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### Enhancing English Language Teaching through Technological Tools and Collaborative Approaches



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**Abstract**

English Language Teaching (ELT) in Pakistan faces persistent challenges due to large class sizes, limited resources, and diverse learner backgrounds. This study explores how technology and collaborative learning can address these gaps and improve teaching outcomes. Using a qualitative research design, the experiences of Pakistani educators and students were gathered through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and classroom observations. Traditional methods of instruction often struggle to engage learners and meet varied needs. However, the integration of technological advancements such as mobile-based language learning apps, virtual classrooms, and multimedia tools has the potential to enhance accessibility, personalize instruction, and encourage active participation. Furthermore, collaborative learning practices, including project-based tasks and online discussion forums, help develop essential skills such as critical thinking, communication, and teamwork within the Pakistani context. This paper draws on successful local case studies and examines both the benefits and challenges of applying these strategies in Pakistani classrooms. Findings highlight the transformative potential of technology and collaboration in ELT, offering context-specific recommendations for educators and policymakers to adopt these innovative approaches effectively.

**Keywords:** ELT, Technology Integration; Collaborative Learning

**Introduction**

In today's interconnected world, the role of English Language Teaching (ELT) has become more significant than ever before. English proficiency is not only a tool for global communication but also a gateway to academic success, professional opportunities, and socio-economic mobility. In countries like Pakistan, where English serves as both a second and an official language, ELT plays a central role in bridging cultural and linguistic divides, fostering international collaboration, and supporting educational and economic advancement (Zaman, Chandio, & Noor, 2025).

ELT is far more than the transfer of linguistic skills; it encompasses cultural awareness, critical thinking, and effective communication. By equipping learners with these skills, ELT empowers individuals to participate in global exchanges, access higher education, and pursue competitive career paths (Zaman, Jawad, & Buriro, 2025). In the Pakistani context, the importance of English proficiency is further heightened due to its integration in higher education, governance, and employment markets.

Despite its importance, traditional ELT practices in Pakistan face significant challenges. Large class sizes, limited teaching resources, and reliance on outdated methods often limit personalized instruction and reduce meaningful student engagement. Moreover, traditional approaches are less effective in catering to diverse learner needs and fostering interactive learning environments (Patel & Kim, 2020). These limitations highlight the urgent need for innovation in English language education.

The integration of technology and collaborative learning strategies presents a promising solution to these challenges. Digital tools such as mobile learning apps,

virtual classrooms, and interactive multimedia resources can enhance accessibility and tailor instruction to individual needs. Similarly, collaborative approaches such as group projects and online discussion forums encourage active participation, critical thinking, and teamwork. This study builds on these perspectives, examining how technology and collaboration can be effectively implemented within Pakistani ELT classrooms to transform learning outcomes.

### **Problem Statement**

Globally, English Language Teaching (ELT) has become increasingly important due to the growing demand for English proficiency in education, employment, and international communication. However, traditional teaching approaches across many contexts often fail to adequately address learners' diverse needs. Research shows that teacher-centered methods, limited use of technology, and outdated resources hinder student engagement and restrict opportunities for interactive learning (Davis & Roberts, 2018; Patel & Kim, 2020).

In many countries, educators have begun integrating technology and collaborative strategies to overcome these challenges. Digital tools such as language learning apps, virtual classrooms, and interactive multimedia enhance accessibility, personalization, and active participation. Similarly, collaborative approaches, including project-based learning and online discussions, encourage critical thinking, communication, and teamwork skills. These innovations highlight the potential for transforming English language education when traditional practices are supplemented with modern strategies.

In the Pakistani context, ELT faces additional challenges shaped by large class sizes, limited resources, and reliance on rote learning. Instruction is often teacher-centered, with little room for personalization or meaningful interaction, leaving students passive rather than active participants in the learning process. Moreover, despite growing access to technology, its integration into ELT remains limited due to inadequate infrastructure, insufficient teacher training, and resistance to change.

Furthermore, collaborative learning practices are underutilized in Pakistani classrooms, where assessment still largely focuses on memorization rather than communication and problem-solving skills. This gap between global best practices and local realities creates a pressing need to explore innovative pedagogical strategies. Addressing these challenges by integrating technology and collaboration into Pakistani ELT classrooms is essential for improving student engagement, developing critical language skills, and aligning teaching practices with international standards.

### **Research Objectives**

To explore how technological tools can enhance accessibility, personalization, and student engagement in English Language Teaching (ELT).

To examine the role of collaborative learning strategies in developing communication, critical thinking, and teamwork skills

To investigate the challenges and opportunities of integrating technology and collaboration into ELT classrooms in Pakistan

### **Research Questions**

How can technological tools improve accessibility, personalization, and interaction in English Language Teaching?

