

An Investigation into the Impact of Presentation
Skills Training on Engineering Students'
Development of Professional Communication
Skills: A Case in Pakistani Context.

Sara Khan

Strathclyde Institute of Education

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Declaration

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Signed:

Sara Khan

Date:

18 January 2025

Sara Khan

Full Name

18 January 2025

Date

Abstract

This study investigates the impact of teaching of presentations skills on engineering students in one of the major Pakistani universities. An ethnographic qualitative approach was employed, and data was gathered through classroom observations, semi structured interviews with teachers and focus group discussions with students while the supportive documents were reviewed to contextualise the findings. The findings after the thematic analysis revealed the challenges encountered by students, including a lack of English language proficiency due to diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, insufficient prior knowledge and lack of confidence. Teachers also face several hurdles that includes large class sizes, limited time and resources and students diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Interactive teaching methods, instead of direct instruction (the most employed method), were preferred by participants to increase students' involvement. Findings from the observations highlighted the use of lecture methods and limited allocated time to these courses making it challenging to individually support all students. The study highlights the pressing need for teaching reforms which includes adopting interactive methods, ensuring the provision of structured feedback according to individual needs, and a conducive learning environment. The study recommends that policy makers introduce reforms in curriculum design, provide sufficient resources to teachers and students, ensure frequent access to teacher development programs, and allocate an appropriate amount of time to these courses.

The study argues that by addressing these challenges, engineering students can be well equipped with effective communication and presentation skills to better perform in both academic and professional settings. This study contributes to the understanding of presentation skill development in a culturally diverse and resource constrained environment, and provides valuable insights for students, teachers and policy makers to enhance academic and professional outcomes.

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Dedication

To Taimur Ahmad Khan,

This thesis, and any good I have done or will ever do, is dedicated to my wonderful and incredible brother

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1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

This study investigates the current teaching and learning of presentation and communication skills in English at one of the leading engineering universities in Pakistan. It explores the extent to which teaching is productive, and student learning is successful, and considers which methods are more effective. In addition, the study identifies challenges to the process, and provides recommendations for improvements to teachers, students and policy makers.

This chapter provides a concise background of Pakistan, outlines the problem statement, and defines the scope, objectives, research questions, purpose and significance of the study. As a faculty member involved in teaching at the university, I have often reflected on the pedagogical practices and learning difficulties in the communication and presentation skills taught at the university, which I presumed were due to factors such as teaching methods, students diverse backgrounds and limited resources. This reflection inspired me to study the courses on communication and presentation skills in English.

Presentation skills are considered an essential component of education worldwide. Most of the teaching models are established in western predominantly monolingual contexts. These models do not fit with multilingual realities like Pakistan where students regularly navigate English, Urdu, and regional languages in academic communication. This study therefore addresses an underexplored research gap by examining presentation skills pedagogy within a multilingual Pakistani environment providing new empirical insights to communication and presentation skills pedagogy in multilingual higher education.

This chapter also introduces the education system in Pakistan focusing on its higher education. It describes how it functions, its historical background, the types of institutions (private and public universities) and their affiliated colleges. This chapter also introduces the governing bodies, their mechanisms, assessments, programme learning outcomes (PLOs), course learning outcomes (CLOs), and the syllabus and curriculum outlines used in various departments of the university.

1.2 Linguistic Profile of Pakistan

Language is an essential component of any culture, and a close relationship exists between language and identity, it is not merely the means of communication but acts as an essential element in forming and expressing individual and collective identity (Zenker, 2018). Thus, language is considered the identity of a nation. Pakistan is linguistically diverse with a complex

interplay of languages that reflects its rich cultural and historical heritage. The linguistic landscape of Pakistan includes a combination of national, regional, and minority languages, each playing a significant role in different spheres of society.

Urdu is used as a unifying medium of communication across diverse linguistic groups also dominating in education, media, and formal communication, although it is not the mother tongue of the majority. English is classed as an official language, inherited from British colonial rule. It is used extensively in government, the judiciary, education, and business sectors. It acts as a symbol of prestige, is essential for socio-economic mobility and international communication. Thus, the strong desire to identify with and integrate into English culture underlines the perception of English as a significant marker of identity perceiving it not only as a tool of supremacy but also as a global language of modernisation and opportunity (Ameen & Rehman, 2024).

Various regional and provincial languages are also used; Pakistan's provinces are home to major regional languages with deep cultural roots. Punjabi is predominantly spoken in Punjab, which is the largest province. This is the most widely spoken language in Pakistan but underrepresented in formal domains like education and media. Sindhi is spoken in Sindh province, taught in schools in Sindh, and used in provincial administration. Pashto is predominantly spoken in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and parts of Baluchistan, while Balochi is spoken in Baluchistan with multiple dialects, and Saraiki is used in south Punjab and parts of Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Numerous minority languages are also spoken across Pakistan, such as Hindko, Brauhi, Shina and Balti which further contribute to its linguistic diversity.

In cities, multilingualism is common, where individuals switch between Urdu, English, and their regional language. In rural areas, regional languages dominate with Urdu and frequent mixing of English and Urdu in informal communication is common, particularly among the urban youth. Many educated people speak three languages which includes English, Urdu and their own regional language, with the elite institutes playing a key role in promoting English language (Jamshaid & Naqvi, 2021). From the sociolinguistic trends, the younger generation increasingly prefers English for socio-economic mobility while regional languages continue to thrive in cultural and domestic contexts.

English dominates higher education and is the medium of instruction in universities but because of several cultural, linguistic and social factors there lies a significant gap between national education policies and its implementation which requires comprehensive language support and policy revisions (Haq et al., 2023). Urdu is the language used in most schools, while regional languages are marginalized, thus, the imposition of Urdu has led to tensions among speakers of regional languages seeking greater recognition. Additionally, many minority languages are endangered due to a lack of institutional support and declining usage. In summary, Pakistan's

linguistic profile is a testament to its cultural diversity and its dynamic interplay between national, regional, and minority languages. However, balancing the roles of these languages while preserving linguistic heritage and meeting modern socio-economic demands remains a critical challenge for policymakers and educators.

1.3 Development of Higher Education Post-partition in Pakistan

After independence, India and Pakistan followed a similar British pattern of education, where students enter university after passing higher secondary education, i.e. twelve years of schooling. Once in higher education, they normally undertake a four- or five-year degree program where they specialize in the field of their choice, e.g. engineering, medicine, education or economics. Pakistan had only one university at the time of independence (University of Punjab, Lahore) but this number has now increased to several public and private institutions (Hinduja et al., 2023).

