

## CHALLENGES AND READINESS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN TEACHING GRADE 5 ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS: EVIDENCE FROM GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS OF PAKISTAN

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English Language Teaching (ELT), Teacher Readiness, Teaching Challenges, Primary School Teachers, Curriculum Implementation, Professional Development.

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### Abstract

This study examined the problems encountered by the primary school teachers and their preparation to teach Grade 5 English textbooks in government schools of Pakistan. A quantitative correlational research design was used. A total of 200 primary school teachers were randomly sampled based on stratification, and data were collected from these teachers. A Likert-scale questionnaire was used to assess teaching challenges and the readiness of the teachers. Descriptive statistical methods, correlation, t-test and ANOVA were used to analyze data. The findings showed that English language proficiency, pedagogical capabilities, and resources are moderately to highly demanding for teachers. The teacher's readiness was determined to be at the moderate level. There was a strong negative correlation between the teaching challenges and teacher readiness ( $r = -0.62$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The study underscores the importance of teacher training for English that is aligned with the curriculum and tailored to specific teachers to increase teaching effectiveness in the primary level.

### INTRODUCTION

English has emerged as one of the most vital international languages for communication, education, science, technology and economic development. English is an important medium of access to higher education, jobs, and world knowledge in many countries, including Pakistan. This means that English language education has been the focus of interest for educational institutions, curriculum developers and policy

makers to a significant extent. The Government of Pakistan has introduced English as a compulsory subject at the Primary School level to teach the learners the beginner's level of language skills at an early age. In the primary school level, students' English textbooks should be used to train basic English skills, such as reading, writing, listening, speaking, vocabulary and grammar. Teachers are the main agents of change and curriculum delivery, and the successful

implementation of the curriculum in English hinges on them. The teacher is a key part in how he/she interprets curriculum goals into the classroom. The quality of their subject knowledge, pedagogical skills, didactic approaches, and confidence has a high impact on the achievement of the students. Secondly, teachers in the field of English language teaching should have a good command of the language and be able to teach in such a way as to enhance language learning. Thus, teacher preparedness is seen as a significant element in order to attain the desired goals of English language learning.

Teacher readiness is the degree to which teachers have the knowledge, skills, attitudes, confidence and professional competencies necessary to do the job of teaching effectively. Ready teachers can design lessons, deliver instructional strategies, manage classrooms, and evaluate student learning, as well as adjust their teaching to address the needs of all students. However, teachers who aren't ready could experience challenges implementing the curriculum, leading to less effective teaching and learning and lower student performance. Several studies have emphasized that teacher readiness has a positive correlation with educational quality and students' learning outcomes (Sultana, 2023). While teacher readiness has been identified as an important factor, many of the issues that impact the teaching of English in government schools persist, especially in primary schools. While English language proficiency is one of the challenges faced by teachers, other challenges include a lack of professional training, teaching materials, overcrowding in classrooms, a lack of instructional support, and low levels of proficiency in English in many developing countries. The difficulties encountered frequently make it difficult for teachers to effectively meet curriculum mandates and provide rich learning opportunities. Research has revealed that pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and communication skills are among the areas that are commonly difficult for English language teachers as a result of the lack of adequate professional preparation and language competence (Fareed et al., 2022).

It is especially important in Pakistan, as most primary school teachers are not specialists in English language teaching and learning. While they are given the duty to teach English, many have not been trained in any particular English language teaching methodology. As a result, they tend to depend on traditional lecture-based methods of teaching, rote learning and textbook-based teaching. These may hinder students' communicative competence and critical language abilities. In addition, teachers might have trouble grasping curriculum goals, creating interactive learning activities, and assessing mastery without bias in a manner that facilitates language development. Competency-based curricula and the new English textbooks have added to the challenges faced by teachers in the classroom. The 5th-grade English textbooks ask the teachers to foster students' higher-order thinking skills, reading comprehension, writing ability, and communication ability. In this regard, teachers need to have adequate content knowledge, pedagogical skills and self-confidence in teaching English in order to fulfil these goals. But, current literature indicates that many of the government school teachers are having difficulties in enacting these curricular expectations due to a lack of professional development and instructional support (Imran et al., 2024). This inevitably leaves a difference between the curriculum goals and classroom practice. Multiple barriers in the effective teaching of the English language have been identified in various studies carried out in Pakistan. Such obstacles are small teaching aids, large class sizes, no language laboratories, limited classroom aids and ineffective training programs for teachers. Also, many teachers indicate problems in language proficiency in English, and in developing interactive language learning settings. Such challenges not only affect teachers' instructional practices but also influence their confidence and readiness to teach English effectively (Jabeen et al., 2024). When teachers face persistent challenges without adequate support, their motivation and willingness to adopt innovative teaching practices may decline. The relationship between teaching challenges and teacher readiness has attracted increasing