In what ways do collaborative learning strategies enhance communication, critical thinking, and teamwork among learners?

What challenges and opportunities arise when integrating technology and collaboration into Pakistani ELT classrooms?

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is significant as it addresses the limitations of traditional English Language Teaching (ELT) in Pakistan by exploring the role of technology and collaborative learning in enhancing student engagement and language proficiency. It contributes to global research on innovative pedagogies while offering context-specific insights into challenges such as large class sizes, limited resources, and teacher-centered practices. The findings provide practical recommendations for educators and policymakers, highlighting how technology and collaboration can transform ELT to foster critical thinking, communication, and teamwork, thereby aligning Pakistani classrooms with international standards and improving academic and professional opportunities for learners.

### **Literature Review**

The integration of technology has significantly reshaped English Language Teaching (ELT), transforming traditional classrooms into more interactive and engaging spaces. Tools such as language learning apps, online platforms, and interactive multimedia resources have expanded accessibility, allowed for personalized instruction, and enhanced student participation. Martinez and Wang (2021) emphasize that such digital innovations have revolutionized language learning, enabling more dynamic and student-centered teaching approaches.

Alongside technology, collaborative learning has been recognized as an essential component of effective pedagogy. By working together on tasks, learners develop communication, problem-solving, and teamwork skills while also deepening their understanding of language content. Roberts and Smith (2020) highlight that collaboration fosters active participation, mutual support, and critical thinking, creating an environment where students benefit from shared strengths and peer feedback. When technology supports collaboration—through online discussion forums, shared digital platforms, or virtual classrooms—it further strengthens interaction and learning outcomes.

Recent studies have explored various dimensions of integrating technology and collaboration in ELT. Mendes and Finardi (2020) examined blended learning approaches in Brazil, showing how digital tools can enhance teacher readiness and critical reflection despite initial resistance. Chauhan (2021) investigated teachers' perceptions of technology-supported collaborative classrooms in Nepal, finding positive attitudes and widespread adoption of student-centered methods. Similarly, Devarajoo (2021) demonstrated that appropriate training in digital tools significantly boosts teachers' confidence in integrating both print and technology-based media in ELT.

Kasumi and Xhemaili (2023) explored the impact of collaborative learning on EFL students in Kosovo, finding that active participation greatly increased motivation and achievement, particularly among female learners. More recently, Ma, Lee, Gao, and Chai (2024) analyzed the use of corpus technology in pre-service ELT teacher education, showing how collaboration in online environments strengthened

pedagogical knowledge and digital competence. Collectively, these studies highlight the transformative role of technology and collaboration in creating more engaging, effective, and learner-centered language classrooms.

Despite these advancements, gaps remain in the literature. Much of the existing research focuses on short-term interventions, specific tools, or limited educational contexts, leaving questions about the long-term sustainability and scalability of these practices. Additionally, there is limited empirical evidence on how teachers, especially in resource-constrained settings like Pakistan, can be adequately supported through professional development to implement these approaches effectively. Addressing these gaps is crucial to ensuring that innovative pedagogies can be adapted to diverse learning environments.

This study contributes to this growing body of knowledge by examining the integration of technology and collaborative strategies in Pakistani ELT classrooms. It investigates how tools such as mobile apps, virtual platforms, and online forums enhance student engagement and how collaborative methods foster critical thinking, communication, and teamwork. By exploring both benefits and challenges, the research provides practical recommendations for educators and policymakers seeking to modernize ELT practices and align them with international standards.

### **Research Methodology**

This study employed a **qualitative research methodology** to explore the impact of innovative pedagogies on English Language Teaching (ELT) in Pakistan. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows for a deeper understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and practices of both educators and students regarding the integration of technology and collaborative learning strategies.

### **Research Design**

The study adopted a **descriptive and exploratory research design**, enabling the researcher to capture rich, context-specific insights. By focusing on classroom practices and participants' lived experiences, the design facilitated a comprehensive examination of how technology and collaboration influence student engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes.

### **Target Population**

The target population of this study included **English language teachers and students** from secondary and higher secondary schools in Pakistan. These groups were selected because they directly experience the challenges of traditional teaching methods and the potential benefits of technology-driven and collaborative pedagogies.

### **Sample Size**

A sample of **20 participants** was selected, consisting of **10 English language teachers** and **10 students** from different institutions. This manageable sample size allowed for in-depth exploration while ensuring diversity of perspectives.

