




## Multifaceted Challenges in English Language Education: Perspectives from Secondary School Teachers and Students in Baluchistan, Iran

**Ali Beikian**  (Corresponding author)

Department of English Language and Literature, Chabahar Maritime University, Iran  
a\_beikian@yahoo.co.uk

**Mohammad-Karim Derakhshideh**

Department of English Language and Literature, Chabahar Maritime University, Iran  
derakhshideh@gmail.com

### ARTICLE INFO:

#### Received date:

2024.10.14

#### Accepted date:

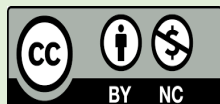
2024.12.03

Print ISSN: 2251-7995

Online ISSN: 2676-6876

### Keywords:

Baluchistan, English language education challenges, secondary school, student perspectives, teacher perspectives.



### Abstract

English language education in Baluchistan, Iran, faces unique challenges due to the region's socio-economic conditions and limited access to resources. This study investigates the specific teaching and learning difficulties within secondary schools in this region. A mixed-methods approach was employed, gathering quantitative data from 80 teachers through a questionnaire and qualitative insights from 57 students via semi-structured interviews. The findings reveal that teachers encounter obstacles such as unclear course objectives, inadequate instructional methods, time constraints, and insufficient administrative support. Students, on the other hand, struggle with curriculum disengagement, a lack of authentic language practice opportunities, low motivation, and emotional barriers like anxiety and fear of judgment. Additionally, the limited integration of technological resources hampers effective language learning. These insights challenge the assumption that resource availability alone can improve language teaching, underscoring the importance of proper resource utilization and teacher training. The study advocates for a localized approach to curriculum design that aligns global language learning goals with Baluchistan's socio-cultural context. Practical recommendations include modernizing teacher training, addressing emotional barriers, and creating a more supportive environment for teachers and students alike.

DOI: 10.22034/elt.2024.64011.2706

**Citation:** Beikian, A. & Derakhshideh, M. K. (2024). Multifaceted Challenges in English Language Education: Perspectives from Secondary School Teachers and Students in Baluchistan, Iran. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, 16(34), 443-462. DOI: 10.22034/elt.2024.64011.2706

## Introduction

In today's globalized world, English proficiency is not only a tool for communication but also an essential requirement for accessing opportunities in education, employment, and intercultural understanding (Gömleksiz & Özkaya, 2012; Akpur, 2017). However, the process of teaching and learning English as a foreign language (EFL) presents significant challenges, particularly in non-English speaking regions such as Baluchistan, Iran. The educational landscape in these regions is marked by systemic limitations, including outdated teaching methods, inadequate resources, and a learning environment that fails to promote effective language acquisition (Bagheri, 2010; Behroozi & Amoozegar, 2014). Despite more than six years of compulsory English instruction in Iranian schools, many students remain unable to communicate effectively in English, suggesting a critical gap between the language education provided and the proficiency required in real-world contexts (Aliakbari, 2005; Khattak et al., 2011).

The region of Baluchistan is an important case study within this context, where both teachers and students face unique challenges that hinder effective teaching and learning of English. From the teachers' perspective, these challenges range from a lack of professional development opportunities to an overemphasis on traditional, grammar-based instruction that does not foster practical language skills (Behroozi & Amoozegar, 2014; Akbari & Tahririan, 2009). For students, the obstacles are equally formidable, including anxiety, a lack of real-world language use, and insufficient motivation (Akbari, 2015). These issues raise critical questions about the effectiveness of current EFL teaching strategies and learning environments in Baluchistan, a region where socioeconomic factors further complicate educational outcomes. The persistent gap between the intended outcomes of English language education and the actual proficiency of students in Baluchistan highlights a critical issue in the region's educational system. Despite years of compulsory English instruction, students remain unable to communicate effectively, pointing to systemic challenges such as outdated teaching methods, inadequate resources, and limited real-world language exposure. These challenges not only hinder student learning but also place considerable strain on teachers, who struggle to meet their students' needs with insufficient support and training. To address this problem, this study explores two key research questions:

- (1) What are the most significant teaching challenges faced by teachers in Baluchistan secondary schools?
- (2) What are the most significant learning challenges faced by students in Baluchistan secondary schools?

The findings of this study are expected to provide valuable insights into the specific obstacles hindering English language acquisition in Baluchistan. By examining both teacher and student perspectives, this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of the systemic issues that undermine effective language learning in this region. The study's results will be instrumental in informing policy recommendations aimed at improving the teaching strategies, curricular content, and resources available to both educators and learners in Baluchistan. Additionally, this research will add to the broader body of knowledge regarding EFL

challenges in under-resourced educational contexts, with potential applications for similar regions in Iran and beyond.

## 1. Review of the Related Literature

The challenges associated with teaching and learning English as a foreign language (EFL) in Iran, especially in underdeveloped regions like Baluchistan, have been widely researched. The existing literature reveals a multitude of factors that contribute to the difficulties faced by both teachers and students, with systemic issues, inadequate pedagogical approaches, and contextual constraints playing significant roles.