attention in educational research. Previous studies suggest that higher levels of instructional challenges are often associated with lower levels of teacher readiness and self-efficacy. Teachers who encounter substantial barriers in their professional work may experience reduced confidence in their ability to achieve instructional goals. Conversely, teachers who receive adequate training, institutional support, and access to teaching resources tend to demonstrate higher levels of readiness and effectiveness in classroom instruction (Trisha, 2025). Understanding this relationship is particularly important in the context of English language teaching, where both subject expertise and pedagogical competence are essential for successful curriculum implementation. Although previous research has examined challenges in English language teaching and teacher preparedness separately, limited attention has been given to the specific context of Grade 5 English textbook instruction in government primary schools in Pakistan. Grade 5 represents a critical stage in primary education, as students are expected to transition from basic language acquisition to more advanced language use and comprehension. Teachers' ability to effectively teach Grade 5 English textbooks is therefore essential for preparing students for subsequent educational levels. However, empirical evidence regarding the challenges faced by teachers and their readiness to teach Grade 5 English remains limited.

Therefore, the present study seeks to investigate the challenges and readiness of primary school teachers in teaching Grade 5 English textbooks in government schools of Pakistan. By examining the nature of teaching challenges and assessing teachers' readiness levels, the study aims to provide valuable insights for policymakers, curriculum developers, teacher educators, and educational administrators. The findings are expected to contribute to the improvement of teacher training programs, curriculum implementation strategies, and professional development initiatives aimed at enhancing the quality of English language education at the primary level.

## Statement of the problem

English is compulsory from primary level onwards in Pakistan, but in government schools, the effective teaching and learning of Grade 5 English textbooks is always a challenging task. Many primary school teachers are teaching English despite not being trained for the role or not being proficient in English. Hence, many teachers have problems comprehending the content of the textbooks, implementing communicative teaching strategies, and making students do meaningful activities in learning a language. Moreover, the teacher's and learner's teaching and learning experience is complicated by the limited professional development opportunities, inadequate instructional support, overcrowded classrooms, and the lack of support from the institution. Such challenges can have a direct impact on teachers' self-assurance and readiness to effectively teach the Grade 5 English curriculum. Several studies have given attention to the general problem area of ELT; however, there is no empirical evidence which is specific to the relationship between challenges and readiness of teachers with respect to grade 5 English textbooks in government primary schools of Pakistan. The lack of research in this area makes it difficult for policymakers and teacher educators to devise specific interventions. Thus, the study is focused on exploring the problems encountered by primary school teachers and their preparedness in relation to using the Grade 5 English textbook in government schools of Pakistan.

## Significance of the study

This research will be useful to various parties in the educational field. It will give empirical evidence of the problems encountered by primary school teachers in teaching English in grade 5, thus revealing primary problems in the implementation of the course. It will help the School Education Department's policymakers to develop effective educational reform and targeted support systems. The study will contribute to teacher training schools and teacher training programs to pinpoint teacher needs in specific areas, especially in the English language and

pedagogical skills. This can result in the development of more focused and competency-based training modules. The results will help school leaders understand the challenges teachers encounter in the classroom and inform the allocation of resources, facilitation, and support in the classroom and school. In addition to this, this study adds to the body of literature regarding the readiness of teachers and English language teaching in developing countries, especially in the Pakistani context. It also serves as a basis for further research concerning the implementation of curriculum, teacher effectiveness, and the improvement of educational quality. Last, this study will contribute to classroom practice by providing information that can be used to improve English language learning outcomes for students in the primary level, as well as teaching methods and teacher confidence.