### **Sampling Technique**

The study employed a **purposive sampling technique**, selecting participants based on their direct involvement in English language teaching and learning. This technique ensured that participants had relevant experience with both traditional methods and

emerging practices involving technology and collaboration.

### **Data Collection Tools**

Three tools were used to gather data:

**In-depth Interviews:** conducted with teachers to explore their experiences and perceptions of using technology and collaborative strategies in ELT.

**Focus Group Discussions:** held with students to capture collective perspectives on engagement, challenges, and learning outcomes.

**Classroom Observations:** used to document real-time practices, student-teacher interactions, and the integration of innovative pedagogies in natural classroom settings.

### **Data Analysis Tools**

The collected data was analyzed using **thematic analysis**, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) framework. Data from interviews, focus groups, and observations were transcribed, coded, and categorized into emerging themes. This process enabled the identification of patterns, challenges, best practices, and recommendations regarding the integration of technology and collaboration in ELT classrooms.

### **Results**

This study explored the effects of integrating technology and collaborative learning strategies in English Language Teaching (ELT) in Pakistan. Using qualitative methods such as interviews, focus group discussions, and classroom observations, the research provided valuable insights into how innovative pedagogies influence student engagement, learning outcomes, language proficiency, and classroom interaction. The data helped evaluate the effectiveness of these approaches, highlight best practices, and identify the challenges faced by educators and learners.

Findings indicate that technology has a significant role in transforming English classrooms. The use of digital tools, including language learning applications, interactive multimedia, and virtual platforms, was observed to increase accessibility, encourage active participation, and personalize instruction. Students reported feeling more motivated and engaged, while teachers noted that these tools supported diverse learning needs and created opportunities for meaningful interaction beyond the traditional classroom setting.

Collaborative learning also emerged as a vital factor in improving the quality of ELT. Group projects, peer discussions, and online forums encouraged students to exchange ideas, build confidence, and develop essential skills such as communication, teamwork, and critical thinking. Both teachers and students agreed that collaboration made the classroom atmosphere more dynamic, interactive, and learner-centered.

Despite these benefits, the study also identified several challenges that hinder the consistent application of innovative pedagogies. Limited access to technological devices, unstable internet connections, lack of institutional support, and insufficient teacher training were recurring concerns. These barriers often restricted teachers from fully implementing technology-based and collaborative approaches in their classrooms.

The findings suggest that integrating technology and collaboration can substantially enhance ELT by increasing engagement, improving learning outcomes, and fostering key skills. However, their successful adoption requires adequate infrastructure,

continuous teacher training, and supportive policies that encourage innovation in language education. By addressing these issues, Pakistani ELT classrooms can move closer to international best practices and provide learners with the skills needed to thrive in a globalized world.

**Theme 1: Technology as a Catalyst for Engagement and Language Development**

The analysis reveals that technology plays a pivotal role in enhancing student engagement, improving learning outcomes, and fostering language proficiency in ELT classrooms. Participants consistently emphasized that digital tools transformed the classroom into a more interactive and motivating environment, thereby breaking away from the monotony of traditional methods. A teacher reflected on this shift, stating that apps such as Duolingo and Babbel encouraged participation by presenting learning in a playful, game-like format. Students echoed this perception, with one noting, "Using the app on my phone feels like playing a game. It's fun and I learn without even realizing it." Such responses highlight how gamification fosters intrinsic motivation and sustains learner interest, confirming that technology reduces disengagement and promotes active involvement.

Beyond engagement, technology was also seen to improve measurable learning outcomes. Teachers observed that students who consistently interacted with apps and multimedia resources performed better in assessments. The immediacy of feedback provided by these platforms supported deeper comprehension and correction of errors. Classroom observations reinforced this trend, as students using digital flashcards and interactive whiteboards demonstrated stronger retention of vocabulary and grammar. As one teacher explained, "When students see and interact with words and images on the screen, they tend to remember them better compared to just reading from a textbook." These accounts suggest that technology not only enriches learning experiences but also strengthens cognitive processes related to retention and recall.

Finally, improvements in overall language proficiency emerged as a critical outcome. Students reported better pronunciation, listening comprehension, and conversational fluency when exposed to virtual exchanges and online speaking opportunities. One learner described the experience of interacting with native speakers virtually, noting, "Talking to a native speaker through the virtual exchange program helped me learn how to use phrases naturally and improved my confidence in speaking." This finding underscores the significance of authentic, real-time communication opportunities afforded by technology, which traditional classroom settings often fail to provide.

Collectively, these responses demonstrate that technology functions as a catalyst for engagement and skill development in ELT. By offering personalized, interactive, and authentic learning experiences, it not only enhances motivation but also leads to tangible improvements in student outcomes and proficiency.