Public universities are funded by the state and enrol large numbers of students based on their respective merit. Several colleges are affiliated to universities and similarly enrol a large number of students. As the affiliated colleges are linked to universities, the total number of enrolled students across both types of institutions is substantial. However, the state cannot provide sufficient funds for all students, thus privatisation needs to be increased along with the introduction of new diverse fields. There is a large proportion of students attending private universities and their affiliated colleges, but efforts are being made to increase this number to accommodate Pakistan's large population. Iqbal et al. (2023) compared Punjab's public and private universities stating that because of lack of govt resources, private institutes involves high tuition fees and a market-based approach.

Public universities mostly offer general education courses. Their budgets are limited, and the state tends to spend more on other sectors such as health and infrastructure rather than on education. Of the funding for higher education, most goes to universities leaving colleges behind. Some universities also generate their own funds by introducing new departments and courses. Moreover, UNESCO recommended that 4-6 percent of the Gross National Product should be allocated to education whereas only 2 percent has been spent on this field in the last two decades which according to the recent survey, has been reduced to 0.8 percent since 2018, in which the share for higher education constitutes only 0.4 percent (Dawn, 2025). Most of the funds go to the salaries of employees meaning that universities receive very little for their development, which compromises the quality of education students receive at university.

Hence, students may not be fully equipped to face the global challenges and present themselves in the international market as competent individuals. On the other hand, private universities not

only pay higher salaries but also provide better research and academic facilities; for example, universities such as GIK and Lums have produced successful researchers and professionals. Between 2003 and 2004, private education sector reforms encouraged the establishment of new private higher education institutions, which increased the speed of privatization. The Higher Education Commission (HEC) was established to ensure quality education in universities, to facilitate the research sector, to monitor, and to publish national and international reviews, ensuring they continue to meet global standards.

1.3.1 Higher Education in Pakistan

The HEC faces many challenges and gaps in the Pakistani HE sectors, such as orthodox methods of teaching, the lack of a future oriented approach, irrational policy making, irrelevant curriculum structure, and an inadequate educational environment (Sain & Sain, 2022). The system can leave students with limited options amongst disciplines, and few students enter education for the future job market. Pakistan has many unemployed graduates (unemployment is one of the major issues in the country) and, since the birth of the country, lower standards in its higher education sector. However, in past two decades Pakistani government have made efforts to bring reforms in higher education by investing in it (Rind & Malin, 2021)

The HEC was established in 2002 and since then has been developing all areas of higher education, including access, quality, governance, and research. The establishment of the HEC represented a major reform; before its birth the condition of higher education in Pakistan was bleak. Thus, initiatives such as scholarships, and the improvement and expansion of existing infrastructure have since been among the important steps taken in the sector (Tanveer et al. 2021). Furthermore, the HEC has also developed a Research Repository which monitors and holds a growing archive of digitized M.Phil. and PhD theses produced in the country. This encourages the international visibility of the research conducted in higher education institutes in Pakistan.

1.3.2 Quality Enhancement Cells

One of the contributing reforms of the HEC is establishing ‘quality enhancement cells’ in universities which are there to ensure that system meets the criteria set and focuses on proper monitoring and development. Moreover, proper accountability and transparency measures were introduced to ensure quality. Additional changes included: the revision of the curriculum, the alignment of degrees, the provision of labs, equipment and scientific material, and the introduction of a tenure track system. Iqbal et al. (2024) explores that the impact of QEC in most of the higher education institutes in Punjab is ‘Barely acceptable’ but still it has been increased due to the management support and teachers and staff development to a certain level. Although considerable progress has been made within Pakistan’s higher education systems new

challenges arise, therefore, to fulfil international educational standards, there is much still to accomplish.

The quality and quantity of higher education is extremely important for developing countries, as it is important to provide access to larger populations such as Pakistan. Noureen et al. (2024) highlights that although the academic quality is enhanced in public institutions after the establishment of QEC but still issues such as lack of resources and bureaucratic resistance persists. Indeed, problems such as poverty, illiteracy, the lack of women's roles, and over population are there and can only be addressed by educating the masses. Unfortunately, enrolment in higher education is low, thus it is important to increase the provision and access to higher education for all sections of society including women. Privatization could support the expansion of higher education but there are still many major gaps, such as financial constraints as not everyone can afford to go to these institutions. Thus, private universities need to be strictly monitored so that they become agents of change and not just money-making machines for society. Students also need to be given incentives to enter certain fields, which currently lack numbers; indeed, the brightest students opt for medicine or engineering.

Quality management and improvement is also an area that requires attention in higher education, as the provision of a high-class education needs to be assured to meet global standards. Collaborative research, innovation, and the use of new technology can contribute to such quality. Thus, the HEC has introduced several other changes including quality assurance, assessment criteria, and teacher training workshops to develop institutions. Moreover, engineering universities in Pakistan are run by a central body, which monitors and provides the agenda that needs to be followed by all courses.

1.3.3 Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC)

The Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) is an official regulatory body that ensures quality assurance and the standardisation of engineering programs across Pakistan. All Pakistani universities have their programs accredited through PEC, which means providing adequately equipped laboratories, qualified teachers and a minimum number of HEC-recognised faculty members. PEC also periodically provides support to these universities so that the quality of research in engineering programs is ensured and steps towards academic excellence are achieved. The basic criterion for accreditation is updated on an annual basis so that local engineering programs follow the same trends and syllabi across the world's best institutions. PEC also provides funding and grants to accredited universities to enhance their capacity through teacher training and research-based grants. Accredited programs are also reviewed periodically so that the quality of education does not fail the minimum benchmark, prospective future students are informed about the quality of institute and their faculty.

PEC provides support for local engineers such as registration, exams for professional engineers, and registration for contractors and operators so they are eligible for government contracts, and are bound to hire local engineers, thereby providing employment opportunities for graduate engineers. PEC designs and delivers continuing professional development courses following which graduates earn CPD points to become professional engineers. The accreditation of engineering programs is one of the primary roles of PEC. Moreover, PEC also assists the government by providing policies on educational activity, supporting industrial growth, safeguarding engineering profession, and forecasting trends so that governments can prioritise their economic plans. The council has an obligation to encourage engineering activities by facilitating financial assistance, making policies to encourage the growth of technical creativity and regulating engineering activities by licensing contractors/operators to conduct engineering activities.