### 1.1. Teacher Challenges

The challenges faced by teachers in Baluchistan and other Iranian regions are multifaceted. One of the most prominent issues is the reliance on traditional teaching methods, such as the grammar-translation method, which emphasizes grammatical accuracy at the expense of communicative competence (Ghorbani, 2009; Behroozi & Amoozegar, 2014). This outdated approach continues to dominate classrooms, despite its well-documented limitations in developing students' practical language skills, such as speaking and listening (Babai Shishavan & Melbourne, 2010). Behroozi and Amoozegar (2014) emphasize that many Iranian EFL teachers face a lack of professional development opportunities, which prevents them from adopting more innovative and student-centered teaching methods. Akbari and Tahririan (2009) argue that this results in teachers relying on traditional approaches, often failing to engage students in meaningful language learning activities. Moreover, the absence of sufficient audiovisual aids and interactive resources further hampers the ability of teachers to create engaging and communicative classrooms (Shahzada et al., 2012; Khattak et al., 2011). Aliakbari and Saeedi (2022) offer a detailed examination of the challenges faced by Iranian EFL teachers, categorizing them into seven key areas: textbooks, educational facilities, teachers, educational systems, learners, social problems, and the broader social context. These challenges are compounded by the pressure to conform to national exam requirements, which leads teachers to focus on grammar and vocabulary, further neglecting speaking and listening skills (Jahangard, 2007; Ghorbani, 2009). In a more recent study, Zohrabi and Khalili (2024) identify a significant challenge faced by teachers: the lack of awareness and training on learners' affective factors, such as grit, emotional regulation (ER), and academic engagement (AE), which are critical to students' psychological well-being (PWB). Without sufficient knowledge or resources, educators struggle to address these factors effectively. The researchers highlight the need for manuals and professional development programs to equip teachers with strategies for managing these challenges, including leveraging peer support through social media to address stressors and enhance the learning environment.

### 1.2. Textbook Evaluation

The limitations of the English textbooks used in Iranian schools represent another critical challenge for both teachers and students. These textbooks are primarily designed around grammar-translation principles, offering minimal opportunities for students to engage in communicative tasks (Dahmardeh, 2009). Sadeghi Hasanabadi et al. (2021) evaluated the usefulness of the *Vision 2* textbook, which is used for second-grade students in senior high school. Their findings indicate that the materials in these textbooks do not fully satisfy the

curriculum requirements, with significant gaps in design and content. They suggest that the textbooks need to be adapted to the students' target situation, incorporating a greater balance of supplementary materials, a focus on self-regulated learning, and a more coherent organization of lessons. In a similar vein, Akbari and Tahririan (2009) argue that the current English curriculum does not adequately prepare students for real-world communication. The textbooks emphasize Iranian culture while neglecting the cultures of English-speaking countries, which is essential for fostering intercultural communication (Mozaffarzadeh & Ajideh, 2019). Maghsoudi et al. (2023) examined the *Prospect* series, another set of textbooks used in Iranian schools, and found that these materials prioritize Iranian cultural values while largely ignoring the global and intercultural aspects necessary for comprehensive English education. Although this approach reflects an effort to promote local culture, it overlooks the broader goals of foreign language education, which should include fostering awareness of global issues.

### 1.3. Policy Challenges and Systemic Issues

At a policy level, the development of a coherent Foreign Language Education Policy (FLEP) in Iran remains a challenge. Tajeddin and Chamani (2020) highlight several contradictions within the current policy framework, noting that key stakeholders, such as experienced English language teaching (ELT) experts, are often excluded from the policy-making process. Furthermore, there is a significant gap between what authorities believe society needs in terms of English language education and what students and society require. The lack of alignment between policy objectives and societal needs exacerbates the already significant challenges faced by teachers and students. Abdollahzadeh and Rajaenia (2024) further critique the typical classroom practices in Iranian public high schools, arguing that these environments do not adequately support the kind of language learning experiences necessary for students to meet national and global standards. *Student Challenges*

From the students' perspective, several factors hinder their ability to learn English effectively. Anxiety, frustration, and a lack of motivation are common issues that affect student engagement and success (Akbari, 2015). The emphasis on mastering complex grammar rules, often detached from practical language use, leads students to view English as a subject to be passed rather than a skill to be mastered (Jafari & Kafipour, 2013). Furthermore, many students lack exposure to real-world English usage, which prevents them from practicing the language outside the classroom (Behroozi & Amoozegar, 2014; Ganji et al., 2018). Studies have shown that students in under-resourced regions like Baluchistan often suffer from limited access to technology, further constraining their opportunities for self-directed learning and language practice (Akbari & Tahririan, 2009). In addition, overcrowded classrooms limit the possibility of individual attention from teachers, reducing opportunities for meaningful interaction and feedback (Jafari & Kafipour, 2013). Comparative studies have demonstrated that students in countries like India, where there is greater access to diverse educational resources and more instructional time allocated to English, tend to perform better in language proficiency tests (Mirzaie Rizi et al., 2014). The lack of such resources in Iran, particularly in regions like Baluchistan, continues to be a significant barrier to effective language acquisition. Additionally, Zohrabi and Khalili (2024) highlight a key challenge faced by students: the impact of affective factors such as grit, emotional regulation (ER), and academic engagement

(AE) on their psychological well-being (PWB). Students often struggle with stressors that hinder their academic progress and mental health, while educators may lack the training or resources to address these issues effectively. This gap underscores the need for learner-centered support systems to help students navigate these challenges and improve their overall well-being.

#### **1.4. Global and Comparative Perspectives**

In other regions, similar challenges have been observed. For example, Yavuz and Höl (2017) examined Turkish EFL learners and found that internal factors, such as anxiety and motivation, significantly affect language learning success. Their findings align with those of Mostofi (2018), who revealed that traditional teacher-centered classrooms, coupled with time constraints, hinder students' progress in learning English. Banditvilai and Cullen (2018) also found that students in their study struggled with writing and listening, citing a lack of motivation and insufficient practice as key barriers to success. These international comparisons reinforce the need for Iranian educational authorities to address the underlying systemic issues that continue to affect English language learning outcomes.

Much of the existing literature focuses on general nationwide trends, neglecting the region-specific challenges that may exacerbate these issues in under-resourced areas like Baluchistan. The interplay between cultural, socioeconomic, and institutional factors in shaping both teaching and learning experiences remains underexplored, leaving a critical gap in understanding how these challenges manifest in a region with distinct needs. This study aims to fill that gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of the most significant teaching and learning challenges faced by secondary school teachers and students in Baluchistan, Iran, thereby offering insights into potential solutions tailored to this unique context.

