

Barriers to Using Effective Teaching Strategies by English Teachers at Primary Level for Language Learning Engagement

Ihsan ur Rahman¹, Muhammad Waris^{2*}, Salman Ahmad³

1 MPhil Scholar, Department of Education, University of Malakand, Chakdara, Pakistan, 18800

2 MPhil Scholar, Department of Education, University of Malakand, Chakdara, Pakistan, 18800

*Corresponding Author: ikbalchitrالي@gmail.com

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Abstract

Language learning is based on provision of effective guidance for enhancing student learning engagement. This research aimed to examine barriers to using effective instructional approaches by teachers in English lessons at the primary level in UC Kamala District Lower Dir. The research described in this paper applies descriptive methods. The research was conducted in nine major primary

schools within UC Kamala Tehsil Adenzai. Data were collected through questionnaire from teachers selected according to their seniority qualifications and teaching experience. The analysis of the data showed that the schools practiced student engagement practices. The teachers were properly trained. However, outdated instructional methods dominated the teaching practices while teachers failed to develop listening and speaking abilities among their students. The study showed the problems of student engagement mostly arose from teachers' non-participation in training sessions, insufficient educational tools, and low quality of educational materials. The researcher recommends that government support should focus on offering refresher classes and audio-visual educational resources to schools. Different communicative classroom activities combined with appropriate motivational approaches from the teacher will assist student learning engagement.

1. Introduction

Numerous experts identify English as a global language. Evidence shows that English remains one of the leading global languages, and extensive numbers of people worldwide use it daily (Erarslan, 2021). The population of countries previously colonized by British and American powers sees English as an essential language (Ahmad, Ahmed, Bukhari & Bukhari, 2013). The people in these countries are sharply focused when they attempt to learn English. A language gains complete global prominence by obtaining a definitive role that every nation officially acknowledges to the extent that English has done so. The concept of a special role contains multiple dimensions despite appearing obvious (Erarslan, 2021). A special role tends toward full manifestation because many people within national populations use this language as their native linguistic source. The status of a language as a mother tongue serves no purpose in granting it global recognition. A language requires universal adoption from different

nations across the world to achieve global status. Communities must determine how to create a distinctive position for this language, even if their residents do not speak it natively. The English language operates under the same patterns as the present-day mother tongue uses. The ongoing spread of English language usage remains unimpeded by racial, colour-related, or religious barriers. The world listens to English-speaking radio stations for more than 60% of broadcasting time, while 70% of international mail comes in the same language (Lombardi et al, 2024).

The social status of the English language stands apart from all other languages in Pakistani culture. English holds its advantageous status as an international language, which serves as the sole connection between Pakistan and global communities. Pakistan is set to establish English as the leading cultural language in the nation. The social, educational, scientific and cultural developments of the world require Pakistan to remain connected with international movements. The use of English as a second language by Pakistan would allow the assimilation of world development experiences from advanced nations. English functions as an influential tool for quick social advancement, which cuts through all areas of Pakistan (Imran et al., 2024). The professional community, alongside intellectuals in our nation, depends on the language for engineering, medicine, agriculture, dentistry, animal husbandry and economic industries, as well as scientific research at all levels of advancement. The language works as both an international trade tool and commercial link while Pakistani researchers use research material from countries like USA and UK and other world nations (Majeed & Hussain, 2024).

The English language serves as the instructional language throughout every Pakistani university. All forms of educational institutions, from lower schools up to advanced education, receive their foundational learning at primary schools. Basic subject preparation at primary school forms an essential base that students need for their future educational development. The mastery of basic subjects, with English as one of the most important components, remains relevant for students who will stop their education after primary school and need to find work. Modern education systems in our country place English at the top position in their curricula. The language holds this critical value since it becomes a required subject through grades V to graduation. The instruction of English needs sufficient emphasis as it should hold a higher. Priority compared to its current placement within the curriculum (Rios et al, 2024). The English language has undergone extensive transformations since the country gained independence. During pre-independence times, the main focus was on mastering English for its literary applications. English is used today primarily to understand and communicate with others. The investigated topic centres around "Obstacles in English language teaching at primary level in UC Khadagzai District Lower Dir, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan." The strategy provides active solutions for this situation.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The students from the selected study area demonstrate extensive challenges when learning English since it is taught as a foreign language from their very first exposure to the subject. Multiple conditions affecting English learning include insufficient educational settings, teacher expertise shortage and weak English exposure in daily environments that generate poor language competency along with unsatisfactory test scores. The main aspect of this research centers on the teaching methods teachers utilize in the English instruction of primary school students.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate barriers that affect English language instruction at the primary school grade level.
2. To find out teaching methods used for student learning engagement education at primary level.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What difficulties do English teachers encounter when they teach at primary education institutions?
2. What teaching methods that teachers commonly utilize for student learning engagement at primary level?