PEC has also been part of government commissions, advisory bodies and committees which interact at different levels with the government. It is the sole representative body for engineering sector, that is authorized through government ordinance. Moreover, it is present throughout Pakistan with its headquarters situated in capital city of Islamabad along with various branches in all provinces. Also, PEC actively supports the government by investigating and implementing remedial measures on issues from industry to education. Since its inception, this council has played a dominating and crucial role and served as a bridging component, speaking for the engineering profession both across the country and globally.

1.4 Research Context

The research context for this doctoral study is a leading engineering university in Pakistan. Although there are many engineering departments in the university, there is only one department involved in delivering courses which help students enhance their communication skills. With the goal of improving students' language abilities, this department offers courses which focus on the speaking and writing abilities of students. Over the past few years this department has developed courses for students on leadership skills, entrepreneurship and management along with core courses in communication skills, technical report writing and presentation skills. The other courses offered by the department involves a foreign language, for example Chinese.

Communication skills in a foreign language are necessary today with the demand for E-commerce and prevalence of the Internet. The global market therefore uses a universal communication language. For example, communication through major commonly used platforms, such as Amazon, Alibaba ODesk, and Fiverr, is primarily conducted in English or

Chinese. Thus, engineering students are expected to become fluent in a foreign language.

Besides this, foreign universities require language test scores like IELTS or TOFEL. GRE or GMAT are used for admission to highly specialised fields; therefore, students are offered short term language courses by departments to prepare for these tests. In addition to preparing them for these tests, the university departments also focus on long term outcomes for their four-year degree programs.

Program educational objectives (PEOs) are broad statements describing the outcomes expected from graduates along with the goals and objectives. This includes the account of the knowledge and skills acquired by students during their degree program. Thus, students need to demonstrate they have achieved the PLOs set by the PEC. The twelve PLOs delivered and required by PEC have been adopted by the university's engineering programmes. These PLOs are achieved by their respective Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) (Appendix A). Some non-engineering courses have been designed to meet the PLO objectives which have only partially been met by the engineering courses. Achievement of the PLOs can be judged through different methods. Furthermore, the department delivering these courses does not only teach but also updates the learning outcomes of its courses and restructures its modules to cater for the needs of the students alongside the goals set by PEC. The PLOs directly assesses the methods used to teach and learn during all courses, also being indirectly examined by the employers and alumni feedback. Indirect evaluations involve surveys at the end of the students' academic course.

Although there are many engineering departments in the university of this study, and only one involved in conducting the functional English courses, the skills covered (communication skills, technical report writing and presentation skills, the development of presentation skills) are essential components across all the university's courses. The department has been pivotal in delivering courses that help students enhance their communication skills with the goal of improving their language ability and presenting in a confident manner. Therefore, the skills courses are designed to enhance students' communication in English by focusing on speaking, pronunciation and syntax structure, and expression. Writing skills are also addressed by offering graded activities at different levels so that engineering graduates can develop an advanced level of writing and speaking. These courses also introduce engineering students to research activities like report writing, presentation, and conducting research. Teachers provide feedback which helps students develop their professional identities and prepare for corporate culture. Moreover, students are also expected to participate in team activities, so they have experience of teamwork, leadership, social responsibilities and how to disseminate responsibilities to other fellow members.

1.5 Problem Statement

Higher education is vital to the economic and technological growth of Pakistan, which includes various fields of which engineering is one of the main ones as it produces personnel who are responsible for driving the country's industrial, technological and infrastructural developments. There are several engineering universities across Pakistan which aim to provide students with innovative problem-solving skills and technical expertise. However, although technical competence is prioritised, communication and presentation skills are also important as individuals need to present their work on global platforms.

Furthermore, in the profession of engineering, engineers often need to collaborate with multidisciplinary groups, interact with clients, and present their projects which require effective presentation skills. They require competence to convey their ideas in a clear and effective manner, to document technical findings and convince stakeholders. Thus, the need for strong communication skills is as crucial as technical knowledge. Graduates who lack these skills may struggle when they enter the market and face professional environments, particularly in leadership roles or global contexts where collaboration is required. Nevertheless, the university's curriculum focuses primarily on their engineering courses and there is limited stress on communication skills development. However, students are expected to deliver presentations in English which they may find challenging as they come from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds across the country and may be used to communicating in regional languages and/or in Urdu but not in English.

Moreover, as students need to conduct presentations in English, which is not their first language, anxiety can affect their presentations, therefore their language ideologies also need to be addressed. There are several language and cultural ideologies represented in each ethnic group in Pakistan. Language ideologies in Pakistan vary as people are more emotionally connected to their respective regional languages and have strong and cultural inclinations towards them. They have more limited use of the national language (Urdu) while English is restricted to academia, bureaucracy, military and private educational institutes. Students at the university of this study come from various regional and linguistic backgrounds across the country which means they have strong bonds with their regional language.

This study was conceived with a practical aim to help relevant stakeholders improve the provision of their courses by developing more effective teaching and learning processes across their skills courses. This study aims to explore potential recommendations for teaching and learning methods to improve students' level of English proficiency. This is crucial as students graduating from universities enter the employment market in competition with students from private universities with higher rankings from the global market. Students at this university are disadvantaged as can struggle to perform at interview and in work due to their language

competence, which means they require greater confidence and language proficiency. To enable the development and competitiveness of students from this university, the study aims to identify effective strategies to enable improvements.

Policy makers such as HEC expect teaching practices and goals to be achieved by staff who are expected to undertake professional development. Nevertheless, teachers do not play any role in the reforms and guidelines generated by HEC and often lack access to professional development opportunities, which means they may not be sufficiently skilled to meet these requirements. As the teachers' and students' perceptions are studied, the aspect of professional development and the extent to which it is practiced in the university of this study will also be considered.

Therefore, the background to and increasing need for language proficiency motivates the researcher to undertake this study so that the gaps can be identified and improvements in this area can be recommended. Existing literature on presentation and communication skills instruction predominantly focuses on English-dominant and/or monolingual academic contexts. There are very limited studies exploring how multilingual students prepare, deliver, and experience academic presentations, or how this linguistic diversity shapes their confidence, rhetorical choices, and learning processes. This creates a clear research gap, particularly in South Asian contexts like Pakistan where multilingualism is a defining feature of higher education. Addressing this gap is critical for developing contextually appropriate and inclusive approaches to instruction of communication and presentation skills.