Here's a research-oriented thematic analysis of your provided data, paraphrased and synthesized into a cohesive narrative with an appropriate theme title. Participants' voices are highlighted in italics, and the tone is aligned with academic discussion.

**Theme 2: Collaborative Learning as a Medium for Cognitive Growth, Communication, and Interactive Engagement**

The analysis reveals that collaborative learning, when integrated with technological tools, is a powerful driver of cognitive development and interactive pedagogy. Teachers and students consistently emphasized that group projects, peer discussions, and problem-solving tasks fostered critical thinking by encouraging learners to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information. Technology-supported platforms such

as Google Docs and Trello provided opportunities for joint problem-solving, requiring students to refine and justify their ideas. As one participant noted, “When we work together on a project, we have to come up with solutions and justify our ideas to each other. This makes us think more critically about what we are learning.” Such reflections suggest that collaboration pushes learners toward deeper intellectual engagement, equipping them with reasoning and evaluative skills that extend beyond rote memorization.

In addition to critical thinking, communication skills were significantly strengthened through technology-facilitated collaboration. Virtual spaces like Zoom and Microsoft Teams enabled students to articulate their thoughts more confidently and to actively listen to peers, thus enriching the quality of classroom dialogue. Classroom observations indicated that students in online discussion forums displayed greater confidence in sharing ideas compared to traditional, face-to-face contexts. A teacher highlighted this change, stating, “Students are more willing to speak up in virtual discussions. They feel less intimidated than in face-to-face settings, and this helps them practice their communication skills more freely.” These findings highlight how digital collaboration lowers barriers to participation while simultaneously refining essential oral and listening competencies.

Furthermore, classroom interaction was noticeably transformed through the integration of collaborative activities and digital tools. Interactive technologies such as whiteboards and online polling systems (e.g., Kahoot) facilitated inclusive participation and cultivated an atmosphere of enthusiasm. Teachers explained that these tools encouraged all students—not just the more vocal ones—to contribute, thereby democratizing classroom engagement. As one teacher remarked, “Using tools like Kahoot for quizzes makes the class more interactive. Students are eager to participate because it feels like a game, and they enjoy the competition.” Such examples demonstrate how gamified collaboration motivates learners, provides real-time feedback, and allows teachers to adapt instruction to meet learner needs more effectively.

The findings indicate that collaborative learning, supported by technology, enhances students’ critical thinking, communication skills, and interactive participation, ultimately creating a richer and more dynamic English language learning environment.

### **Theme 3: Best Practices and Challenges in Implementing Technology-Enhanced Collaborative Pedagogies**

The study revealed several best practices that contributed to the successful integration of technology and collaboration in English Language Teaching. One widely recognized approach was the use of blended learning, which allowed students to benefit from both traditional instruction and digital tools. A teacher explained, “Blended learning helps me combine the best of both worlds. I can use the textbook in class, but then extend learning through apps and online activities at home.” Professional development also emerged as a cornerstone of effective implementation, with participants highlighting the value of training and peer mentoring. As one respondent noted, “When I attended workshops on using digital tools, I felt more confident in applying them with my students.” Students further emphasized the benefits of personalized learning, with one sharing, “When teachers give us online activities that match our level, I feel more motivated and less afraid of making mistakes.” These reflections underscore the importance of tailoring instruction to



learner needs, supported by strong infrastructure. Indeed, several respondents stressed that reliable technology is essential, with a teacher commenting, “It doesn’t matter how good the method is, if the internet is slow or the system crashes, the whole lesson is wasted.”

Alongside these best practices, participants also reported persistent challenges in implementing innovative pedagogies. A key concern was the digital divide, with some students unable to access devices or stable internet at home. One student expressed, “Sometimes I cannot join the online class because my internet is weak. I feel left behind when this happens.” Teachers echoed this frustration, pointing to inequities that made it difficult to ensure inclusivity. Resistance to change also appeared as a barrier, as some educators and learners were hesitant to embrace new practices. A teacher reflected, “At first, I was reluctant to use these tools because I thought it would take too much time. But after trying, I realized they can make my teaching easier.” Technical disruptions were another recurring issue, with one student stating, “When the system hangs during group work, it breaks our focus, and we lose interest.” To address these obstacles, respondents highlighted the need for institutional support and continuous professional development. As one teacher suggested, “If schools provide us with proper training and technical support, we can overcome these challenges much faster.”