#### Objectives of the study

1. To identify the challenges faced by primary school teachers in teaching Grade 5 English textbooks.
2. To examine the level of teachers' readiness for teaching Grade 5 English.
3. To find the relationship between teaching challenges and teacher readiness.
4. To investigate the influence of gender, academic qualifications, and teaching experience on primary school teachers' readiness to teach Grade 5 English textbooks.

#### Research Hypotheses

H01: There is no significant relationship between teaching challenges and teacher readiness.  
H02: There is no significant difference in readiness between male and female teachers.  
H03: There is no significant difference in readiness based on qualification.  
H04: There is no significant difference in readiness based on teaching experience.

#### Literature Review

English has become an essential language for communication, education, and employment across the globe. Consequently, many countries have introduced English as a compulsory subject

in primary education to equip learners with the linguistic skills necessary for academic and professional success. In Pakistan, English occupies a significant position in the national curriculum and is taught as a compulsory subject in government schools. The primary level serves as the foundation for language learning, making effective English instruction critical for students' future academic achievement. Research suggests that successful English language teaching at the primary level depends largely on teacher competence and preparedness. Teachers are expected to possess adequate language proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, classroom management skills, and assessment competencies to facilitate meaningful learning experiences. However, studies conducted in developing countries indicate that primary school teachers often face challenges in delivering English instruction due to limited training and inadequate professional support. These challenges become more pronounced when teachers are required to teach advanced textbook content that demands higher levels of language competence and instructional expertise.

#### Challenges Faced by Primary School Teachers in English Language Teaching

The primary level English teaching is faced with various difficulties in the teaching process, especially in government schools. Low English proficiency of teachers is one of the problems that is often reported. Most primary school teachers are generalists teaching several subjects, who may not have a particular qualification in English language teaching. Consequently, they often have problems in teaching grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and understanding reading and writing skills effectively. A second problem in this regard is pedagogical competence. The effective English language teaching needs to bring into use the learner-centred and communicative teaching approaches, which are suitable to engage students in the process of using English. But some studies have indicated that teachers are still using traditional teaching methods, which are lectures and memorization because of a lack of knowledge of the new

language teaching method. The emphasis on traditional teaching methods limits opportunities for authentic language use and skill building for learners. Another challenge in the teaching of English is resource constraints. In government schools, there is often a lack of teaching aids, supplementary reading material, audiovisual materials and technological tools for language learning. Without these resources, the teachers' opportunities to provide interactive and engaging learning activities are limited. In addition, too many students in a classroom may be a barrier to the teacher's ability to give each student the personal attention they need and to effectively track student progress in language acquisition.

Another consideration is professional development opportunities. Numerous studies have shown that English language teaching (ELT) is a very poorly trained area for many primary school teachers. Alongside curriculum changes, new expectations for teaching and new competency expectations for learning have been introduced, but not all teacher preparation programs have followed suit. Teachers then might find it difficult to grasp what the curriculum is trying to teach and put the activities in the textbooks into action. Lack of professional development can have a negative impact on teachers' confidence levels, teaching skills and readiness to try out new teaching approaches. Further challenges to English language instruction are the assessment challenges. The assessment of students' language competence in a number of formative and summative ways is a common expectation for teachers. However, teachers might lack assessment literacy and might not be trained in authentic assessment practices, which may hinder their accurate assessment of students' language development. All of this can have a negative impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Teacher readiness has emerged as an important concept in educational research due to its influence on teaching effectiveness and curriculum implementation. Teacher readiness refers to the extent to which teachers possess the knowledge, skills, attitudes, confidence, and professional competencies necessary to perform their instructional responsibilities successfully.

