A Survey of Teaching Strategies in ESL Classroom

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The study surveys as to what kind of teaching strategies are applied by English language teachers for the development of linguistic abilities of ESL learners at intermediate level in Pakistan. English language pedagogy keeps on exploring the ways and means of teaching second language in various strategic forms to ESL learners. The study focuses on the related analysis of English language teaching strategies applied by both Public sector and Private sector at intermediate level at District Jacobabad, Sindh, Pakistan. The study applies both quantitative and qualitative methods for data analysis. Participating subjects were 40 English language teachers of intermediate level of Public sector and Private sector schools and colleges. The ELT teachers were interviewed in details coupled with data via questionnaires. The evidence from the data manifests that the ELT teachers of public sector are more inclined to apply the teaching strategies of GTM (Grammar Translation Method) while Private sector teachers are interested in Communicative Teaching Approach Strategies. Furthermore, the study suggests that there is a great need to train and motivate Public sector teachers through workshops for applying Communicative Teaching Approach Strategies in their ESL context in order to make their ESL learners communicatively competent.

1. INTRODUCTION

English language teaching is overwhelmed with countless techniques and methods in ESL classroom. Language reflects life, and perhaps teaching English should, therefore be as varied as living and include as many ways as possible. The way English is taught, can affect the academic achievement of the L2 learners especially at higher secondary level. English

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Language teachers usually employ uniform pedagogical methods without addressing the particular needs, set of habits, cultural background as well as areas of weakness of the young learners they teach. Much has been investigated to develop the teaching strategies in terms of L2 language learning. Even then both the Public Sector and Private Sector teachers neither update themselves nor take advantage of the latest researches in L2 learning.

Nunan (1998) argues:

"The teachers need to be aware that motivation is a consideration in determining whether or not learners are willing to communicate. Clearly, the more meaningful the materials and the tasks are for the learners involved the better the outcome will be".

Ur (2005) develops this further by suggesting that good speaking skills classrooms are ones where learners talk a lot, participation is even, motivation is high and the language is at an acceptable level. The flaws in English language teaching are responsible for inadequate performance on the part of second language learners, since the teaching methodology focuses mainly on the reading and writing skills and do not encourage learners to acquire spoken competence. Some Pakistani linguists like Rehman (1990) have questioned the traditional way of teaching English in schools. However, out-dated methods of teaching are still used all over the country in general and at Jacobabad, Sindh in particular.

1.1 English as a Second Language in Sindh

Speaking is very important skill and always gives a dynamic impression. It enhances or mars the personality of the speakers; whether he speaks acceptable English fluently or not. It would be no exaggeration to say that the person having lot of knowledge about any particular subject but having no English communicative competence is as illiterate as today's educated man without the knowledge of computer. There is a great need of developing spoken abilities of the students at Intermediate level in Sindh. They need to be taught as to how they should develop their spoken abilities through latest modern teaching techniques. The prevailing method of teaching (Grammar Translation Method) relatively has become obsolete one. This method does not meet the needs of today's challenges. In this context, Jacobabad Upper Sindh is badly affected area where the teachers use Grammar Translation Method. As a result second language learners at Intermediate level are not only poor in spoken but also reading and

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comprehending English lessons and exercises. The sooner students achieve communicative competence, the better it is. What needs to be done is to take some serious measures in order to advance language teachers through training at different forums.

1.2 Purpose of Study

The main purpose of the study is to explore the teaching strategies being applied by English language teachers at intermediate level in order to see what is being used and what should be applied instead. The horizon of the study focuses on methods of teaching and classroom activities, to help develop spoken abilities of second language learners through the findings of this research.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

➢ To know what teaching strategies are applied by English language teachers in ESL classroom.

➢ To see how effectively these English language teachers apply methods and techniques to develop the communicative competence of second language learners.

➢ To suggest as what methods are more successful in ESL classroom.

1.4 Investigation

➢ What sort of teaching strategies do English Language Teachers apply in ESL class rooms?

➢ Do both public sector and private sector English language teachers apply the same teaching strategies in ESL classrooms?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Oxford (1990) argues that "Language learning strategies are specific actions or techniques that learners use to assist their progress in developing second or foreign language skills". Furthermore, he said, "the types of strategies used by different learners vary due to different factors, such as degree of awareness, stage of learning, task requirements, teacher expectations, age, sex, nationality/ethnicity, general learning style, personality traits,

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motivation level, and purpose for learning the language". Teacher is the main resourceful person who provides the techniques and skills to the students. Not only are they responsible for providing but also they are supposed to create environment where second language learners can easily learn the target language.