## **2. Methodology**

This study was designed as a mixed-methods investigation, employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches to capture the perspectives of teachers and students regarding the causes of secondary school students' failure to learn English. This dual approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of the issue, as it combines numerical data with in-depth qualitative insights.

### **2.1. Participants**

A cluster sampling method was used in the first phase for selecting teachers, as the same curriculum, syllabus, textbooks, and teaching methods are uniformly followed across all secondary schools in the Baluchistan Zone. Random sampling was employed for selecting students who participated in the qualitative aspect of the study. The participants in this research included 80 secondary school teachers, comprising 35 males and 45 females, aged between 25 and 45 years. In the second phase, a group of 57 secondary school students, aged 16 to 18 and native Baluchi/Persian speakers, was randomly chosen based on their willingness to participate in the qualitative part of the research.

### **2.2. Instruments**

Data collection utilized two distinct instruments. The quantitative instrument was a questionnaire adapted from Alotaibi et al. (2014) to assess teachers' opinions regarding factors

leading to students' failure to learn English. This questionnaire was translated into Persian to ensure accessibility for the participants and underwent linguistic validation to confirm that the translation retained the original meaning and clarity of the items. The questionnaire was rigorously assessed for both validity and reliability. The validity of the questionnaire was ensured through a process of expert review, where experienced educators and researchers evaluated the items to confirm that they effectively measured the intended constructs. The instrument underwent pilot testing with a small sample of teachers to identify any ambiguous items and make necessary adjustments. The reliability of the questionnaire was established using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded a score of 0.87. This high-reliability coefficient indicates strong internal consistency, suggesting that the questionnaire can reliably gather authentic data on the factors affecting students' English learning outcomes. The questionnaire was then converted into Google Docs format and disseminated through social media to reach the participants efficiently.

For the qualitative component, semi-structured interviews were conducted in person to gather insights from teachers regarding the factors contributing to student's failure to learn English. The interview questions were formulated based on the research questions and the literature review, ensuring they addressed the study's objectives. The questions were also validated through expert feedback, with experienced educators reviewing them to ensure clarity and relevance to the research context.

The data collection procedure involved several steps. Initially, the selected 80 secondary school teachers completed the questionnaire, which assessed their perceptions of the factors contributing to students' failure to learn English. Following this, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the students to elicit their views on the causes of English language learning failure, continuing until thematic saturation was reached.

Quantitative data collected via questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS software, employing various statistical analyses such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations to ascertain teachers' opinions about influential factors in students' failure to learn English. The qualitative data gathered from the semi-structured interviews underwent content analysis to identify themes, leading to a comprehensive understanding of the factors affecting English language learning in the targeted population.

Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the research process. Before conducting interviews with students, permission was obtained from both their parents and the Office of General Education. Informed consent was secured from all of the participants, ensuring they were fully aware of the study's aims and their right to withdraw from participation at any time. The interviews were conducted respectfully and confidentially, with the participants' anonymity preserved in reporting findings.

### **3. Results**

The primary aim of this study was to explore the factors contributing to secondary school students' failure to learn English within the Baluchistan Zone. Specifically, this research sought to address two key questions: first, to identify the most significant problems faced by teachers in teaching English in Baluchistan secondary schools; and second, to ascertain the most

pressing challenges experienced by students in learning English in these schools. The following section presents the findings from both the quantitative and qualitative data collected, providing insights into the perceptions of teachers and students regarding the obstacles to effective English language learning in this context.

### 3.1. First Research Question

The results of the first research question will focus on identifying the most significant problems of teaching English in Baluchistan secondary schools from the teachers' perspectives. To achieve this, quantitative data collected from the teachers' questionnaires will be analyzed, emphasizing the key themes and factors that reflect their views on the challenges encountered in English language instruction. This analysis aims to reveal specific obstacles that hinder effective teaching practices within the Baluchistan context, offering valuable insights for addressing the issues prevalent in this educational landscape.

Table 4.1. displays the descriptive statistics for the secondary school teachers who participated in the study, including the mean and standard deviation for Section I of the questionnaire, which encompasses items A1 to A15.

**Table 4.1.** Descriptive Statistics of the Participants in Section I

Item	Number	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	STD.	Items sorted according to the mean
A1	80	39 48.8%	5 6.3%	10 12.5%	17 21.3%	9 11.3%	2.4000	1.53111	6
A2	80	17 21.3%	27 33.8%	8 10%	9 11.3%	19 23.8%	2.8250	1.49916	1
A3	80	44 55%	4 5%	8 10%	11 13.8%	13 16.3%	2.3125	1.61162	8
A4	80	14 17.5%	33 41.3%	10 12.5%	10 12.5%	13 66.3%	2.6875	1.34629	2
A5	80	16 20%	33 41.3%	8 10%	10 12.5%	13 16.3%	2.6375	1.37098	3
A6	80	4 65%	6 7.5%	2 2.5%	11 13.8%	9 11.3%	1.9875	1.50521	11
A7	80	37 46.3%	6 7.5%	11 13.8%	14 17.5%	12 15%	2.4750	1.56686	5
A8	80	42 52.5%	5 6.3%	6 7.5%	13 16.3%	14 17.5%	2.4000	1.64278	6
A9	80	33 41.3%	19 23.8%	9 11.3%	15 18.8%	4 5%	2.2250	1.30214	9
A10	80	31 38.8%	20 25%	7 8.8%	12 15%	10 12.5%	2.3750	1.44411	7
A11	80	43 53.8%	10 12.5%	9 11.3%	14 17.5%	4 5%	2.0750	1.34799	10
A12	80	47 58.8%	13 16.3%	4 5%	9 11.3%	7 8.8%	1.9500	1.37703	12
A13	80	37 46.3%	17 21.3%	3 3.8%	17 21.3%	6 7.5%	2.2250	1.41399	9
A14	80	24 30%	29 36.3%	9 11.3%	9 11.3%	9 11.3%	2.3750	1.32527	7
A15	80	17 21.3%	31 38.8%	7 8.8%	19 23.8%	6 7.5%	2.5750	1.27065	4

