, Professional Development. Prior to joining OUP, Neda has taught English as a foreign language to adults and university students in the UK and UAE. She is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy UK (FHEA), has an MA from Goldsmiths University and a PGC in Higher Education from Middlesex University. Neda writes as a columnist for Dawn and is also an author of a book of non-fiction - The Love Connection, as well as a children's story - Little Jimmy.*

Inclusive Assessment in English Language and Literature

This workshop explores how non-exam assessment can create more inclusive and meaningful English language and literature classrooms. Traditional examinations often measure what students can recall under pressure rather than what they truly understand, which can disadvantage learners with diverse linguistic backgrounds, varying literacy experiences, and different learning needs. By broadening assessment approaches, teachers can provide all students with authentic opportunities to demonstrate growth, creativity, and understanding.

Participants will examine practical, low-resource strategies such as portfolios, peer and self-assessment, project-based learning, oral presentations, reflective journals, and collaborative storytelling. These approaches value the learning process alongside the final product, encourage student reflection, and reduce the anxiety often associated with high-stakes testing. Particular attention will be given to supporting learners who are developing English proficiency and those whose strengths may not be evident in traditional written examinations.

Through hands-on activities, sample rubrics, and classroom case studies, teachers will gain a toolkit of adaptable assessment methods that can be implemented immediately. The workshop highlights simple yet powerful alternatives, enabling students to demonstrate learning through tasks such as creating short documentaries, designing artefacts, producing artwork, or presenting creative responses to literary and language topics. These options promote equity, engagement, and deeper learning by recognising multiple ways of expressing understanding



Seema Khalid: *A certified educationist from Australian Catholic University and Oxford Teachers' Academy tutor, Seema brings diverse experience in teaching and leadership across school and college levels. She has held roles in academic coordination and school management, with a strong focus on staff development and collaborative leadership. Her expertise lies in building student-centered learning environments, strengthening teaching practices, and empowering educators. Known for her professionalism, interpersonal skills, and results-driven mindset, she is committed to fostering respectful, creative, and growth-oriented educational spaces. She also serves as visiting faculty at the Institute of Business Management (IoBM), teaching courses in Educational Leadership and Management.*

From Prompt to Pen: Strengthening Student Writing with SFL-Informed AI Models

Dr. Kamran Ali

Many of us now ask AI for model essays. The results usually read well, but on closer inspection they are often flat and predictable, and students learn little from imitating them. Over years of marking O Level scripts, I have found that Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) offers a simple way of seeing what makes writing work, and that the same insight can help teachers obtain far better models from AI.

In this hands-on workshop, we will look at real student writing, work out what is missing, and see how a few SFL ideas can shape both the prompts we give AI and the feedback we give students. No background in SFL is needed, as everything is explained in plain terms. AI stays on the teacher's desk as a planning tool, not in students' hands. Participants will leave with ideas they can try in their next class.

Keywords: Systemic Functional Linguistics, AI-generated model texts, student writing, feedback, English language teaching

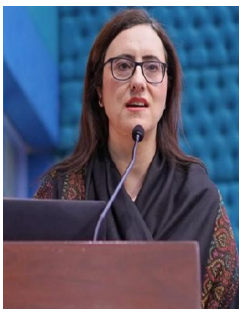


Dr. Kamran Ali *is an Associate Professor of Linguistics at Bahria University, Karachi, specialising in Systemic Functional Linguistics. He has authored nine books and about 30 research publications, and brings over 19 years of teaching experience, from O/A Level classrooms to doctoral supervision. He is also an LRN-accredited teacher trainer.*

AI for Equitable Classrooms: Empowering Teachers, Supporting Diverse Learners

The panel brings together perspectives from education, EdTech, AI and teacher development, with the following panellists:

Panelists



Riffat Jabeen is currently serving as Director Academics, EdTech and Quality Assurance at the Federal Directorate of Education Islamabad where she oversees academic and student related affairs across over 400 educational institutions.

Riffat brings a strong background in strategic planning, teacher professional development and large scale education reform. She has led transformative national pivotal role in conceptualizing and launching TeleSchool, Pakistan's first national educational television channel, ensuring continuous learning for millions of students during Covid. She has spearheaded innovative projects School on Wheels,

As Project Director at the National Institute of Excellence in Teacher Education (NIETE), she leads national digital onboarding and capacity building initiatives for teachers.



Zeeshan Hasan leads Khan Academy Pakistan where he is working to bring world-class Khan Academy AI-supported learning to schools across Pakistan. Under his leadership, Khan Academy has partnered with the governments of Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to train government school teachers in using AI in the classroom. He works with leading education networks including The Citizens Foundation, CARE Foundation Akhuwat. He has worked with UNESCO, World Bank, ADP, JICA.

Before this, Zeeshan founded Grassroots Education Services, which ran teacher development programmes reaching 8000 teachers and deployed School Service Quality across 200 Beaconhouse campuses. He taught strategy, leadership and entrepreneurship at LUMS. He holds an MBA from the University of Technology Sydney.



Rehana Kazi is currently an **AI and Public Engagement Lead at the LUMS Learning Institute**, with over seven years of experience working across Pakistan's NGO and private education sectors, with a focus on teacher professional development, educational technology, and innovation. She has spent three years working closely with the application of AI in education and research contexts, with a particular interest in how institutions can adopt AI thoughtfully, responsibly, and equitably.



Rabia Malik is Senior Academic Advisor for English and School Education at the British Council Pakistan, with 19 years of experience spanning teaching, school leadership, school improvement, curriculum development and teacher education. Her expertise includes[MP1] large-scale education programme design and delivery, monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL), policy engagement, and the development of academic frameworks, standards and learning materials. She works with government and education partners to strengthen teaching and learning, advance foundational learning and English language education, and inform education policy through inclusive, evidence-informed approaches that support sustainable, system-level change.



Saira Mahmood is a Senior Lecturer at the Government Elementary College of Education (Hussainabad) where she teaches English proficiency and pedagogy courses.Saira holds an MSc in Applied Linguistics for Language Teaching from the University of Oxford.

Her research interests include AI ethics and governance in education, and GenAI for language teaching and learning.



Muhammad Talha Chishti is an education policy and systems strengthening specialist with over 12 years' experience leading large-scale teacher development, foundational learning, and inclusive education programmes across Pakistan.

As Head of English and School Education at the British Council, he leads GOAL/ILMpact (£20m, FCDO), which applied Teaching at the Right Level methodology to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for 200,000 children by 65% in low-capacity and conflict-affected districts, and EaSTE, a national digital and blended teacher training programme reaching over 200,000 primary school teachers across Punjab and Sindh.

He is currently Technical Lead on RISE, developing AI-informed teacher training resources now accredited into Punjab's supplementary curriculum, and leads EDGE, a national programme advancing English, digital, and life skills for adolescent girls. He co-chairs Punjab's Foundational Learning Technical Working Group with UNICEF and is building Assessia, an AI-powered standardised assessment platform for Pakistani schools. His work centres on a consistent question: how technology and teacher capacity-building can reach the learners and classrooms conventional systems struggle to serve.

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