Oxford (1990) claimed that successful language learners use a wide range of strategies that are most appropriate for their learning tasks. It means, learners must find out which strategies help learn and develop speaking abilities. The language teachers read aloud lessons and make the students read and comprehend. They do not speak the target language in ESL classroom nor are the ESL learners encouraged to interact with the teachers. Students are the passive learners while the teachers are active ones. They do not play grammar and language games or any other CLT (communicative language teaching) activities in order to encourage the learners. What happens, the students helplessly go to tuition centers, where, they find some sort of speaking activities i.e. speech competition, daily routine speech activities are the encouraging opportunities for them to develop the target language.

Presently, importance of oral skill proficiency cannot be denied, since spoken proficiency is gaining stronger and faster recognition throughout the world. The ESL learners must learn the modern skills, so that they should not only develop communicative abilities but also all other skills of learning a language. The same speaking strategies argued by Chamot, A. U (1993) as follows:

"To develop classroom speaking skills, children need opportunities to participate in small group discussion, to present oral reports, and to respond adequately to teacher questioning…"

Day to-day modification in language learning has paved the ways and means to develop its different theories in different horizon. In addition, if we have a cursory look at the uniform methods and approaches of English language learning, we can have clear-cut and categorical ideas of speaking skills applied by second language teachers in their ESL classrooms.

2.1 Grammar Translation Method (GTM)

Grammar Translation Method seems to stay evergreen for times to come in Pakistan, particularly in Sindh. This particular method changed its name in other way round. Once it

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was called Classical method, as it was taught firstly in the teaching of the classical languages Latin and Greek (Freeman, 2000). Later on, in early 1900 century, this method was used for the purpose of helping students read and appreciate foreign language literature. Language teachers believed through the study of the grammar of the English language, students would be more familiar with the grammar of the Native Speakers. And this acquaintance would help them in the development of speaking as well as writing. This method could not be proved to be useful in terms of development of communicative competence nor result-orientating. This shows the decline of the performance on the part of the ESL learners.

The major strategies used in GTM class are:

- ❖ Translation of a literary passage
- ❖ Reading comprehensive questions
- ❖ Antonyms/synonyms
- ❖ Cognates
- ❖ Deductive application of rules
- ❖ Fill in the blanks
- ❖ Memorization
- ❖ Use words in sentences
- ❖ Composition

2.2 Direct Method (DM)

The strategies used in this method are comparatively effective than the GTM method. Since DM has one basic rule **NO TRANSLATION** is allowed in the class, it shows traits through its name that direct target language only to be spoken in the class. Teachers who use the DM believe students need to associate meaning and the target language directly. Direct Method refers to the most widely known of the natural methods. DM was introduced by its supporters in France and Germany. Later this method was officially approved in both counties (Freeman, 2000). There are some basic strategies applied in DM ESL classrooms, for example:

- ❖ Reading aloud

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- ❖ Questions and answers exercise
- ❖ Getting students to Self-correction
- ❖ Conversation practice
- ❖ Fill-in-the-blank
- ❖ Dictation
- ❖ Map-drawing and
- ❖ Paragraph writing

Above-mentioned basic strategies can be observed in other teaching methods as well. This method did not stay any longer, since USA government wanted quick results so that they could appoint multi-lingual persons in Arm Forces. In this context, direct method was replaced by audio-lingual method in order to get rapid result (Freeman, 2000).

2.3 Audio-lingual Method (ALM)

This method was developed in the United States of America during 2nd World War. There was a great need of learning foreign languages rapidly for military purposes. GTM did not prepare students for target language, whereas Direct Method and Audio-lingual methods do. The target language is taught with systematic attention to pronunciation and intensive oral drillings (Freeman, 2000). As Hackett (1959) argues:

"It is these basic patterns that constitute the learners tasks. They require drill, drill and more drill, and only enough vocabulary to make such drills possible."

The method was developed in order to prepare second language learners quickly for some military designs. That is why this Audio-lingual method is overwhelmed with the drillings so as to produce rapid results. Later on, even this method could not fulfill the needs of the learners. Partly on account of repeated practice of the same slot, and partly it brings mechanic way of artificiality in language learning.