1.5.1 Engineering Education and Presentation Skills in Pakistan

In Pakistan, Engineering universities have significance in their aim to equip students for the demands of a competitive global job market. Along with technical knowledge, developing their competence to effectively communicate is a critical factor for success. Soomro et al. (2019) describes presentation skills as the most problematic area for the engineering students in Pakistan, where over 70 percent of the undergraduate students found it difficult to orally present their technical content. Kakepoto et al. (2022) in their pilot project on communication skills for novice engineers explains that lack of soft skills and proper training produces less confident and less equipped graduates. The development of presentation skills is crucial to bridge the gap between the technical expertise and professional interactions in various educational and professional settings. The courses examined in this study aim to enable students to present their ideas confidently, collaborate in teams and excel in interviews or working environments.

However, this development depends on the teaching of these courses and how successfully teachers deliver the content, provide a conducive learning environment and engage students in practical applications. The curriculum often provides content on organising a presentation, using audio visual aids and delivery techniques, but the teaching method employed, and quality of teaching significantly influences students' outcomes. Also, the number of students per class, the

time allocated, the availability of resources and students' motivation play important roles in the effectiveness of these courses. Additionally, students come from a range of different backgrounds, and for some cultural and linguistic barriers may cause apprehension in delivering presentations in English. Kakepoto et al. (2020) highlights factors such as reduced class participation and lack of professional readiness linking it with lack of communication and presentation skills among engineering students in Pakistan. Considering these influences and the lack of studies in this area, this research was designed to examine the extent to which the presentation skills teaching and learning are successful, exploring the challenges in the process and how they could be mitigated.

1.5.2 Global Patterns in Teaching Presentation Skills

The need to integrate soft skills into technical education is rapidly increasing worldwide. Sivasankar et al. (2025) emphasise the need of effective public speaking skills for engineering students to be successful in multinational companies. Globally, universities have also recognised their importance and incorporate training within their engineering programs, such as mandatory language and communication foundation courses and experiential learning activities. These are becoming common in leading institutions as they engage with and meet the needs of students from a variety of countries with differing cultures and languages. In contrast, Pakistani engineering universities have not been particularly active in recognising the importance of these global trends, which further highlights a gap that this study seeks to address.

Universities worldwide have also adopted innovative strategies for teaching presentation skills such as the use of simulation exercises, peer feedback, and the incorporation of digital tools to engage students in active learning (Joseph & Joy, 2020, Lim et al., 2022). These methods emphasise practice sessions, interactive practice and constructive feedback to build students confidence and competence. Thus, engineering universities in Pakistan also need to adopt these approaches and assess where their current practices align with global standards; they also need to address the specific challenges faced by students in Pakistan to meet their diverse needs.

Also, where these global models have shaped communication pedagogy globally, they mainly adopt only English communication and linear rhetorical conventions. When they are applied in multilingual contexts such as Pakistan, they often overlook how students draw on multiple languages during preparation and delivery. This gap between global expectations and local linguistic realities forms a core rationale for this study, which seeks to explore how multilingual engineering students navigate presentation tasks within their socio-linguistic context.

1.6 Significance of the Study

An exploration of how teachers are teaching presentation skills and how students are learning them will help provide valuable insights to policy makers, improve teaching, and align the curriculum with students' needs. This study seeks to assess the perceptions regarding effectiveness of presentation skills teaching, to identify gaps in current teaching practices and suggest actionable measures to enhance the teaching and learning of presentation skills. It aims to enable the professional readiness of students when they graduate ensuring they can meet the demands of the market. This provides a platform for a detailed assessment of how well teachers are developing the presentation skills of their students and the need for continuous improvement in this field.

This study examines the extent to which teachers are successful in equipping their students with presentation skills in English at a Pakistani engineering university; this is significant for the evolving job market and for global and local professional landscapes. As engineering is a field that requires the ability to communicate complex ideas alongside technical expertise, engineers are required to present their projects and explain their technical designs to a diverse audience. Some Pakistani students elect to go to different western countries to explore job market and often become part of multinational corporations. Presentation skills are critical in these situations as they enable the clear articulation of ideas which builds credibility in influencing the decision-making process of stakeholders from different countries and cultures.

The study examines the teaching of presentation skills to engineers and highlights its significance as part of the engineering curriculum and in preparing students for professional success. An assessment of how well these courses are taught by gaining insights from teachers and students will offer insights into the challenges faced by students from diverse backgrounds and that teachers currently face in meeting students' needs. Furthermore, higher education curriculum designers and policy makers can benefit from this study by identifying strengths and weakness of current teaching methods. This study provides evidence-based recommendations to bring improvements to the design and delivery of these courses, considering how they cater to students' cultural and linguistic diversity. By focusing on the local context and students' diverse needs and experiences, the research aims to ensure that the findings are practically applicable and relevant thus distinguishing it from more generic studies on the development of presentation skills.

Most existing literature considers Western contexts, while this study provides valuable insights specific to Pakistani engineering education. It aims to offer in-depth of the challenges, hurdles and outcomes in this context. In addition, this study intends to identify the challenges faced by teachers with a view to empowering them with knowledge of the tools and training they need to enhance their teaching practice. Thus, it is hoped this study will offer a valuable contribution to

teaching and policymaking in higher education. By assessing existing presentation and communication skills teaching and learning the study aims to provide evidence-based solutions to current challenges and meaningful insights to existing gaps. These insights can provide feedback to teachers on ways to incorporate more effective methods and inform policy makers and university administration on the wider professional and institutional measures needed.

This research will focus on qualitative methods of study gathering in-depth knowledge of the issues and gaps in language development and educational settings. This research will inform teachers in Pakistan HE for developing their practice, students preparing for their presentations and policy makers on specific current language teaching practices and the challenges faced by the university. The study also aims to offer detailed observation of and data on students' perceptions based on their social, ethnic, cultural, educational and socio-economic backgrounds.

Therefore, this research intends to provide educational and language policy makers with insight to plan and develop language programs that are more suitable and appropriate for students and teachers. At the same time this study will provide a realistic understanding of the language learning requirements for curriculum developers and designers. The study aims to highlight new ideas and improvements from a teaching perspective taking into consideration teachers' beliefs regarding students and classroom settings and comparing them with their practice. In doing so, it will address the reasons for any gaps between their expectations and outcomes with the aim of benefiting all stakeholders including teachers, learners, and policy makers.

The study's significance remains in its empirical focus on multilingual higher education, an area where research on presentation skills instruction stays restricted. By investigating how engineering students manage linguistic choices, content development, and presentation anxiety, the study offers insights that challenge monolingual assumptions dominating global communication pedagogy. The findings have practical implications for teachers, curriculum designers, and policy makers, specifically in developing communication and presentation skills courses that recognises and leverages students' multilingual resources. This study therefore contributes to the ongoing efforts to align communication skills teaching with local needs and multilingual realities.