2. Literature Review

As the English language establishes itself as more essential, teachers have implemented various methods to teach TESL and TEFL courses, which have undergone different transformations. Every school worldwide teaches language as a standard practice during the current period. The worldwide language of communication, which is English, exists in every school curriculum. Students and teachers need to conduct joint efforts when addressing English language teaching activities and learning processes to reach their educational goals. English language teachers become more effective when they fully grasp lesson content and deliver these concepts to their classroom, according to (Rios et al., 2024). Apart from factors strictly dependent upon the particular situation, English language teaching at the elementary school level requires the following objectives to be focused on and to be developed: the knowledge and understanding of grammar, the ability to use grammar in learners' own English

writing, the understanding and meaning of English passage, the interest in reading English textbooks, the public interest and favorable attitude towards the English language, the ability for writing essay and translation of passages, the habit of self-study.

Studies demonstrate that language-learning strategies represent intentional actions that language students use to enhance their learning process, from acquisition through storage and recall to information application. All stages of language learners resort to strategic approaches in their learning process, as research shows (Fauzan et al., 2024). The majority of language learners do not understand the strategies they deploy and the techniques that would provide maximum benefits. Visible evidence demonstrates that education can help students develop stronger learning approaches which enhance their language skills. Performance in second language learning depends most significantly on students' learning styles together with their adopted strategies. Appropriate teacher training must provide instructors with an understanding of both learning styles and learning strategies. Teachers should build instructional programs suited to students' individual style needs while simultaneously teaching effective learning approaches to their students.

Teachers indicated in research findings that student absenteeism stood among the main causes of making students repeat classes, with an agreement rate exceeding 70%. The administration should impose serious consequences after detecting this problem. The Pakistani educational system faces serious discipline problems that develop in other Third World nations. School administrators, together with teachers, rely on corporal punishment to address discipline problems in their educational institutions. It is defined as an action that involves deliberate physical violence used to inflict pain on children with no intention of causing physical damage according to the purpose of behavior management. Educational quality monitoring through supervision has consistently been essential for maintaining education standards. Supervisors should first detect favorable instructional practices that need preservation and unfavorable practices that need correction to find the solution.

The education system in Pakistan lacks a proper and well-defined accountability procedure at present. The field supervisory staff lacks proper training specifically regarding supervision methods according to research findings. The supervisor lacks crucial expertise, the required competencies, and the disposition needed to assist teaching faculty. The mentioned tasks and supervisory operations remain unclear to these individuals. The staff remains ignorant about both the aims and significance, along with the responsibilities of instructional supervision. The lack of success in enhancing quality teaching through supervision remains because of this situation. Several individuals maintain their positions as supervisory staff over teaching personnel while the actual objective of instructional supervision has not been achieved. Teachers interpreted high student absences as a failure in the disciplinary methods used in primary educational institutions. (Imran et al., 2024).

English education constitutes foreign language studies throughout Pakistan, where students develop linguistic talents through active learning practices. Students' needs and interests must guide every teaching decision related to English education. A particular analytical approach to English teaching requires the evaluation of these specific domains. This set of areas forms the critical foundation because their evaluation enables a better understanding of any approach to English language teaching methodology. Every method for language instruction presents distinct features regarding these aspects. Moreover, these areas play an important part in the success or failure of a language teaching methodology: the goals/aims of using that particular language teaching methodology, the role of the teacher and student in the classroom and their interaction, particular features of teaching-learning process, the way through students' feelings dealt are with, the view of language concerning culture, the language skills which are emphasized, the role/usage of student's native language in classroom, the evaluation technique which is used, and treatment of student errors and mistakes. Qualifying new language content within a social context provides students with distinct information regarding its meaning (Majeedet et al., 2024).