There are some basic strategies used in this method:

- ❖ Dialog Memorization
- ❖ Backward Build-up (Expansion) Drill
- ❖ Repetition Drill

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- ❖ Chain Drill
- ❖ Single-slot Substitution Drill
- ❖ Multi-slot Substitution Drill
- ❖ Transformational Drill
- ❖ Question-and-answers Drill
- ❖ Use of Minimal Pairs
- ❖ Complete the Dialog
- ❖ Grammar Game

2.4 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Approach

Rapidly developing world well-known language teaching method is the Communicative Approach/Communicative Language Teaching method. Its instrumental aim of teaching is to make the students communicatively competent. We find its origin in 1960s (Freeman, 2000).

Littlewood (1981:1) argues:

"One of the most characteristic features of communicative language teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language."

The desired goal of CLT is communicative competence i.e. the ability to use the linguistic system effectively and appropriately. We find that the meaning keeps paramount place in this method. Since the target of language teaching is to develop what Hymes (1972) referred to as "communicative competence". Dell Hymes is the originator of the phrase who coined this term in order to contrast a communicative view of language and Chomsky's theory of competence. In a number of influential books and papers, Halliday has described a powerful theory of the functions of language, which complements Hymes's views of communicative competence for many writers on CLT (e.g., Brumfit and Johnson 1979). Canale and Swain (1980), they identified four dimensions of communicative competence:

- ❖ Grammatical Competence
- ❖ Sociolinguistic Competence
- ❖ Discourse Competence &
- ❖ Strategic Competence

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Richards et al. (2000) suggest that a communicative approach fore fronted "communicative competence" as "the goal of language teaching". Whereas, in this method we observe that the most of the activities are based on speaking skills-centered and teachers of this method want their students to be communicatively competent. As Brown (2000) "Communicative classrooms are learner-centered and characterized by an emphasis on language use, fluency, authentic language and contexts, and negotiation of meaning".

Communication Language Teaching (CLT) approach is currently in vogue and is actively promoted and taught by many universities and colleges as the preferred methodology, in other countries. As Brown (2000, p. 46) humorously put it, CLT, along with a number of concepts closely allied to it such as "learner-centered," "whole language based," "content-centered," and "cooperative," has become such a bandwagon term that without the endorsement of it "teachers cannot be decent human beings and textbooks cannot sell." In this connection, Kasper (1997, p.345) points out, "in applied linguistics, models of communicative competence serve as goal specifications for L2 teaching and testing."

There are some basic strategies used in this approach:
- ❖ Authentic material
- ❖ Scrambled sentence
- ❖ Language games
- ❖ Picture strip story
- ❖ Role play

3. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY
The data were collected from those ELT teachers who teach either in Public sector or Private sector schools and colleges of District Jacobabad, Sindh region. The area of the study is also limited to the speaking strategies applied by language teachers for the development of communicative competence of ESL learners in ESL classroom.

4. DATA COLLECTION

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The major source of data collection was the English language teachers themselves. Those English language teachers, who teach English to ESL learners at intermediate level at Jacobabad Sindh, were the participants of this research. 20 teachers of private sector and 20 teachers of public sector were interviewed and they filled the questionnaires as well. Total eight higher secondary schools and colleges (four public sectors & four private sectors) were selected for data collection. Five English language teachers were randomly selected from each school and college. Since the purpose of the study is to explore the teaching strategies used by English language teachers in the classroom, the questionnaires were formulated with all the teaching strategies giving them options to select what strategies they apply in their ESL classroom.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULT DISCUSSION

According to survey report, some ESL teachers of private sector apply basic strategies for the development of communicative competence of second language learners. While public sector teachers neither know about the teaching techniques and methods carried out in ESL classroom nor they apply. Though, very few strategies are applied by them yet it needs to be enhanced the quality of strategies applied in ESL class.

5.1 Translation Activity

In this class activity the graph (Appendix-A) shows that there is no association between the use of activities and the type of teachers, X^2(1, N= 40) =7.34, p <.05. Public-sector English language teachers preferred Translation activities in their classrooms, as displayed in the Bar-chart shows that 90 % Public sector teachers are interested in using Translation Activities, while 25 % Private sector teachers are inclined to use the same activities.

5.2 Memorization Activity

In this class activity the graph (Appendix-A) shows that there is no association between the use of activities the type of teachers, X^2(1, N= 40) =4.840, p <.05. Public-sector English language teachers preferred Memorization activities in their classrooms, as displayed in figure

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2. The Bar-chart shows that 72 % Public sector teachers are interested in using Memorization activities, while 28 % Private sector teachers are inclined to use the same activities.