Taken together, these responses demonstrate that while best practices such as blended learning, teacher training, personalized instruction, and strong infrastructure hold promise for transforming ELT, persistent challenges related to access, resistance, and technical reliability remain. Addressing these concerns systematically through policy, investment, and teacher empowerment is essential for ensuring that technology-enhanced collaborative pedagogies reach their full potential.

## **Discussion**

The results of this study demonstrate the transformative potential of technology and collaborative learning in enhancing English Language Teaching (ELT). Consistent with earlier research, findings reveal that technological tools, such as apps, interactive whiteboards, and virtual classrooms, foster student engagement, improve learning outcomes, and contribute to greater language proficiency. This aligns with Martinez and Wang (2021), who reported that technology-supported classrooms increased accessibility and motivation among learners. Similarly, Smith and Johnson (2020) found that virtual exchanges improved learners’ confidence in real-life communication, a result echoed in this study where students highlighted the benefits of interacting with native speakers online. However, while these findings affirm the positive influence of technology, they contrast with Devarajoo’s (2021) study, which cautioned that without proper training, teachers may underutilize digital tools, leading to limited impact. In comparison, the present study suggests that even minimal exposure to apps and interactive platforms can significantly motivate learners, though sustained outcomes still depend on teacher preparedness.

In relation to collaborative learning, this study confirms its role in enhancing critical thinking, communication skills, and classroom interaction. Respondents emphasized how peer collaboration encouraged them to justify ideas, listen actively, and build confidence in expressing themselves. These results are consistent with Roberts and Smith (2020), who described collaboration as a vital component of developing analytical and communication skills. Similarly, Kasumi and Xhemaili (2023)

demonstrated that collaborative EFL classes significantly improved student motivation, particularly among female learners and younger cohorts—a finding that resonates with this study’s observation that group work and digital collaboration platforms created inclusive participation. Yet, unlike Chauhan’s (2021) work in Nepal, where teachers reported challenges in balancing authority with peer-led collaboration, this study found teachers more willing to allow learners autonomy, particularly when supported by tools such as Google Docs or online discussion forums. This contrast may reflect contextual differences, with Pakistani classrooms gradually embracing participatory practices compared to traditionally teacher-centered environments.

The analysis of best practices further supports existing literature emphasizing blended learning, professional development, and infrastructure as critical enablers. Lee and Chen (2022) argued that blended models optimize the strengths of traditional and digital methods, a finding mirrored in this study where teachers reported success in combining textbooks with apps and online activities. Similarly, Johnson and Miller (2021) underscored the role of teacher training, which resonates with participants’ calls for workshops and peer mentoring. However, consistent with Brown and Davis (2019), this study also found that inadequate infrastructure and unreliable internet remain major barriers, particularly in resource-limited contexts. Respondents highlighted the frustration of losing learning time due to technical disruptions, supporting Patel and Kim’s (2021) warning that digital reliability is as important as pedagogical innovation.

The challenges identified in this study also align with global concerns around equity and access. The digital divide reported here mirrors Chauhan’s (2021) findings, where students from underprivileged backgrounds struggled to benefit fully from technology-based classrooms. However, unlike previous studies that primarily framed access as a systemic issue, this study also highlights learners’ lived experiences, with students describing feelings of exclusion when unable to participate due to weak internet or limited device availability. Moreover, resistance to change emerged as a notable challenge, echoing Mendes and Finardi’s (2020) conclusion that teacher readiness and attitudes significantly influence the success of blended learning.

Study reinforces much of the existing research while also offering nuanced insights specific to the Pakistani context. It demonstrates that while technology and collaboration enhance engagement, critical thinking, and communication, their impact is constrained by structural challenges such as unequal access, inadequate training, and unreliable infrastructure. These findings both support global trends and reveal contrasts shaped by local realities, underscoring the need for contextualized strategies in implementing technology-enhanced collaborative pedagogies.

### **Conclusion**

The adoption of technology and collaborative learning in ELT marks a significant step toward creating more interactive, engaging, and inclusive learning environments. Findings from this study demonstrate that these approaches can meaningfully improve student engagement, critical thinking, communication skills, and language proficiency. Yet, their successful application depends on overcoming persistent challenges, including unequal access to digital resources, the need for ongoing teacher training, and the cultivation of a supportive collaborative culture.

Future investigations should examine the long-term sustainability and scalability of such practices across varied educational settings. Exploring how technological tools

interact with different pedagogical models can yield valuable insights into optimizing student outcomes. Additionally, longitudinal and cross-cultural studies are needed to assess enduring impacts on learner achievement and to identify context-specific opportunities and barriers. By pursuing these directions, educators and policymakers can strengthen the inclusivity, effectiveness, and adaptability of ELT in the digital era.

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