Results from research conducted in primary schools of Chitral show that teacher methods used in Pakistani rural areas fall short when aiming to develop student language proficiency in English. The existing system contains multiple problems that prevent the teachers from taking responsibility for this situation. A teacher without sufficient training could lack an understanding of the objectives of teaching English. The pre-service teacher education programs need to integrate content that develops the four language skills because this will lead to better language skills in teachers who teach English. Training faculty members in teacher education programs require reassessing teacher and paraprofessional needs before providing adequate training that serves English language learners best. Therefore, separate training for English teachers must focus on teaching English as a language and developing four language skills. Effective teacher education represents a suitable approach to solving current teaching English issues while allowing instructors to teach English as a skill beyond standard subjects. The delivery of professional development training for English teachers should continue post-training through field-supported and in-service education sessions to help teachers master new English teaching methods. (Nawab, 2012).

Using English teachers exclusively to teach students English language proficiency may lead to suboptimal results. Students need complete freedom to practice the English language in both classrooms and schools

throughout all educational areas. The process of becoming proficient requires learners to conduct regular language interaction. As a process of habit development, students need to practice English regularly under teacher guidance. Reform is necessary for primary-level English textbooks. Students will become more engaged in learning through book activities that include language exercises. The book needs to offer language practice in its activities for all four language areas. The examination scheme needs to include space for evaluating students on each of the four language skills. Testing papers which incorporate all language skills will cause teachers to focus their attention on developing each language competency. The teaching of English at the primary level needs refinement because students should bring a solid base when they start primary education (Majeed & Hussain, 2024).

Research shows that effective instructional methods shortage leads to English learning problems among 656 students spread across KPK's four districts regardless of government or private sector schools. The research proves that students from both government and private educational institutions encountered equivalent problems while studying voices, verb forms, narration, conjunctions, prepositions, articles, sentence arrangements, and reading comprehension. (Khan et al., 2025). Students at the primary level sufficiently understand that the importance of the English language will expand in their educational path and professional setting, yet they remain dissatisfied with the teaching techniques utilized for English throughout their academic journey (Ali et al., 2014).

3. Methodology

3.1 Nature of Study

The present study is quantitative. The research adopts both survey methodology and a case-study approach because it focuses exclusively on educational facilities teaching English as a Foreign Language in this particular area. An evaluation of English teaching strategies occurs through a survey which examines nine different English teachers working in Government primary schools.

3.2 Data Collection Tools

The study was descriptive. The study used the surveys as its data collection method. The research focused on understanding which teaching techniques primary school teachers implement to teach English subjects to students in UC Khadagzai Tehsil Adenzai. Researchers fully investigated the available literature on this subject. The research collected information by distributing a questionnaire which included 18 questions of dual response types: multiple choices and yes/no answers.

3.3 Target Population

All teachers both male and female of government primary schools located in UC Khadagzai comprised the total study population. Senior teachers constituted most of the staff while the remaining teachers were of younger age.

3.4 Sampling

The researchers used convenient sampling method for this study. Thus, 33 teachers were selected conveniently from nine schools belonging to UC Khadagzai District Lower Dir (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), Pakistan. The teachers were selected based on the criteria of their willingness and availability to respond.

3.5 Research Tools

A structured questionnaire was developed based on literature review and in consultation with field experts. The questionnaire contained (YES / NO) response options together with multiple choice options, which allowed for three to five answer possibilities for gathering data from respondents.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher personally obtained data by visiting the teachers in the selected schools. Research ethics guidelines were considered when the researcher received permission from nine school Head teachers to visit all educational facilities. The respondents were informed about the purpose of the research study before presenting its nature to the respondents. The questionnaire contained full freedom for all respondents to fill it independently from anyone's help at their respective schools.

3.7 Analysis of Data

The researcher collected data through teacher responses, which were then arranged and combined, and statistical tables were created based on research objectives and main study questions. The 18 survey questions appeared in five tables to reflect the related nature of the questions. Simple percentages along with average methods were used for data analysis. Calculations from this process started the determination of conclusions and established suggestions.