Ready teachers demonstrate confidence in their subject knowledge, employ appropriate teaching strategies, manage classrooms effectively, and assess student learning accurately. Educational researchers view teacher readiness as a multidimensional construct encompassing cognitive, pedagogical, and psychological dimensions. The cognitive dimension includes content knowledge and understanding of curriculum requirements. The pedagogical dimension involves instructional planning, classroom management, assessment skills, and teaching methodologies. The psychological dimension refers to teachers' self-efficacy, confidence, motivation, and willingness to engage in professional growth. Studies have consistently shown that teacher readiness contributes significantly to educational quality. Teachers who feel prepared and competent are more likely to create positive learning environments, implement effective instructional strategies, and achieve desired learning outcomes. Conversely, low levels of readiness may lead to instructional difficulties, reduced confidence, and ineffective curriculum implementation. Therefore, understanding factors that influence teacher readiness is essential for improving educational practice.

## Teacher Readiness in English Language Teaching

In the context of English language teaching, readiness involves both language competence and pedagogical expertise. Teachers must possess sufficient proficiency in English to explain concepts, model language use, and facilitate classroom interaction. Additionally, they need specialized knowledge of language teaching methodologies, lesson planning techniques, classroom activities, and assessment procedures. Research indicates that teacher readiness in English language instruction is influenced by several factors, including academic qualifications, teaching experience, professional training, and institutional support. Teachers who receive specialized training in English language teaching generally report higher levels of readiness and confidence than those without such training. Similarly, experienced teachers often demonstrate

greater instructional competence due to their familiarity with classroom challenges and curriculum requirements. Institutional support also plays a critical role in enhancing readiness. Schools that provide adequate teaching resources, supportive leadership, and professional development opportunities contribute positively to teachers' preparedness. Conversely, limited support systems may hinder teachers' ability to perform effectively despite their personal efforts and commitment.

### Relationship Between Teaching Challenges and Teacher Readiness

The relationship between teaching challenges and teacher readiness has received increasing attention in educational literature. Existing research suggests that teaching challenges and readiness are closely interconnected. Teachers who encounter numerous barriers in their professional practice often experience lower levels of confidence and preparedness. Challenges such as inadequate training, resource shortages, heavy workloads, and insufficient institutional support can undermine teachers' ability to implement curriculum requirements effectively. Conversely, teachers with higher levels of readiness are generally better equipped to cope with instructional challenges. They are more likely to adapt teaching strategies, utilize available resources creatively, and maintain positive attitudes toward teaching. Thus, readiness may function as a protective factor that enables teachers to overcome classroom difficulties more effectively.

Empirical studies have reported significant associations between teacher competence, self-efficacy, and instructional effectiveness. These findings suggest that reducing teaching challenges and strengthening teacher readiness should be considered complementary goals in educational improvement efforts. Professional development programs, mentoring initiatives, and curriculum-focused training can play important roles in enhancing readiness while simultaneously addressing existing challenges. Although previous studies have examined challenges in English language teaching and teacher readiness

separately, limited research has focused specifically on Grade 5 English textbook instruction in government primary schools in Pakistan. Furthermore, few studies have investigated the relationship between teaching challenges and readiness within the context of curriculum implementation at the primary level. Given the importance of Grade 5 as a transitional stage in students' language development, a comprehensive investigation of teachers' challenges and readiness is necessary. Therefore, the present study seeks to address this gap by examining the challenges faced by primary school teachers and their readiness to teach Grade 5 English textbooks in government schools of Pakistan.

### Research Design

The study will use a descriptive-correlational research design. The descriptive component will help in determining the level of teachers' readiness and the extent of challenges faced by them. The correlational component will examine the relationship between teaching challenges and teacher readiness. In addition, comparative analysis will be conducted to explore differences in readiness based on gender, qualification, and teaching experience.

### Population of the Study

The population of the study will consist of all primary school teachers working in government schools who are teaching Grade 5 English textbooks. These teachers are directly involved in English language instruction at the primary level and represent the target group for this research.

### Sample Size and Sampling Technique

For this study, the appropriate sample size was 200 primary school teachers. This sample size is considered adequate for quantitative analysis and is suitable for applying statistical techniques such as correlation, t-test, and ANOVA. The study will use a stratified random sampling technique.