5.3 Conversation Activity

In this class activity the graph (Appendix-A) shows that there is no association between the use of activities and the type of teachers, X^2(1, N= 40) =10.889, p <.05. Private-sector English language teachers preferred Conversation activities in their classrooms, as displayed in figure 3. The Bar-chart shows that 35 % Public sector teachers are inclined in using Conversation activities, while 90 % Private sector teachers are interested in using the same activities.

5.4 Pronunciation Activity

In this class activity the graph (Appendix-A) shows that there is no association between the use of activities and the type of teachers, X^2(1, N= 40) =9.800, p <.05. Private-sector English language teachers preferred Pronunciation activities in their classrooms, as displayed in figure 4. The Bar-chart shows that 15 % Public sector teachers are inclined in using Pronunciation activities, while 85 % Private sector teachers preferred using the same activities. Furthermore, Abbasi (2010) argues in terms of English pronunciation of Sindhi ESL learners:

"Sindhi ESL learners of English can not pronounce English sounds accurately on account of following reasons coupled with some suggestions in order to achieve native like accurate English sounds to be produced by Sindhi ESL learners of English.

a) English and Sindhi vary in their syllable structure, stress pattern and consonant clusters.

b) English language teachers speak Sindhi-accented English.

c) ESL learners made the same phonetic errors as committed by their ELT teachers.

d) There are several orthographic problems which cause difficulties on the production of English sounds by Sindhi ESL learners.

e) ELT teachers do not pay much attention to pronunciation, which is the most important area for achieving high level of proficiency in pronunciation.

f) ESL learners produce inaccurate English sounds on account of problem-posing twenty six English consonantal as well as vocal sounds."

5.5 Transformational Drill

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In this class activity the graph (Appendix-A) shows that there is strong association between the use of activities and the type of teachers, X^2(1, N= 40) =.027, p >.05. Public as well as private-sector English language teachers preferred Transformational drills in their classrooms, as displayed in figure 5. The Bar-chart shows that 95 % Public sector teachers are interested in using Transformational drills, while 90 % Private sector teachers are inclined to use the same activities.

5.6 Grammar Game

In this class activity the graph (Appendix-A) shows there is no association between the uses of activities and the type of teachers, X^2(1, N= 40) =7.364, p <.05. Private-sector English language teachers preferred Grammar game activities in their classrooms, as displayed in figure 6. The Bar- chart shows that 5 % Public sector teachers preferred applying Grammar game activities, while 50 % Private sector teachers are inclined to use the same activities.

5.7 Picture-Strip Story

In this class activity the graph (Appendix-A) shows that there is no association between the use of activities and the type of teachers, X^2(1, N= 40) =9.308, p <.05. Private-sector English language teachers preferred Picture-Strip Story activities in their classrooms, as displayed in figure 7. The Bar-chart shows that 5 % Public sector teachers are interested in using Picture-Strip Story, while 60 % Private sector teachers are inclined to use the same activities.

5.8 Role-Play Activity

In this classroom activity the graph (Appendix-A) shows that there is no association between the use of activities and the type of teachers, X^2(1, N= 40) =9.000, p <.05. Private- sector English language teachers preferred Role-play activities in their classrooms, as displayed in figure 8. The Bar-chart shows that 10 % Public sector teachers are inclined interested in using Role-play activities, while 70 % Private sector teachers are interested to use the same activities.

5.9 Cognates Activity

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In this class activity the graph (Appendix-A) shows that there is strong association between the use of activities and the type of teachers, $X^2(1, N= 40) = .000$, $p > .05$. Public as well as private – sector English language teachers preferred Cognates activities in their classrooms, as displayed in figure 9. The Bar-chart shows that 40 % Public sector teachers are interested in using. Cognates Activities and 40 % Private sector teachers are also inclined to use the same activities.

5.10 Language Game

In this class activity the graph (Appendix-A) shows that there is no association between the use of activities and the type of teachers, $X^2(1, N= 40) =1.600$, $p <.05$. Private-sector English language teachers preferred Language games in their classrooms, as displayed in figure 10. The Bar- chart shows that 15 % Public sector teachers are preferred using Language games, while 35 % Private sector teachers are inclined to use the same activities.