4. Results

4.1 Demographic Profile

Table 1 *Subject's qualification*

Responses	MA/MSc	BA/B.Sc.	FA/F.Sc
Academic qualification of teachers	33 (100%)	0	0
Professional qualification of teachers	M.Phil. (Education)	M. ED.	B. Ed.
	1 (9%)	25 (76%)	5 (15%)

All respondents who took part in the study hold M.A/M.S.C degrees, according to the table above. All teachers at the Primary schools of UC Kamala have achieved their National Educational Policies Commission-recommended qualification in English. Three respondents out of thirty-three (9%) hold the highest educational qualifications, as per Table 8. A total of thirty teachers (90% of the total) possess an M.A. in education, along with five respondents (15% of the total) who maintain an education-based B.A degree makes up thirty per cent of teachers who completed their professional training in education. The researchers possess sufficient professional training as outlined by the Commission of National Education in Pakistan (1966).

4.2 Subjects' Knowledge of Strategies

The following table demonstrates how well the specialists understand English together with teachers' mastery of different educational approaches for English language instruction.

Table 2 *Subjects' knowledge of strategies*

Questions	Response	
	Yes	No
Knowledge about strategies	33 (100%)	0
Application of different strategies	30 (91%)	3 (9%)
Application of strategies in proper time	28 (85%)	5 (15%)
Application of strategies according to individual differences	16 (48%)	17 (52%)
Modern strategies for the development of various skills	22 (67%)	11 (33%)
Strategies motivate students to learn	25 (76%)	8 (24%)
Application of strategies learnt in training	20 (61%)	13 (39%)

The data regarding essential knowledge about classroom strategies in English education is presented in Table 2. Every participant demonstrated the necessary information that forms the focus of this research investigation. Some discrepancies exist between the number of respondents who practice different teaching methods despite their universal awareness of these strategies. A previous finding showed that all respondents possessed essential knowledge of teaching strategy. Yet, our analysis indicates that 30 respondents (91%) utilize these methods in English classroom instruction, but three respondents (9%) do not employ such strategies. The participants demonstrate different strategic approaches when implementing strategies according to their time schedules. A total of 28 respondents make up 85% of the participants who use proper timing for their strategies, while five

respondents amount to 15% who do not apply strategies at appropriate times. Around 26 (79%) of the survey participants report that their employed learning methods successfully address issues faced by students with pronunciation difficulties, word definition comprehension challenges and writing problems, but 7 (21%) of respondents' techniques prove ineffective in helping students with academic challenges. The teacher's implementation of modern learning techniques receives minimal agreement from the respondents. Out of 33 respondents, 22 people (67 per cent) implement modern strategies to develop student language capabilities, but the other 11 teachers (33 per cent) do not use these methods. The research outcome reveals findings that are identical to those observed when teachers utilize divergent approaches to teach slow learners. Twenty-two participants, serving as 67% of the sample, apply separate strategies for slow learners that promote active involvement of each student, but 11 respondents, constituting 33%, do not establish specific instructional approaches for slow learners. Among the respondents, 16 (48%) apply learning strategies at various mental levels, but 17 (52%) do not use individualized strategies. Half of the respondents show no regard for individual differences in students, which represent fundamental learning aspects.

4.3 Teachers' Opinions about Students' Understanding in the Process of Learning

The essential nature of understanding arises throughout every teaching-learning interaction and basic interpersonal communication alike. A listener who fails to comprehend the messages of a speaker during a basic discourse leaves the process unfinished. Similar to teaching and learning processes, students require a full understanding of their teachers' lectures. The teachers need to track their students' educational advancements as they participate in classroom learning activities. The present research investigated how teaching professionals evaluate student grasp of educational material. A table follows, which contains the responses of participants to this particular question, later accompanied by analysis and discussion.

Table 3 Teachers' opinions about students' understanding

Questions	Response	
	Yes	No
Students understand methods	30 (90%)	3 (9%)
Students convey their problems	17 (52%)	16 (48%)
Student gives a positive response to strategies	26 (79%)	7 (21%)

Table 3 presents data regarding respondent opinions about how students understand classroom teaching methods. Thirty respondents representing 91% of the total sample believe students understand methods followed in classroom yet three respondents comprise 9% who disagree with this statement. The respondents hold mixed opinions about whether students effectively demonstrate their classroom-related difficulties which include pronunciation and grammar-related issues. The data reveals seventeen students (52%) express issues and study-related challenges to teaching staff yet sixteen individuals (48%) stated students maintain their reserved nature thus failing to communicate study-related problems. The obtained results show acceptable success from student replies despite initial struggles in expression of learning challenges. According to the data 26 (79%) of participants noted students provide positive feedback on their educational strategies though 7 (21%) of participants did not observe this relationship between teaching approaches and student response.