1.6.1 Originality & Contribution of this Study

This study contributes original knowledge at three levels. First, it offers a theoretical contribution by combining CoP and experiential learning theory to explain the ways multilingual students develop presentation skills by reflection, participation and interaction.

Secondly, it provides a pedagogical contribution by documenting the teaching strategies such as structured individual feedback, increasing time for these courses, and incorporating interactive methods which remain under-recognised in conventional presentation pedagogy in this

university. Thirdly, it offers a contextual contribution by presenting empirical evidence from a multilingual engineering context in Pakistan, thereby enriching global debates on adapting teaching of communication to linguistically diverse higher education contexts.

This study makes several original contributions to knowledge in the field of communication and presentation skills pedagogy within multilingual higher education contexts. Although presentation skills are widely acknowledged as crucial for academic and professional success of students, much of the existing studies has been carried out in Western, English-dominant educational contexts. These contexts vary significantly from multilingual settings such as Pakistani universities, where students regularly navigate several linguistic systems, including English, Urdu, and regional languages. By examining presentation skills development within a multilingual engineering university, this study addresses a significant gap in existing literature and provides contextually grounded insights into how linguistic diversity shapes communication learning.

At the theoretical level, this study contributes by combination of Wenger's Communities of Practice and Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory to explain how presentation skills develop through participation, interaction, experience, and reflection. While these frameworks have been widely used in educational research, their application to multilingual presentation skills development in engineering education remains limited. This study shows how students develop presentation competence through socially situated learning processes, experiential practice, and interaction within academic communities. Supporting perspectives from communication apprehension and interaction-based learning further enhance understanding of the psychological and interactional dimensions influencing students' communication experiences.

At the empirical level, this study contributes by providing ethnographic evidence from a multilingual engineering university context in Pakistan. Through classroom observations, staff interviews, student focus groups, and document analysis, the study captures the lived experiences of students and teachers engaged in presentation skills instruction. This provides a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of current pedagogical practices, student challenges, and institutional constraints. Such context-specific empirical insights are largely absent in existing literature, which often assumes monolingual learning environments.

At the pedagogical and practical level, this study contributes by identifying effective teaching practices, challenges, and areas for improvement in communication skills instruction. The findings highlight the importance of interactive teaching methods, feedback mechanisms, student engagement, and supportive learning environments in developing presentation skills. These insights have direct implications for curriculum design, teacher development, and institutional policies aimed at improving graduate communication competence. Finally, this study makes a contextual contribution by foregrounding multilingualism as a central factor

guiding development of presentation skills. By positioning teaching of presentation within the linguistic realities of Pakistani higher education, this research challenges monolingual assumptions that dominate global communication pedagogy. The study contributes to broader academic discussions on multilingual education and provides evidence-based recommendations for development of more inclusive and contextually relevant communication skills pedagogy in higher education context.

1.7 Research Questions

The following questions were developed as a direct response to the identified problem:

1. How can the teaching of presentational skills in English be improved to meet the academic and professional needs of engineering students in a Pakistani university?
2. According to staff and students, what factors contribute to students' strengths and weaknesses concerning English presentational skills?
3. Which teaching strategies are currently used by English language teachers and to what extent are they perceived to be effective by staff and students?
4. What improvements to the current provision of presentation skills development are sought by staff and students?

1.8 Research Objectives

The objectives address the challenges students and teachers face in existing teaching and learning practices and recommends actionable measures to enhance the outcomes. Thus, the objectives are as follows:

1. To understand students' and teachers' perceptions regarding the development of presentation skills.
2. To propose recommendations to improve presentation skills training.
3. To assess the teaching methods and practices used by instructors.
4. To identify the challenges in teaching and learning presentation skills.
5. To evaluate the impact of presentation skills training on students' academic and professional development.

Achieving the research objectives will provide a thorough assessment of the extent to which such teaching is successful in the university. The research subsequently aims to bridge existing gaps in pedagogical approaches by addressing these objectives.

1.9 Scope and Delimitations

The scope and delimitations provide boundaries within which the study will be conducted. Defining the limits of the study ensures clarity about what the research aims to find and what it does not include. This study is conducted at one university in Pakistan limiting the generalisability of the findings to other educational institutions. However, it may offer rich, context-specific insights that are applicable to other multilingual environments or similar educational contexts. Focusing on one university allows a comprehensive detailed investigation of the specific teaching practices & challenges teachers and students encounter within the selected university. Although these courses include a wide range of competencies, e.g report writing, functional English, this study focuses on presentation skills specifically. Other elements are beyond the scope of this study. Moreover, the research involves one specific semester thereby limiting the outcomes, teaching practices and perceptions of participants during this period. Limiting the research to one university, including the specific courses of study, will provide valuable insights from which to address the practical constraints faced e.g time, accessibility and resources.

The study does not include postgraduate students or any other form of professional skill development. This delimitation is intentional as undergraduate courses form the foundation phase in developing all technical and professional skills which are extremely important for students' academic and future work environments.

Specific aspects under examination include the curriculum structure and content related to presentation skills, instructional strategies and tools used by teachers, and opportunities for practical application and feedback. The research focuses on undergraduate engineering students enrolled in English communication courses which are a critical group, as they are at a stage where developing presentation skills is essential for their academic progression and future professional success. Therefore, the study specifically evaluates the success of teachers in imparting presentation skills by analysing their teaching methods, students' experiences, confidence and skill development, and the alignment of teaching practice with the curriculum objectives.

1.10 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is structured in the following manner to ensure a comprehensive and rational exploration of the research topic. The chapters are as follows:

1. Introduction
 - Delineates the linguistic profile of Pakistan, its historical background, the problem statement, background of the study, aims and objectives and research

- questions.
 - Discusses background including its scope & delimitations.
 - Establishes foundation for the research by introducing the essential elements including their relevance.
2. Literature Review
 - Reviews existing studies, theories, and frameworks related to communication and presentation skills in engineering education.
 - Identifies gaps in the current body of knowledge and highlights the significance of integrating soft skills training in the engineering curriculum.
 3. Research Methodology
 - Presents the research framework, data gathering procedures and analytical approaches.
 - Explains the sampling strategy, selection of engineering universities, and limitations of the methodology.
 4. Data Analysis
 - Highlights trends, patterns, and insights related to the effectiveness of communication and presentation skills courses.
 - Provides an overview of the analysis process and its connection to the research objectives.
 - Explains the techniques or tools used (e.g., statistical tests, thematic analysis).
 5. Findings and Discussion
 - Discusses the findings in the context of study's objectives and existing literature.
 - Presents outcomes of the surveys, interviews, and observations.
 - Analyses the implications of the findings for engineering education and the professional development of students.
 6. Conclusion and Recommendations
 - Outlines the main outcomes of the research and their implications for curriculum development in engineering universities.
 - Provides actionable recommendations for enhancing communication and presentation skills training.
 - Suggests directions for future research in this area.