The results revealed that approximately 68 percent of the teachers identified unclear course objectives as a significant issue impacting students' ability to learn English. Specifically, a considerable number of the teachers indicated "strongly disagree" or "disagree" on the questionnaire, suggesting their perception that the course objectives are ambiguous for secondary school students. The second highest mean score ( $M = 2.68$ ) was associated with item A4, which highlights that most teachers believe the prerequisites for the courses are also unclear, posing an additional challenge for high school students in learning a foreign language. Furthermore, 61 percent of the teachers expressed concerns regarding the clarity of the course content, identifying this as a third major obstacle in English language acquisition. Teachers' instructional methods were also noted as problematic for students' foreign language learning. Table 4.1. illustrates the mean and standard deviation for each item in Section I of the questionnaire. Notably, item A2, which addressed the clarity of course objectives, received the highest mean score ( $M = 2.82$ ), while item A12, which examined the suitability of the content for the student's age, received the lowest mean score ( $M = 1.98$ ).

Table 4.2. provides the descriptive statistics for the participants, specifically focusing on Section II of the questionnaire, which encompasses items B1 to B9. These items address various aspects of the teaching techniques implemented in the classroom.

**Table 4.2. Descriptive Statistics of the Participants in Section II (B1 to B9)**

Item	Number	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	STD.	Items sorted according to the mean
B1	80	19 23.8%	28 35%	11 13.8%	10 12.5%	12 15%	2.6000	1.37427	1
B2	80	35 43.8%	18 22.5%	4 5%	8 10%	15 18%	2.3750	1.57009	6
B3	80	31 38.8%	18 22.5%	8 10%	19 23.8%	4 5%	2.3375	1.34017	7
B4	80	43 53.8%	4 5%	10 12.5%	13 16.3%	10 12.5%	2.2875	1.54423	8
B5	80	35 43.8%	11 13.8%	4 5%	23 28.8%	7 8.8%	2.4500	1.50021	3
B6	80	36 45%	7 8.8%	6 7.5%	19 23.8%	12 15%	2.5500	1.59826	2
B7	80	42 52%	4 5%	9 11.3%	9 11.3%	16 20%	2.4125	1.65884	5
B8	80	39 48.8%	7 8.8%	8 10%	13 16.3%	13 16.3%	2.4250	1.59727	4
B9	80	33 41.3%	19 23.8%	9 11.3%	15 18.8%	4 5%	2.2750	1.45806	9

According to Table 4.2. item B1 received the highest score (mean = 2.60), indicating that teachers encourage students to learn new vocabulary and use it in English classes. In contrast, item B9, which addresses the syllabus being excessively large and ineffective in enhancing students' English proficiency, received the lowest score (mean = 2.27). These results suggest that teachers perceive a significant lack of emphasis on the four language skills within the high school curriculum, which contributes substantially to students' challenges in learning a foreign language. Furthermore, issues related to syllabus design and instructional strategies were identified as significant barriers. For instance, 43.8% of the teachers strongly disagreed with item B2, implying that the majority do not encourage students to utilize a dictionary during



English classes. Similarly, 38.8% of the teachers strongly disagreed with item B3, indicating that many do not prioritize teaching students the parts of speech in secondary school English lessons.

Table 4.3. presents the descriptive statistics for the participants concerning Section III of the questionnaire, which includes items B10 to B17.

**Table 4.3.** Descriptive Statistics of the Participants in Section I (B10 to B17)

Item	Number	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	STD.	Items sorted according to the mean
B10	80	41 51.3%	6 7.5%	9 11.3%	15 18.8%	19 11.3%	2.3125	1.52277	7
B11	80	32 40%	11 13.8%	10 12.5%	12 15%	15 18.8%	2.5875	1.58069	2
B12	80	33 41.3%	5 6.3%	15 18.8%	11 13.8%	16 20%	2.6500	1.59984	1
B13	80	36 45%	12 15%	8 10%	11 13.8%	13 16.3%	2.4125	1.55648	4
B14	80	35 43.8%	14 17.5%	9 11.3%	8 10%	14 17.5%	2.4000	1.54756	5
B15	80	45 57.5%	5 6.3%	1 1.3%	16 20%	12 15%	2.2875	1.63965	8
B16	80	35 43.8%	6 7.5%	15 18.8%	13 16.3%	11 13.8%	2.4875	1.51777	3
B17	80	39 48.8%	7 8.8%	8 10%	13 16.3%	13 16.3%	2.3750	1.63332	6

Based on the results presented in Table 4.3, item B12 received the highest mean score ( $M = 2.65$ ), indicating that teachers perceive students as exhibiting interest in learning English. Conversely, item B15 recorded the lowest mean score ( $M = 2.28$ ), which pertains to students' propensity to utilize their first language (L1) during discussions and inquiries. Additionally, a substantial proportion of the teachers, specifically 40%, selected "strongly disagree" for item B11, suggesting that they believe students do not maintain a positive attitude toward English as a school subject and fail to recognize its significance for their future. Furthermore, 43.8% of the teachers expressed strong disagreement with item B16, indicating that students lack a solid foundation in English skills following their intermediate education.

Table 4.4. presents the results for the fourth section of the questionnaire, focusing on items B18 to B22.