4.4 Use of A/V Aids in Classroom

Multiple teaching approaches exist for teachers to deliver subject matter during educational processes. Teachers implement various educational methods and tools during classes to achieve understanding enhancement among students. The classroom environment benefits from audio visual aids as an educational technique. The technique belongs to contemporary methods used to improve student motivation. Educationists agree that audio visual aids serve as highly beneficial resources for education purposes. Through classroom AV aids students become more creative and they develop higher levels of curiosity while improving their listening abilities and their speaking abilities and building better classroom discipline. The researcher emphasized the educational value of AV aids by conducting an inquiry about their classroom use with the teachers. The teachers documented their answers regarding the question within this presentation table.

Table 4 The use of A/V aids in classroom

Questions	Response	
	Yes	No

Use of Audio Visual Aids in classroom	22 (67%)	11 (33%)
Books suitable to follow strategies	11 (33%)	22 (67%)
Training provided regarding strategies	21 (64%)	12 (36%)
Strategies helpful in solving problems	26 (79%)	7 (21%)

Table 4 examines teacher opinions about their material use such as A.V aids alongside their experiencing professional training. According to the collected data 22 (67%) teachers use audio visual aids in classrooms for teaching but 11 (33%) teachers do not utilize such aids in their teaching practices.

The evaluation regarding book appropriateness shows an even worse result than other measures. Out of 33 the respondents 22 believe that the Ministry-recommended textbooks fail to match student needs and proposed teaching methods. recreate teacher training stands at an unsatisfactory level. Among the investigated teachers 21 respondents (64%) attended educational programs about strategies but 12 teachers (36%) failed to participate in such training. Among the teachers being researched three out of ten lack appropriate training. Learning strategies in training ends up being essential but students must practice these methods to succeed. A majority of 20 teaching staff members (61%) implement teaching strategies from their training courses yet 13 respondents (39%) do not use these methods.

4.5 Teachers' Priority of Developing Language Skills

The world shares one universal belief: all languages contain four critical abilities: listening, speaking, writing, and reading. Those who possess their native language naturally achieve speaking abilities and listening abilities, while writing and reading require proper schooling. Language usage does not produce any ideal results. Human beings never achieve a perfect command of language since both native and non-native speakers struggle with it. Knowledge acquisition of an additional language does not automatically result in expertise within the fundamental language capabilities. The learner and teacher must focus on developing each of the four fundamental language skills. Teachers teaching a foreign language must dedicate themselves to fostering the development of their student's four language skills. The interview queried teachers about language skill advancement during this period. The table provided shows the responses of these participants.

Table 5 Teachers' priority for developing language skills

Questions	No. of respondents	% Age
Application of various strategies appropriately in connection with English language skills		
Listening skills	8	25%
Listening skills	9	27%
Reading skills	9	27%
Writing skills	7	21%
Method/Methods used in classroom		
a) Direct method	9	27%
b) Grammar translational method	12	37%
c) Structural approach	2	6%
d) Audio lingual approach	3	9%
e) Communicative approach	7	21%
Various strategies applied in classroom		
a) Drill	6	18%
b) Practice	12	37%
c) Pair work	5	15%
d) Role play	0	0
e) Information gap activities	0	0
f) Group discussion	10	30%
Strategies for clearance of a concept		
a) To narrate	6	18%
b) To explain in detail	13	40%
c) To draw things on board	8	24%
d) To show pictures	2	6%
e) To show real things	4	12%

Table 5 shows how educators rank students' development of listening skills and speaking skills and reading skills and writing skills alongside their preferred classroom English language instructional methods. The survey depicts that listening skills received support from 8 (25%) of respondents while speaking obtained backing from 9 (27%) respondents followed by reading skills with 9 (27%) respondents who voted for them and writing skills received support from 7 (21%) of the participants.