5.11 Public Speaking
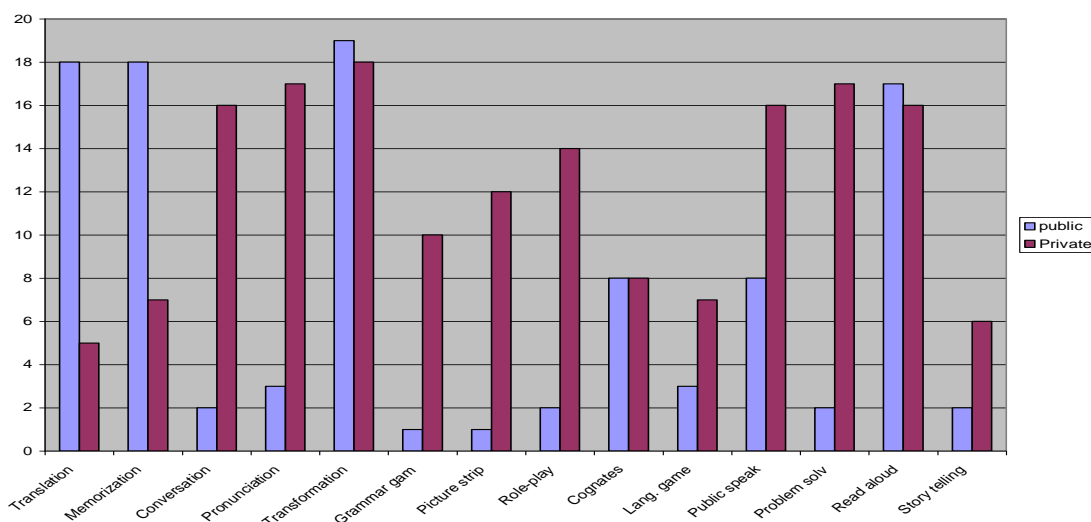
In this class activity the graph (Appendix-A)   shows that there is no association between the use of activities and the type of teachers, $X^2(1, N= 40) =2.667$, $p <.05$. Private-sector English language teachers preferred Public Speaking Activities in their classrooms, as displayed in figure 11. The Bar-chart shows that 40 % Public sector teachers are inclined to using Public Speaking Activities, while 80 % Private sector teachers are inclined to use the same activities.

5.12 Problem-Solving

In this class activity the graph (Appendix-A)   shows that there is no association between   the use of activities and the type of teachers, $X^2(1, N= 40) =11.842$, $p <.05$. Private-sector English language teachers preferred Problem Solving Activities in their classrooms, as displayed in figure 12. The Bar-chart shows that 10 % Public sector teachers are interested in using problem Solving Activities, while 85 % Private sector teachers are inclined to use the same activities.

5.13 Reading-Aloud Activity

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In this class activity the graph (Appendix-A) shows that there is strong association between the use of activities and the type of teacher, X^2 (1, N= 40) =.030, P >.05. Public as well as private-sector English language teachers preferred Reading aloud activity in their classrooms, as displayed in figure 13. The Bar-chart shows that 85 % Public sector teachers are interested in Reading aloud activity, while 80 % Private sector teachers are inclined to use the same activities.

5.14 Story-Telling Activity

In this class activity the graph Appendix-A)   shows that there is no association between the use of activities and the type of teacher, X^2(1, N= 40) =2.000, P <.05. Private- sector English language teachers preferred Story telling Activities in their classrooms, as displayed in Figure 14. The Bar-chart shows that 10% Public sector teachers are interested in using Story-telling activities, while 30 % Private sector teachers are inclined to use the same Activities.

5.15 Bar-chart

Below Bar-chart shows overall results of public sector as well as private sector teachers. We can interpret that this graph displays that public-sector ELT teachers are more inclined to apply old techniques while private sector teachers are more oriented to the application of somewhat modern strategies. It furthermore shows that there is no association between public sector and private sector teachers with special reference to speaking strategies used in ESL classroom.

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Figure1: Bar Chart Showing Overall Result of Teaching Strategies

5.16 A chi-square test

A chi-square test was performed to examine as to what sort of speaking strategies used by both Private and Public sector English Language teachers. The chi-square test gives an idea that there is a bit association between the use of activities and the type of teachers as shown below table 1:

5.17 Reporting Results of Statistical Test

Activities	Public Sector	Private Sector	Chi-square	DF	P-Value
Translation	18	05	7.340	1	.007
Memorization	18	07	4.840	1	.028
Conversation	02	16	10.889	1	.001
Pronunciation	03	17	9.800	1	.002
Transformation	19	18	.027	1	.869
Grammar Game	01	10	7.364	1	.007
Picture-Strip Story	01	12	9.308	1	.002
Role-Play	02	14	9.000	1	.003
Cognates	08	08	.000	1	1.000
Language-Game	03	07	1.600	1	.206
Public-Speaking	08	16	2.667	1	.102
Problem-Solving	02	17	11.842	1	.001