**Table 4.4.** Descriptive Statistics of the Participants in the Fourth Section (B18 to B22)

Item	Number	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	STD.	Items sorted according to the mean
B18	80	33 41.3%	20 25%	8 10%	14 17.5%	5 6.3%	2.2250	1.32144	2
B19	80	35 43.8%	19 23.8%	8 10%	9 11.3%	9 11.3%	2.2250	1.40501	2
B20	80	45 56.3%	10 12.5%	4 5%	15 18.8%	6 7.5%	2.0875	1.43371	4
B21	80	39 48%	12 15%	9 11.3%	15 18.8%	5 6.3%	2.1875	1.37881	3
B22	80	42 52.5%	4 5%	9 11.3%	9 11.3%	16 20%	2.4125	1.65884	1

According to the results presented in Table 4.4, item B22 received the highest mean score ( $M = 2.41$ ), which pertains to time management and the allotted time for English classes each week. In contrast, item B20 recorded the lowest mean score ( $M = 2.08$ ), addressing the adequacy of time dedicated to practicing speaking skills during class. Notably, a majority of the teachers selected "strongly disagree" (41.3%) for item B18, indicating that they believe there is insufficient time for students to engage in various types of writing activities in class. Similarly, 43.8% of the teachers expressed strong disagreement regarding item B19, suggesting that they perceive a lack of sufficient time for students to practice different forms of reading within the classroom setting.

Table 4.5. presents the descriptive statistics for the participants related to items B23 to B25.

**Table 4.5** Descriptive Statistics of the Participants in the Fifth Section of the Questionnaire (B23 to B25)

Item	Number	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	STD.	Items sorted according to the mean
B23	80	40 50%	8 10%	8 10%	18 22.5%	6 7.5%	2.2750	1.45806	3
B24	80	39 48.8 %	6 7.5%	11 13.8%	14 17.5%	10 12.5%	2.3750	1.52925	2
B25	80	29 36.3%	14 17.5%	11 13.8%	12 15%	14 17.5%	2.6000	1.53111	1

According to Table 4.5, item B25 received the highest mean score ( $M = 2.60$ ), indicating that teachers perceive the class environment and the available teaching aids and equipment positively. In contrast, item B23 recorded the lowest mean score ( $M = 2.27$ ), reflecting concerns regarding the noisy environment of the classroom, which may hinder effective learning.

Table 4.6. presents the descriptive statistics for the participants related to the sixth section of the questionnaire, encompassing items B25 to B31.

**Table 4.6** Descriptive Statistics of the Participants in the Sixth Section of the Questionnaire (B26 to B31)

Item	Number	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	STD.	Items sorted according to the mean
B26	80	30 37.5%	5 6.3%	18 22.5%	13 16.3%	14 17.5%	2.7000	1.32144	1
B27	80	31 38.8%	13 16.3%	11 13.8%	12 15%	13 16.3%	2.5375	1.40501	2
B28	80	34 42.5%	14 17.5%	10 12.5%	10 12.5%	12 15%	2.4000	1.43371	5
B29	80	46 57.5%	5 6.3%	3 3.8%	16 20%	10 12.5%	2.2375	1.37881	6
B30	80	33 41.3%	7 8.8%	16 20%	13 16.3%	11 13.8%	2.5250	1.65884	3
B31	80	39 48.8%	7 8.8%	8 10%	13 16.3%	13 16.3%	2.4250	1.59727	4

According to Table 4.6, item B26 received the highest mean score ( $M = 2.70$ ), indicating that teachers perceive the evaluation methods as unfair. In contrast, item B29 recorded the

lowest mean score ( $M = 2.23$ ), reflecting concerns regarding conflicts between school rules and teachers' professional judgment. Additionally, a significant portion of the teachers, specifically 38.8%, strongly disagreed with item B27, suggesting that, in their view, the school administration does not exhibit favorable behavior towards teachers.

### **3.2. Second Research Question**

To effectively address the second research question regarding the challenges faced by students in learning English in Baluchistan secondary schools, the study analyzed qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews with students. These interviews aimed to elicit students' perspectives on the factors contributing to their difficulties in acquiring English language skills. The students provided insights into their personal experiences, attitudes toward English learning, and the specific barriers they encountered in the educational environment. The following section presents the findings from these interviews, highlighting the key themes that emerged and offering a comprehensive understanding of the students' viewpoints on the obstacles to learning English in this context.

### **3.3. Curriculum in the Schools**

The participants indicated that the curriculum imposed by the Ministry of Education does not adequately address their social and linguistic needs. This top-down approach leaves students feeling disconnected from the learning materials, fostering a sense of obligation rather than engagement. One participant noted, "We have to study things that don't relate to our lives or interests. It feels like we're just following orders." Additionally, the participants expressed concerns that the curriculum does not incorporate contemporary topics or cultural elements, leading to a disinterest in the material. They argued that the lack of flexibility in the curriculum prevents them from exploring subjects that could inspire and motivate them. This lack of student involvement in syllabus selection contributes to negative feelings toward the curriculum, which may ultimately hinder their success in learning English.

### **3.4. Time**

A pervasive issue identified by the participants is the inadequacy of time allocated for practicing English. They expressed a strong desire for more opportunities to engage with the language, whether through reading, listening, speaking, or writing. One participant stated, "I wish we had more time to practice speaking and writing. I often feel rushed, and I can't improve." The participants mentioned that the limited class hours dedicated to English leave them with insufficient time to cover essential topics. They also highlighted the overwhelming number of subjects they are required to study, leaving little room for dedicated English practice. Without sufficient time dedicated to these essential activities, the participants face significant challenges in their language development, further exacerbating their struggles with English.