All students possess Pashto as their native language although their English teaching approaches vary. The data reveals that 9 students (27%) employ direct method but 12 students (37%) apply GTM (grammar translation method) while 2 students (6%) use structural approach and 3 students (9%) utilize audio lingual approach and 7 students (21%) teach with communicative approach for English subject. The selected teaching approaches result in different classroom activities. In English language teaching the classroom data shows that respondents use drill as a strategy by six participants (18%) while twelve participants (37%) employ practice in their methodologies. Additionally, fifteen participants (15%) utilize pair work and ten participants (30%) use group discussion as strategies. The data provided by the respondents does not show the use of role play or information gap activities for teaching English. The participants follow multiple approaches when they clarify student comprehension in educational settings. The technique of detailed explanation has become common practice among teachers as 13 (40%) of them adopted this approach. The respondents demonstrated a preference for drawing materials on the board since this strategy was employed by 8 (24%) of the respondents. Throughout the teaching learning process, the respondents use either pictures or real items or verbal explanation with equal frequency.

5. Discussion

The researcher examined how teaching strategies are used in English language classes at UC Khadagzai lower Dir KPK in light of the research objectives and problem statement. The researcher analyzed the data gathered to obtain these conclusions. This study concluded that every teaching staff at the schools of UC Ouch maintained the necessary qualifications to deliver professional instruction in English language.

This finding supports the results of previous studies. The social status and academic qualifications of the English language stands apart from all other languages in Pakistani culture. English holds its advantageous status as an international language, which serves as the sole connection between Pakistan and global communities (Imran et al, 2024).

It was found out through this study that most teachers had not received refresher training in their professional career to enhance their teaching methods despite enhancement being a major challenge. This finding of the current further supported the results of earlier research that training was essential for professional development of language teacher. The education system in Pakistan lacks a proper and well-defined accountability procedure at present to provide training to teachers on language teaching. The field supervisory staff lacks proper training specifically regarding supervision methods according to research findings. The supervisor lacks crucial expertise, the required competencies, and the disposition needed to assist teaching faculty. The mentioned tasks and supervisory operations remain unclear to these individuals (Ali et al, 2014).

This current revealed that most teachers in the school system applied traditional teaching approaches from the past. The instructors in this context failed to address listening and speaking abilities. This finding also supported the results of previous studies where it has been reported that teachers use outdated and traditional teaching methods in classroom for language teaching. For example, some researchers have reported that lack of effective and transformative instructional methods shortage leads to English learning problems among 656 students spread across KPK's four districts regardless of government or private sector schools. The research proves that students from both government and private educational institutions encountered equivalent problems while studying voices, verb forms, narration, conjunctions, prepositions, articles, sentence arrangements, and reading comprehension. (Khan et al., 2025).

6. Recommendations

Based on the results of this study it is concluded that the teachers used traditional methods in classroom to teach language courses. This did not help to engage in language learning actively. A total of 33% of the English teaching staff failed to utilize teaching materials together with audio visual aids during their English lessons. It was further concluded that students failed to express their learning barriers causing major obstacles to smooth educational progress. It can be further concluded that most teachers failed to implement strategies which corresponded to the mental capability of their students. Thus it is highlighted here that a considerable number of slow learners gets overlooked in this matter because they do not find change for participation and engagement in the classroom due to the usage of old and traditional methods of teaching by the teachers.

7. Recommendations

The previously described findings and conclusions motivate these proposed recommendations to enhance the instructional approaches used by teachers for teaching English.

- i. Education commission members advocate using audiovisual instruments in abundance since they increase their significance in teaching practices. Audio Visual Aids help teachers execute their duties with more effectiveness while cutting down their work volume. Different Audio-Visual Aids should be supplied by the government as part of their educational support to schools.
- ii. Refreshment workshops provide teachers the basic groundwork they need to develop their teaching skills. The government should initiate various refreshment programs which help teachers improve their instructional methods.
- iii. Humans possess distinctive characteristics which make them separate from their fellow human beings. Teachers display a positive influence because they serve as educational experts while maintaining psychologist abilities. Through alternative teaching methodologies the instructor can instruct students while recognizing their individual differences.
- iv. The staff members are expert but neglected essential skill development in their students. The acquisition of high-quality English teaching results requires development of listening along with speaking alongside reading and writing skills.
- v. Students usually remain silent in most traditional English language courses. Through strategic implementation the teacher leads students to increased motivation levels. The current primary-level textbooks require replacement. The texts used in instruction do not match what students are able to understand mentally. The teaching materials fail to reach any lesson which creates excitement among students. Through expert and teacher involvement the government stands to make positive contributions toward textbook development.

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