### Research Tool

The data for this study was collected using a structured questionnaire adapted from validated

instruments used in previous studies (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Fareed et al., 2022; Richards, 2017). The questionnaire was modified to suit the context of Grade 5 English teaching in government primary schools of Pakistan. The instrument consisted of two main sections:

Section A: Teaching Challenges

- English language proficiency challenges
- Pedagogical challenges
- Resource-related challenges
- Assessment challenges

- Professional training challenges

Section B: Teacher Readiness

- Content knowledge readiness
- Instructional readiness
- Classroom implementation readiness
- Assessment readiness
- Teacher self-efficacy and confidence

A five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) was used to record responses.

Results

Table 1: Level of Teaching Challenges and Teacher Readiness (N = 200)

Variables	Mean	SD	Level
Teaching Challenges	3.76	0.63	High
Teacher Readiness	3.22	0.58	Moderate

Table 1 shows that primary school teachers experience a high level of teaching challenges (M = 3.76, SD = 0.63) in teaching Grade 5 English textbooks. This indicates that teachers frequently face difficulties related to English proficiency, pedagogy, resources, and assessment.

In contrast, teachers' readiness is at a moderate level (M = 3.22, SD = 0.58), suggesting that although teachers are somewhat prepared to teach English, their preparedness is not at an optimal level. This gap reflects a mismatch between curriculum demands and teacher capacity.

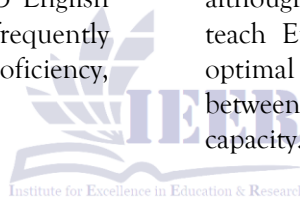


Table 2: Mean scores of Teaching Challenges

Factors	Mean	SD	Rank
English Language Proficiency	3.89	0.71	1
Pedagogical Challenges	3.80	0.68	2
Resource-related Challenges	3.74	0.66	3
Assessment Challenges	3.69	0.64	4
Training-related Challenges	3.68	0.62	5

Table 2 indicates that English language proficiency challenges are the most significant issue (M = 3.89) faced by teachers. This suggests that many teachers struggle with spoken and written English, which directly affects classroom instruction.

Pedagogical challenges are ranked second, showing that teachers also face difficulty in

applying modern teaching strategies such as communicative language teaching and activity-based learning. Resource-related and assessment challenges are also notable, indicating insufficient teaching materials and weak assessment literacy. Training-related challenges, although slightly lower, still show a consistent need for professional development.

**Table 3: Mean scores for Teacher Readiness**

Factors	Mean	SD	Rank
Instructional Readiness	3.30	0.61	1
Content Knowledge Readiness	3.25	0.59	2
Classroom Implementation Readiness	3.20	0.57	3
Assessment Readiness	3.18	0.56	4
Self-efficacy & Confidence	3.15	0.55	5

Results in Table 3 show that instructional readiness is the highest-rated dimension, indicating that teachers feel relatively more confident in lesson delivery. However, self-efficacy and confidence are the lowest ( $M = 3.15$ ), suggesting that teachers still lack strong

confidence in teaching Grade 5 English effectively. This reflects moderate preparedness rather than full readiness. Overall, readiness remains limited due to gaps in content mastery and assessment skills.

**Relationship between teaching challenges and teacher readiness**

**Table 4: Pearson Correlation Analysis**

Variables	Challenges	Readiness
Challenges	1	
Readiness	-0.69**	1

Table 4 shows a significant negative relationship ( $r = -0.64, p < .01$ ) between teaching challenges and teacher readiness. This indicates that as teaching challenges increase, teacher readiness decreases. In other words, teachers who face more difficulties in English language teaching

tend to feel less prepared and less confident in delivering Grade 5 English content. This finding supports the theoretical assumption that instructional barriers directly reduce teacher effectiveness and self-efficacy.

**Gender Differences in Teacher Readiness**

**Table 5: Independent Samples t-test**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Male	140	3.18	0.60		
Female	160	3.26	0.56	2.21	.028

The results indicate a significant difference in readiness based on gender ( $t = 2.21, p < .05$ ). Female teachers showed slightly higher readiness compared to male teachers. This may be due to greater classroom engagement, communication

style differences, or participation in informal professional learning activities. However, the difference is small, indicating that both groups require further professional development support.