This structure ensures a logical flow of information, guiding the reader from the broader context of the study to its specific findings and practical implications.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Chapter Introduction

This thesis seeks to explore the effectiveness of current teaching practices in the context of presentation skill development at one of the major engineering universities in Pakistan. For this reason, this literature review seeks to first clarify the main factors associated with teaching of presentation skills in English. This chapter presents the key theoretical frameworks that underpin the study, along with a critical review of related literature to situate the research within existing academic discourse. Ultimately, this literature review investigates existing research on presentation skill development in Pakistan as well as globally, identifying gaps in relation to the presentation skill development of engineering students in Pakistan. I will explore different definitions in the literature that inspired and influenced this research. Moreover, this literature review highlights work already undertaken concerning all the cardinal aspects of this research and will refer to findings which explain the key issues and challenges faced.

2.2 Theoretical Foundations and Conceptual Framework

2.2.1 Wenger's Communities of Practice (CoP)

This doctorate is primarily based on Wenger's (1998) Communities of Practice (CoP) framework, which posits that learning is a social process that occurs within communities where members of the community share practice, engage mutually, and build a collective repertoire. In the context of this study, the classroom is taken as a dynamic community where members such as teachers and students contribute to the development of presentation skills by active participation, group presentation, peer feedback, and shared experiences.

Communities of Practice (CoP) by Wenger (1998) has been authenticated in both teaching and learning contexts. Slagoski (2019) underscored the ways English teachers use this framework involving online platforms such as Twitter, in order to develop professional knowledge by shared engagement and repertoire. Similarly, Hooper (2020) demonstrates that learner-led CoPs in university self-access centers foster identity negotiation and confidence via peer support and participatory scaffolding. Minematsu (2022) illustrated Wenger's (1998) CoP theory in a Japanese EFL classroom, where structured oral presentation activities are supported by peer feedback and reflection, creating a shared repertoire of communicative practices. Students progressed from peripheral observers to active participants in a learning community oriented around presentation competence, reinforcing the social and participatory assumptions central to Wenger's (1998) model.

Nagao (2019) illustrated that an EFL classroom can genuinely function as a Community of Practice. considering student participation, shared aims around their oral communication, and development of a communal repertoire of presentation strategies. The findings of her study advocate that Wenger's (1998) original definition, which is usually applied to informal or professional settings, should be extended to include pedagogical communities, predominantly in structured language classrooms. This closely relates to the context of my study, where Pakistani engineering students are involved in cycles of presentation, reflection, and peer feedback. By employing research instruments such as classroom observation, student and teachers' interviews, I can map the emergence of communal presentation norms and participation trajectories. Thus, by positioning my study within Nagao's findings, I support the classroom as CoP assumption while contributing new insights into an engineering university context. These studies not only reiterate Wenger's (1998) assertion that learning is socially situated, but also emphasise the value of informal, participatory environments which provides an insight that is relevant to exploring how Pakistani engineering students develop their presentation skills through community-based learning.

2.2.2 Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory

Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (1984) aligns with Wenger's (1998) framework and fits with the study's main discoveries by emphasising the significance of hands-on activities and direct experiences. Kolb (1984) described a cyclical model encompassing concrete experience, reflective observations, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. When utilised in the context of presentation skills development, an experiential learning experience allows students to improve their skills by practicing their presentations, receiving feedback, and engaging in iterative learning cycles (Kolb, 1984).

Kolb's (1984) framework supports the notion of practice-based learning, and it has been widely applicable in higher education context especially in the situation that involves reflection and active participation. For example, Pamungkas et al. (2019) in their review of Kolb's (1984) framework in the field of mechanical engineering underlined its significance in skill-based disciplines, arguing that ELT encourages learners to connect theoretical understanding with real-world application. Similarly, Baahmad (2025) applied Kolb's (1984) framework to enhance leadership, teamwork and communication and proves that experiential learning activities enhanced confidence and skills through practice-based learning. Wijnen-Meijer et al. (2022) also relate Kolb's (1984) model to skill-based disciplines, focusing on clinical education that how relate world experiences, reflection and simulations enables students to bridge the gap between their knowledge and practical application. Kho and Ting (2023) in their toastmaster program that was grounded in Kolb's (1984) ELT, demonstrated the relevance of experiential

learning model with speaking abilities emphasising that communicative competence can be enhanced through practice and reflection.

The above-mentioned studies underscore the relevance of Kolb's (1984) framework with this study's objectives, highlighting reflection and practice-based learning through repeated presentations in class that Kolb's (1984) ELT aligns closely with the goals of this study, which emphasises learning-by-doing and reflection through repeated classroom presentations. Other supporting theories align with this study including McCroskey's (1977) 'communication apprehension' and Long's (1996) 'interaction', which highlight the challenges students face and the significance of interactive methods.

2.2.3 McCroskey's Communication Apprehension

McCroskey's (1977) theory illuminates affective challenges, which in the context of presentation and skills development would include stage fright, a fear of negative evaluation and low levels of confidence. These challenges can hinder students' willingness to speak and participate or perform oral tasks, highlighting the need for supportive environments and anxiety reducing teaching strategies.

This is crucial in EFL contexts where it is expected from students to deliver oral presentations. Recent research by Rahman and Pinky (2024) reports that students experienced medium to high level of CA, in a university in Bangladesh, which were significantly decreased by employing structured, presentation-based instruction. Similarly, Siska et al. (2023) explored that group work and interactive learning activities significantly lowered the level of communication apprehension among EFL students, with 90% reporting reduced anxiety and increased participation highlighting the efficacy of peer-supported practices in developing oral competence. In accordance with these findings, my study includes practice of presentation, reflection, and feedback to support the development of communicative confidence among engineering students, showing how these practices can reduce dispositional barriers. In another study, Nasir et al. (2023) demonstrates communication apprehension and English anxiety among Thai-speaking minority students in Malaysian national schools, finding that small-group speaking tasks and peer feedback significantly lowered their anxiety and enhanced their willingness to participate in tasks. This supports the view that structured, collaborative curriculum interventions can effectively address CA in multilingual classroom settings.