### **3.5. Motivation**

Motivation emerged as a crucial factor affecting the participants' willingness to learn English. Many reported a lack of intrinsic motivation, often perceiving English as irrelevant to their future educational or career aspirations. One participant commented, "I don't see how English will help me get a good job. It feels pointless to learn." The participants also cited the absence of positive reinforcement or encouragement from teachers, which further diminishes their motivation. They noted that they often do not receive constructive feedback on their progress,

leading to feelings of stagnation. This disconnects leads to a diminished desire to engage with the language, undermining their efforts and reducing the likelihood of success in mastering English.

### 3.6. Method of Teaching

The participants highlighted a reliance on their teachers for guidance and instruction, which can hinder their independent language practice. One noted, "I always wait for the teacher to explain everything. I rarely try to practice on my own." This dependency creates a passive learning environment, where the participants expect their teachers to impart knowledge instead of actively seeking to improve their skills. Furthermore, some indicated that the teaching methods employed were not always effective. A participant mentioned, "Sometimes the lessons feel boring, and I lose interest." The lack of varied teaching strategies, such as group work or interactive activities, contributes to a disengaged classroom atmosphere, which can be detrimental to the learning process. The participants also expressed frustration over their teachers' failure to integrate technology into their lessons. This reliance on traditional methods, combined with the lack of technological integration, can lead to an unengaging and ineffective learning experience.

### 3.7. Interaction

The limited opportunities for interaction with native English speakers were cited as a significant barrier to language fluency. The participants recognized that regular engagement with proficient speakers is vital for developing their speaking and listening skills. One participant expressed, "It's hard to speak well when you don't have anyone to practice with. I feel stuck." Many students also indicated that they often feel shy or intimidated when trying to speak in English, particularly in front of their peers. They also highlighted the lack of English-speaking environments in their daily lives, noting, "We don't hear English being spoken around us, so it's challenging to practice." However, the foreign status of English in Iran restricts their ability to practice the language outside the classroom, which can lead to frustration and feelings of isolation.

### 3.8. Poor English Vocabulary

The participants acknowledged that a robust vocabulary is fundamental to language proficiency. However, they expressed frustration over the unrealistic expectation of mastering an extensive vocabulary, leading to feelings of inadequacy. One stated, "There are so many words in English, and I can't learn them all. It makes me feel like I will never be good at this." They mentioned that vocabulary lessons often lack context or practical application, making it difficult for them to retain new words. Additionally, students expressed concern that they struggle to use the vocabulary they learn in real conversations, noting, "I know the words, but when I try to speak, I forget them." This gap in vocabulary knowledge directly impacts their ability to communicate effectively in English.

### 3.9. Grammar

The participants identified English grammar as another formidable challenge. The complexity of grammatical structures, often differing significantly from Persian, leads to confusion and difficulty in both written and spoken communication. Many feel compelled to memorize grammatical rules, which they find arduous and impractical for real-life application. One

participant shared, “I have to memorize so many rules, but when I try to speak, I forget them all. It’s frustrating.” Students often described grammar as a source of anxiety, stating that they fear making mistakes while speaking or writing. They expressed a desire for more engaging and contextualized grammar instruction, with one participant stating, “If we could learn grammar through stories or dialogues, it would be easier to understand.”

### **3.10. Feeling Shy and Embarrassed**

The emotional aspect of language learning cannot be overlooked. The participants frequently reported feelings of shyness and embarrassment when speaking English in front of others, stemming from a lack of confidence in their abilities. One noted, “I get so nervous when I have to speak English in class. I feel like everyone is judging me.” They indicated that this fear of judgment often prevents them from participating in class discussions or asking questions, further hindering their learning process. The participants also mentioned that a lack of peer support contributes to their feelings of isolation, with one stating, “I wish my friends would practice with me. It’s hard to do this alone.” This emotional barrier can cultivate a negative attitude toward language learning, potentially resulting in further disengagement and failure.

### **3.11. Facilities**

Finally, the lack of technological resources at home was a significant concern for many participants. Limited access to devices such as laptops or smartphones constrains their ability to utilize online resources, including English podcasts and reading materials. One participant mentioned, “I don’t have a computer at home, so I can’t practice online. It really holds me back.” The participants also expressed frustration with the lack of access to Internet services, stating, “Without the Internet, we miss out on so many learning opportunities.” Furthermore, the inadequate technological infrastructure in schools, including the absence of language laboratories, hampers their opportunities for effective practice and learning. Students underscored the importance of integrating technology into their education, noting that “with better access to technology, we could learn so much more.”

## **4. Discussion**

In exploring the educational landscape of Baluchistan secondary schools, this study seeks to illuminate the multifaceted challenges encountered by both teachers and students. The first research question investigates the significant teaching challenges as perceived by teachers themselves, shedding light on the systemic and contextual factors that hinder effective pedagogy in this region. Subsequently, the second research question shifts the focus to the students' perspectives, identifying the key learning challenges they face and how these obstacles impact their educational experiences. By addressing these two critical areas sequentially, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of the educational dynamics in Baluchistan, contributing to the development of targeted interventions that can enhance teaching and learning outcomes in secondary schools.

### **4.1. First Research Question**

The findings regarding the teaching challenges faced by teachers in Baluchistan secondary schools reveal a complex and multi-layered set of issues, some of which align with prior research, while others diverge in significant ways. At the forefront of these challenges is the discovery that 68% of the teachers identified unclear course objectives as a major impediment

to students' English language acquisition. This finding diverges from Akbari and Tahririan (2009), who argued that the core issue stems from the curriculum's inability to prepare students for real-world communication. While both studies recognize curricular deficiencies, the novelty of our findings lies in the realization that teachers themselves struggle to understand the very objectives they are tasked with delivering. This discrepancy points to a more foundational problem—if teachers cannot grasp the aims of their instruction, the likelihood of student success diminishes dramatically. The difference here may stem from the local educational context in Baluchistan, where a lack of training and professional development exacerbates this confusion among educators.