Qualification and Experience differences

Table 6 : One-way ANOVA

Variable	F	p
Qualification	4.56	.011
Experience	5.12	.006

Table 6 shows significant differences in teacher readiness based on qualification and teaching experience. Teachers with higher qualifications (e.g., M.A / MPhil) demonstrated better readiness than those with lower qualifications. Similarly, experienced teachers showed higher readiness compared to less experienced teachers. This suggests that academic background and classroom experience play an important role in developing teacher readiness for English instruction.

Discussion

The present study examined the challenges faced by primary school teachers and their readiness to teach Grade 5 English textbooks in government schools of Pakistan. The findings revealed that teachers experience a high level of instructional challenges and a moderate level of readiness. These results are consistent with previous research indicating that English language teaching at the primary level in Pakistan is hindered by multiple systemic and pedagogical issues (Fareed et al., 2022; Jabeen et al., 2024). The most significant challenge identified in this study was teachers' limited English language proficiency. This finding aligns with Imran et al. (2024), who reported that many primary teachers struggle with grammar instruction, pronunciation, and classroom communication in English. Similarly, Sajid et al. (2024) found that inadequate language competence restricts teachers' ability to implement communicative teaching strategies effectively.

Pedagogical challenges were also found to be highly significant. Teachers reported difficulty in applying modern instructional approaches such as activity-based learning and communicative language teaching. This supports the findings of Richards (2017), who emphasized that teachers in developing contexts often rely on traditional rote-

based methods due to insufficient pedagogical training. In Pakistan, Bano et al. (2024) also highlighted a persistent mismatch between curriculum expectations and teachers' instructional practices. The study further revealed a significant negative relationship between teaching challenges and teacher readiness ( $r = -0.64, p < .01$ ). This indicates that as challenges increase, teachers' readiness decreases. This finding is consistent with Fareed et al. (2022), who reported that instructional barriers negatively affect teachers' confidence and classroom performance. Similarly, Trisha (2025) argued that teacher readiness is strongly influenced by the extent of institutional support and professional development opportunities.

Teacher readiness was found to be moderate, suggesting that teachers possess basic instructional capacity but lack advanced skills required for effective English teaching. This aligns with Sultana (2023), who found that teacher readiness improves significantly when continuous professional development and training are provided. However, in Pakistan, such opportunities remain limited and inconsistent (Mirza et al., 2024). The results also indicated significant differences in teacher readiness based on gender, qualification, and teaching experience. Teachers with higher qualifications and greater experience demonstrated higher readiness levels. This finding is consistent with Imran et al. (2024), who reported that experienced teachers are better able to manage classroom challenges and adapt instructional strategies effectively.

Overall, the findings of this study reinforce the argument that teacher readiness is closely linked with professional competence, training opportunities, and classroom support systems. Without addressing these challenges, effective implementation of Grade 5 English textbooks will remain difficult in government schools.

### Conclusion

This study concludes that the problems encountered by primary school teachers in government schools in implementing Grade 5 English textbooks are quite large, both from the teacher's point of view, namely the difficulty in reading English, as well as the language used in the English textbook, the difficulty of using English in the classroom, and the lack of facilities. These difficulties have a profound impact on their ability to provide effective English teaching. The findings of this study also show that the teachers' readiness is found to be in the moderate stage, meaning that teachers have basic instructional skills but do not have complete readiness in meeting the needs of the curriculum. The relationship between the teaching challenges and preparation of teachers was found to be significant and negative, which means that the higher the teaching challenges, the lower the readiness to teach. Moreover, the readiness of teachers to become effective teachers varies according to gender, qualification, and teaching experience, indicating that teacher background is important in affecting teacher effectiveness. Overall, the study highlights the necessity of systematic improvement of teacher training and institutional support for improving English language teaching in primary schools.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

Regular and structured training programs should be introduced to improve teachers' English language proficiency and pedagogical skills. Training should be aligned with Grade 5 English textbooks to ensure practical classroom application. Government schools should be equipped with adequate teaching aids, English learning materials, and digital resources. School leadership should provide continuous instructional support and mentoring to teachers. Reducing class sizes can improve teacher-student interaction and enhance language learning outcomes. Teachers should be trained in modern assessment techniques, including formative and competency-based assessment methods.

Preference should be given to candidates with stronger English language backgrounds for primary-level English teaching positions.

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