2.2.4 Long's Interaction Hypothesis

Long's interaction hypothesis (1996) advocated that the development of language is most effective when the learners engage in meaningful dialogue and receive timely feedback, which also emphasises the value of interactive learning. This model supports the inclusion of tasks that encourage clarification, confirmation, and feedback exchanges. Ortega-Auquilla (2019)

highlights that significant improvement was witnessed in the students who were involved in activities where they had a chance to interact during the communicative practices. Furthermore, classroom interaction can be enhanced by incorporating referential questions with teachers (Al-Zahrani & Al-Bargi, 2023). In the context of my study, student-led presentations and peer feedback activities are incorporated in order to create opportunities for meaningful interaction, consistent with Long's (1996) principles. These interactive experiences not only provide comprehensible input and output opportunities but also promote metalinguistic awareness and engagement with real audiences.

Collectively, these theoretical perspectives not only illuminate the complex interplay of social, affective, and interactive factors in the development of presentation skills but also provide a comprehensive framework to evaluate and enhance instructional practices in engineering education. By situating the study within a framework that integrates these perspectives, the research aims to gain deeper insight of the challenges and potential solutions in teaching oral communication skills in a multilingual, culturally diverse academic environment.

2.2.5 Integrating the Theoretical Framework

Wenger's (1998) Communities of Practice (CoP) and Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) were adopted as this study's primary theoretical lenses to understand how presentation skills develop in engineering classrooms in a multilingual context. These two constructs offer complementary perspectives that together explain both the social and experiential dimensions of learning. Supporting theories from McCroskey's (1984) Communication Apprehension and Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis further enhance the framework by addressing the affective and interactional dimensions of communication.

Communities of Practice serves as the key theoretical lens, where the engineering classroom is positioned as a socially situated learning environment where presentation skills of students are developed through active participation, interaction and engagement with share academic practices. From this lens, learning is not perceived as only acquiring the skills but as a procedure of becoming an active and competent participant in an academic community. The presentation practice sessions of students are developed by peer interaction, feedback mechanism, classroom norms and more participation opportunities. This perspective is particularly interlinked with multilingual aspects where identity, language competence and participation are intertwined.

CoP is complemented by Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory by offering a process-oriented explanation where presentation skills are developed among students through cycles of experience, reflection, conceptualization and experimentation.

Presentation activities e.g., preparing for presentations, delivering them in class, receiving feedback, and refining subsequent performances align closely with Kolb's experiential learning cycle. Where CoP explains the social context in which learning occurs, ELT explains the cognitive and reflective processes through which students improve their presentation competence over time. These frameworks combined, allow this study to explore both the social participation and individual learning processes involved in development of presentation skills.

Additionally, Communication Apprehension by McCroskey offers an important psychological perspective to understand variations in students' confidence, anxiety, and desire to speak in English. Communication apprehension is exceptionally relevant in multilingual contexts, where students tend to experience linguistic insecurity or fear of being judged/negative evaluation. This lens helps explain observed differences in student participation and presentation performance.

The framework is further supported by Long's Interaction Hypothesis stressing the significance of interaction, feedback, and negotiation of meaning in language development. This whole process of skill development includes interaction between students, teachers and peers. Feedback also plays a critical role in bringing improvement in both linguistic competence and effectiveness of communication. This construct reinforces the significance of interactive teaching environments for development of communication skills.

By combining these theoretical perspectives, this study investigates development of presentation skills at several interconnected levels. The social and participatory nature of learning is explained by CoP, Experiential Learning Theory discusses the experiential and reflective learning processes, Communication Apprehension explains affective and psychological influences, and the role of interaction and feedback in language and communication development is explained in Interaction Hypothesis. These combined theories shaped the design of the study, informed the process of data collection, and guided the thematic analysis and interpretation of findings.

2.3 English Language Practices in a Higher Education Context

2.3.1 English Language in Higher Education in Pakistan

English is an official language of Pakistan as it underpins the education system, forming the medium of learning at educational institutions, from primary to post-graduate level. However, the standard of English does not currently meet reasonably acceptable benchmarks or international standards as discussed by Lodhi and Akash (2019) where they assessed the language levels of the college students against CEFR descriptors and reports the significant

difference between the actual and desired outcomes. Moreover, the gap between the existing and desired standard is more pronounced in Pakistani Higher Education (HE).

In general, most universities in Pakistan, specific courses are delivered to improve and refine students' English language. This research focuses on the impact of English language teachers on engineering students with varied backgrounds and diverse English language competences. It aims to assess the efficacy of the learning imparted to students and identify inadequacies in the teaching methods adopted by teachers. Consequently, this research will propose future action for more effective methods to enable improved English Language amongst these students. This literature review highlights work already undertaken related to this research area, and explains the challenges and actions identified by other academics concerned with the HE in Pakistan.

Aziz et al. (2015) addressed the significance of English language and its crucial role in students' academic success. Feng et al. (2023) in the systematic review of several studies discussed the areas that require improvement so that remedial measures can be identified to assist and support students. Their review outcomes suggest that students with higher proficiency in English show better academic outcomes. Thompson et al. (2022) also underscored the importance English language in assessing the impact of language proficiency on the academic achievements. The findings of their study also reveal that by addressing language-related challenges, rather than solely focusing on students' English proficiency levels, may be a more effective strategy to enhance learning. Therefore, Fareed et al. (2022) illustrated that the teachers have a critical role in this regard as they can introduce innovative approaches. Several other factors contribute to learners' language acquisition, such as their background, their parents' language, and support from the institution (Yasmeen et al., 2024). They further added that family support and engagement play significant role in yielding improved outcomes.

Khan et al. (2020) emphasised that the educational institutes in Pakistan need to invest more in English language teaching as it equips students to deal with the global challenges, when they enter a foreign environment for the purpose of study or work. As English is considered the most dominant language all around the world (Dutta, 2019). However, a wide gap exists between the provision and acquisition of English language in private, elite institutes and the remaining public and low scale private institutions, which results in fewer education and employment opportunities for many students. This suggests the need to adopt inclusive approach to provide equitable chances to all students beyond their backgrounds and financial status (Mahboob & Zafar, 2025).

2.3.2 English Language Proficiency Amongst Students

The role of English language of instruction in Pakistani universities was explored by Khan (2017) whose research showed the importance of being able to effectively communicate and

understand foreign literature, highlighting the need of English language acquisition to cope with international academic and professional challenges. Iqbal et al. (2019) explored the perceptions of college students regarding English as their medium of instruction in Pakistan, revealing that the students considered it to be important for their educational and professional life.