Furthermore, the lack of smooth transition and continuity in course content across grade levels, as found in our study, echoes the work of Alotaibi et al. (2014), who reported similar issues in Kuwaiti schools. This shared experience between vastly different educational systems suggests that discontinuity in curricula may be a more widespread issue, particularly in regions where educational reform is slow or inconsistent. However, our study highlights a key additional factor—the disconnect between course prerequisites and students' background knowledge—identified by teachers as a significant contributor to student failure, a finding that extends the work of Aduwa Ogiegbaen (2006). This disconnect may be attributed to the top-down nature of curriculum design, where local contextual realities are often overlooked.

The teachers in our study also pointed to class size and inadequate access to technology as critical barriers to effective teaching, aligning with research by Suleman et al. (2011), Santosa and Dang (2022), and Tariq and Rashid (2023). The novelty in our findings lies in the deeper connection we identified between these barriers and the demotivation of both students and teachers. The lack of essential teaching aids, as echoed by Yusuk (2020) and Hossain (2024), further compounds these challenges. This points to a broader issue in under-resourced educational systems, where the availability of technology and teaching aids is not just a matter of enhancing instruction but is fundamental to maintaining teacher and student engagement.

Our study also found that teachers' instructional methods posed significant challenges to foreign language learning, aligning with Ghorbani (2009), Behroozi and Amoozegar (2014), and Haufiku et al. (2022), who criticized the prevalence of outdated teaching methods. However, our findings go further by providing specific evidence that a notable proportion of the teachers (43.8%) do not encourage dictionary use, and 38.8% fail to prioritize teaching parts of speech—practices that are widely recommended by language education experts. This deviation from best practices suggests that the issue is not merely about using traditional methods but about a broader disconnect between contemporary pedagogical standards and classroom realities in Baluchistan. The lack of emphasis on the four language skills, as identified in our study, aligns with earlier observations by Jahangard (2007), Ghorbani (2009), and Pirzad and Abadikhah (2022), but our research strengthens the argument for curriculum reform by offering quantifiable evidence that illustrates the extent of this deficiency.

Moreover, our study found that time management challenges, particularly the insufficient time allocated for language activities, echoed the concerns of Jafari and Kafipour (2013). This reinforces the need for a comprehensive reevaluation of class scheduling and curriculum pacing in Baluchistan's schools. Interestingly, while previous studies, such as Shahzada et al. (2012) and Khattak et al. (2011), emphasized the absence of audiovisual aids as a major hurdle, our study found that teachers generally viewed the classroom environment and available teaching

aids positively. This discrepancy may highlight an underexplored issue—the difference between the mere presence of resources and their effective utilization. Our study suggests that in Baluchistan, the problem may not be a lack of resources but a lack of training on how to integrate these tools into effective teaching strategies.

Teacher motivation and administrative support emerged as critical challenges in our study, with the participants expressing feelings of being undervalued and unfairly evaluated by school administrations. While Akbari and Tahririan (2009) and Aliakbari and Saeedi (2022) primarily focused on pedagogical challenges, our findings highlight the systemic nature of these issues, emphasizing how inadequate administrative practices in Baluchistan contribute to teacher demoralization and diminished instructional quality. In comparison, Zohrabi and Khalili (2024) stress the importance of addressing learner-centered factors such as grit, emotional regulation, and academic engagement to enhance students' psychological well-being. However, the lack of teacher motivation and institutional support identified in our study underscores a parallel concern: how can teachers effectively address students' affective needs or implement innovative strategies when they themselves face systemic neglect and insufficient professional support? This juxtaposition reveals that both teacher well-being and student affective factors are interlinked and equally critical to fostering an effective educational environment. Addressing these interconnected challenges requires a holistic approach that includes both administrative reforms and professional development.

#### **4.2. Second Research Question**

Our investigation into the learning challenges faced by students in Baluchistan reveals a similarly complex landscape, where our findings both reinforce and challenge existing literature. One of the most striking results is the disconnect between the imposed curriculum and the social and linguistic needs of students. This echoes the critiques of Dahmardeh (2009) and Sadeghi Hasanabadi et al. (2021), who pointed out the limitations of English textbooks in Iranian schools. However, our findings offer a unique contribution by directly capturing the students' voices, who express frustration not only with the content but also with their exclusion from the syllabus selection process. This lack of student involvement, as highlighted in studies by Kaspul (2020) and Purwati et al. (2023), contributes significantly to students' disengagement and apathy toward their learning. Our research underscores the importance of learner-centered approaches, particularly in contexts like Baluchistan, where students' cultural and linguistic realities are so far removed from the standardized curricula imposed upon them.

The inadequacy of time allocated for English practice, a recurring theme in our study, echoes Jafari and Kafipour's (2013) and Yusuk's (2020) concerns. However, our research goes beyond these earlier studies by providing a more detailed analysis of how time should be strategically redistributed across various language skills, rather than merely increasing class hours. This nuanced understanding emphasizes the need for targeted interventions that address the specific needs of Baluchistan's students, who struggle to balance reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills within the limited time available.

The lack of interaction with native English speakers also emerged as a significant challenge in our study, a finding consistent with Ganji et al. (2018) and Alberth (2023). While this issue has been widely acknowledged in non-English-speaking regions, our research highlights the psychological impact of this lack of exposure. Students in Baluchistan feel "stuck," unable to progress in their speaking skills due to a lack of real-world practice opportunities. This

emotional dimension of language learning has often been overlooked but is critical in shaping student motivation and success. Our findings add a new layer to this understanding by illustrating how these emotional barriers are particularly pronounced in regions where students feel culturally and socially isolated from the language they are learning.