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Reading-Aloud	17	16	.030	1	.862
Story-Telling	02	06	2.000	1	.157

Table 1

6. CONCLUSION

Investigating what sort of teaching strategies applied by both English language teachers of public and private sectors in ESL classroom at intermediate level, was an excellent experience of collecting empirical data from the district Jacobabad Sindh, Pakistan. The survey reported that public sector teachers apply old strategies as compared to private sector teachers. Some government sector teachers did not know the modern techniques used in advanced methods like Direct Method, Audio-Lingual Method and Communicative Approach .They did not have much more know-how about the techniques, methods and approaches. Mostly they depended on grammar translation and loud reading activities in the ESL classroom. While private sector teachers were relatively advanced as compared to public sector teachers. They applied almost all the activities as are used in CLT and Audio-lingual method. In interview with the private sector teachers as was reported that the students perform better in speaking as well as in all other activities. In interview with the public sector teachers, they were questioned about their way of teaching. They could not answer satisfactorily, whereas few private sector teachers described methods in their own way of understanding. The survey shows that the more advanced strategies the teachers apply the more effective results they achieve. There is a great need of teacher-training programs in order to equip them with the latest teaching methods, which ultimately will affect the performance of ESL learners. The ESL teachers should be equipped with the updated methods and the approaches applied in ESL classroom for communicative competence. For this the ELT teachers should regularly participate in ELT workshops and seminars in order to keep themselves updated.

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  ISBN 978-3-639-25281-1.

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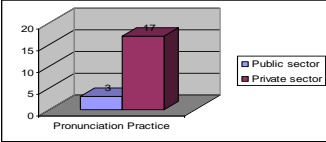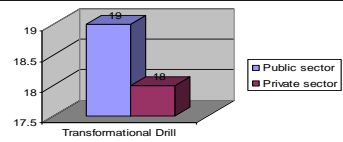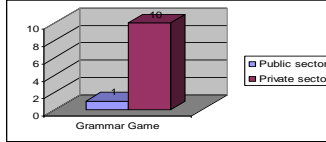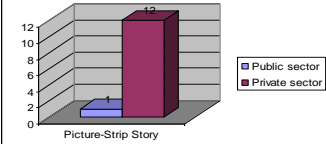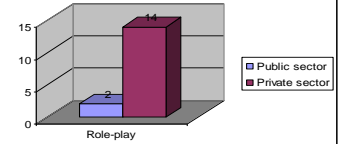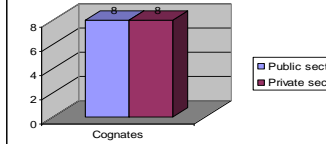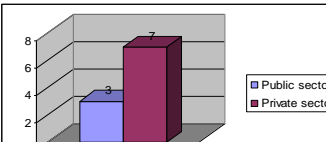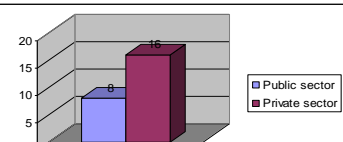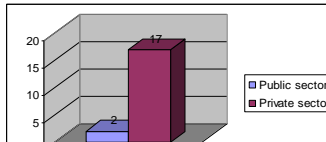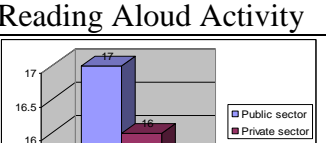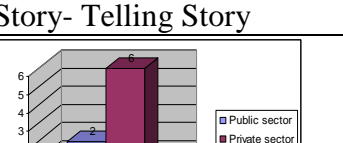
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Following Graphs Show 14 Teaching Strategies Applied by ELT Teachers in ESL Classroom

Appendix-A

Translation Activity	Memorization Activity	Conversation Activity
Figure. 1	Figure. 2	Figure. 3

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Pronunciation Activity	Transformation Drill	Grammar Game
Figure. 4	Figure. 5	Figure. 6
Picture-Strip Story	Role-Play Activity	Cognates Activity
Figure. 7	Figure. 8	Figure. 9
Language Game	Public Speaking	Problem-Solving
Figure. 10	Figure. 11	Figure. 12
Reading Aloud Activity	Story- Telling Story	
Figure. 13	Figure. 14	

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