Our study also uncovers a troubling lack of intrinsic motivation among students, who often view English as irrelevant to their future aspirations. While Akbari (2015) highlighted similar motivation issues, our findings challenge the assumption that students universally recognize the importance of English in a globalized world. This lack of motivation may be rooted in the disconnect between the curriculum and students' personal and career goals, further highlighting the need for educational reforms that prioritize relevance and student engagement (Chowdhury et al., 2021). More recently, Zohrabi and Khalili (2024) emphasize the significance of affective factors, such as grit, emotional regulation, and academic engagement, in predicting students' psychological well-being. While our findings focus on the motivational gap and curriculum relevance, Zohrabi and Khalili's study draws attention to the role of emotional and psychological factors, suggesting that a comprehensive approach to reform is needed to enhance both engagement and well-being in education.

The emotional challenges students face, such as feelings of shyness and embarrassment when speaking English, are particularly pronounced in Baluchistan, where students feel culturally and linguistically disconnected from the language. While Akbari (2015) and Tennah Ibtissam and Chaimaac (2023) acknowledged these emotional barriers, our study provides new insights into how these feelings manifest in a region like Baluchistan, where opportunities to practice English are scarce, and the fear of peer judgment is heightened. These findings demand a more holistic approach to language education that addresses not only cognitive strategies but also the affective factors influencing language learning.

Finally, the issue of limited access to technological resources, both at home and in schools, presents a significant challenge for students in Baluchistan. This aligns with Akbari and Tahririan's (2009) observations regarding resource constraints in under-resourced regions. However, our research offers a more granular understanding of how this digital divide directly affects students' English learning outcomes. The absence of language labs and digital resources in Baluchistan's schools, in contrast to the resources available in better-funded institutions (Banditvilai & Cullen, 2018), exacerbates educational inequalities, further widening the gap between rural and urban students.

## **Conclusion**

This study examined the challenges faced by teachers and students in English language education within Baluchistan secondary schools. Using a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data from 80 teachers and qualitative insights from 57 students, we identified a set of interconnected issues that impede effective English language learning in this region. Our findings reveal that teachers struggle with unclear course objectives, inadequate instructional methods, time constraints, and lack of administrative support. These challenges are compounded by a curriculum that fails to engage students, limited opportunities for authentic language practice, and a lack of motivation among learners. The study also highlights emotional barriers faced by students, including anxiety and fear of judgment, as well as the impact of limited access to technological resources. The convergence of these factors creates a



challenging environment for English language education in Baluchistan, indicating a need for reform. Our research corroborates several findings from previous studies while also providing context-specific insights into the challenges faced in this region.

The study contributes to the theoretical understanding of English language education in several ways. It questions the assumption that resource availability alone is sufficient for effective language teaching, highlighting the role of resource utilization and teacher training. The findings emphasize the importance of considering affective factors in language learning theories, particularly in contexts where English is a foreign language with limited real-world application. Our research suggests the need for a holistic approach to curriculum design that integrates local cultural contexts with global language learning objectives. The study also indicates potential limitations of top-down educational policies, suggesting a need for more localized approaches to curriculum development and implementation. Additionally, our findings contribute to the ongoing discussion about the role of technology in language learning, particularly in resource-constrained environments.

The practical implications of this study suggest areas for potential improvement in the approach to English language education in Baluchistan secondary schools. There is a need for teacher training programs that focus on modern, communicative language teaching methods and effective resource utilization. Our findings indicate a need for curriculum reform that involves both teachers and students in the design process, aiming for relevance and engagement. Implementing strategies to create more opportunities for authentic language use, potentially through technology-mediated interactions or community partnerships, could be beneficial. Developing support systems for teachers, including fair evaluation methods and improved administrative support, could create a more conducive teaching environment. Investment in educational technology and infrastructure could help bridge the digital divide and provide students with access to diverse learning resources. Integrating strategies to address emotional barriers to learning and foster a supportive learning environment may be valuable. Finally, reassessing time allocation for English classes, with a focus on balancing different language skills and providing adequate practice opportunities, could enhance the effectiveness of English language education in this region.

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of this study to contextualize the findings appropriately. The sample size, while sufficient for qualitative insights, may limit the generalizability of the quantitative findings to the broader Baluchistan region. The study focused on secondary schools in Baluchistan, and the findings may not apply to other educational levels or regions in Iran. The research relied on self-reported data from teachers and students, which may be subject to bias or social desirability effects. The study did not include classroom observations, which could have provided additional insights into the actual practices and challenges in the classroom setting. It's also worth noting that the research was conducted at a specific point in time and may not capture long-term trends or changes in the educational landscape. These limitations provide context for interpreting the results and suggest areas for future research to address these gaps.

Based on our findings and the acknowledged limitations, several avenues for future research emerge that could enhance our understanding of English language education in Baluchistan

and similar contexts. Longitudinal studies to track the impact of specific interventions on English language learning outcomes in Baluchistan secondary schools could provide insights into the effectiveness of reform efforts over time. Comparative studies examining English language education challenges across different regions in Iran could help identify both common and context-specific issues. Investigations into the effectiveness of technology-mediated language learning interventions in resource-constrained environments like Baluchistan could yield practical solutions to some of the challenges identified in our study. Research exploring community-based language learning initiatives to supplement formal classroom instruction in this region could uncover alternative approaches to creating authentic language learning opportunities. Studies focusing on the development and implementation of culturally relevant English language curricula for Baluchistan students could address the engagement and motivation issues highlighted in our findings. Investigations into strategies for fostering learner autonomy and intrinsic motivation among students in this specific context could provide insights for improving student outcomes. Research on the impact of teacher professional development programs on classroom practices and student outcomes in Baluchistan secondary schools could inform teacher training initiatives. Finally, studies examining the role of school leadership and administrative practices in supporting effective English language education in this region could shed light on systemic factors influencing educational outcomes. By addressing these areas, future research can build upon this study, contributing to the improvement of English language education in Baluchistan and similar contexts.

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