These studies stress the importance of English language fluency for academic achievement, critical thinking, job prospects, and integration into international academic communities.

However, they also illuminate the problems that currently exist and the need for better English language teaching methods and resources in Pakistan's universities. Nevertheless, Ullah et al. (2024) explained that incorporating English as compulsory instead of Urdu in higher education aids the international exposure and increase chances of jobs for the students. Siddiqui et al. (2024) highlighted the significance of English language for job progress and accessing new information and underscores its role in making these students global citizens. English Language Teachers thus have a pivotal role to play in imparting English Language learning to students to prepare them for their future professional lives and their personal development. Therefore, the instructors involved in teaching these courses in HE settings in Pakistan are one of the prime foci of this research, and their teaching practices will be analysed to identify improvements to enhance English learning outcomes of students.

Moreover, in 2006 the Government of Pakistan made English the language for use in higher education and job acquisition. Thus, policy makers and national curriculum developers have since focused on English language instruction from grade one and worked to make it available to all instead of an elite (Ministry of Education, 2006). However, due to their diverse educational backgrounds, when many students reach higher education, most are unable to cope with the demands of learning in this language and often do not have the confidence to present their work.

Universities in Pakistan can admit students from various schools who may come with or without English language skills. Thus, at the university it is typically necessary to devise a mechanism to improve the English Language skills of many of its students. In designing a curriculum for English Language learning the university expects that the disparity between students' competence in English Language can be addressed, for example, students are expected to present their work and assignments in English. The university also delivers separate, credited courses of communication and presentation skills which are taught by its school of humanities and social sciences. These courses – delivered in English – are compulsory for all students, meaning that English language competence and communication is recognised as important. Nevertheless, despite its importance across the country, poor English Language competence is prevalent in Pakistan and the reasons for this are explored in this chapter.

In government schools in Pakistan, Urdu is the medium of instruction until grade 10 (age 14-16). Therefore, when students enter college/universities, and they encounter English as medium of instruction they can find it difficult to grasp the knowledge imparted. Until that point in government schools their syllabus will have been delivered in Urdu except for separate English lessons. They are taught grammar to grade 5 (ages 10-12) so that when they enter secondary school, students have already the grammar and its functions and the medium of instruction remains same. However, at this stage they can focus more on reading rather than speaking. Indeed, the more students, the read the better equipped they become for further and higher education, as reading comprehension is important when understanding field specific concepts communicated in English. Thus, students with good reading skills can grasp scientific concepts better because they can comprehend the language and follow instructions better way. So, if language is developed at this stage, future education becomes less challenging. However, language does not develop when students are not encouraged to read beyond textbooks, such as in government schools.

Teachers in government schools do not have adequate knowledge of teaching English and often come from government schools' education. In comparison, private schools has English as the medium of instruction throughout; the entire curriculum is taught in English which gives students a better command of the language on starting university. Following the American/British system, reading beyond textbooks is compulsory, which is where the gap in competence emerges. Private schools encourage students towards linguistic empowerment by encouraging communication and language abilities that persist into adulthood and encourage greater confidence. The teachers at these schools are therefore qualified to teach students the content and enhance their English language skills. Nevertheless, there are several other factors that constrain English language teaching in government universities which private institutions do not encounter. These include large classes, a lack of resources, a lack of fully trained teachers, a lack of time for such courses (Bhutto et al., 2023).

2.3.3 Issues with Language and Communication Skills Teaching

One of the major reasons for poor English Language competence in Pakistan is the lack of fully trained teachers which originates at the primary level and continues through to higher education. The predicament ultimately results in inferior English language proficiency amongst students in Pakistan. Sadeghi et al. (2019) also highlighted that teacher's ability to teach the language skills depends on their own command on English language which needs to be considered while designing trainings and workshops for them. The perceptions of English language teachers were explored by Hassan (2016) in his study, noting their concerns about factors such as lack of resources and faculty, examination systems and inconsistent educational policies. There are several other factors contributing to ineffective teaching such as overcrowded classrooms, lack

of qualified teachers and limited time (Channa et al., 2023). The lack of trained teachers is a widely recognised issue. Those teaching English language in such universities typically hold degrees in English literature, suggesting there is lack of trained capability in English language teaching.

There have been efforts to address this issue; these efforts reflect the importance of skilled English Language teachers. English is a compulsory subject in all public institutes. In March 2003, there was a committee established by HEC, called National Committee on English (NCE). They invited experts to propose methods to optimise teaching-learning dynamics in universities (HEC Report, 2002-2008). Additionally, the Learning Innovation Division initiated the “English language teaching reforms” project, which mainly focused on research and human resource development in ELT and higher education in Pakistan (HEC Report, 2002-2008). Its main aim was to bring improvements to the deteriorating standards of English in higher education in Pakistan. They initiated many well-defined ELT programs to bring significant changes to teaching and encouraged research in this field (HEC Report 2002-2008) which revealed a need for improvements in the language skills of teachers (HEC Report, 2002-2008). The ELTR project was officially launched in 2004 by the Higher Education Commission in Pakistan to practically deal with the problems in ELT and formulate policies to address them (Christopher & Shamim, 2006). They encouraged the development of a uniform system in English language classrooms and initiated a national committee divided into the following sub committees:

- a. Testing and evaluation,
- b. Research and publication,
- c. Computer-assisted language learning,
- d. Curriculum and material development and faculty training.

Furthermore, a research centre named ‘National Centre for English Learning and Teaching’ was formulated working as an authority to monitor the teaching process of English. Funds were allocated for this purpose, and a significant change has been observed in teacher training programs and reforms to old curricula.

Teacher education and training is important in bringing changes that can address the issues faced by public education (Siddiqui et al., 2021). Indeed, Roca Campos et al., (2021) considered teacher education an ongoing process of professional development that evolves over time and positively impact social and educational outcomes of their students. Thus, teachers’ professional development is crucial in strengthening abilities, reasoning and impactful communication among students (Darling et al., 2017).

Roca Campos et al. (2021) also encouraged teacher education and access to learning opportunities, advising this should be a continuous process that develops their intellectual abilities. However, Jumani and Abassi (2015) found no institutionalised arrangements for regular teacher training in Pakistan underscoring the lack of quality, resources and properly policy in this area. Thus, although teacher training has been given a lot of importance in educational policies in Pakistan, many courses remain unable to meet the requirements of teachers.

2.3.4 Language Attitudes

Jawed et al. (2024) considered language attitudes as pertaining to how students feel towards a certain language and the findings of their study reveals students' strong preference to switch between Urdu and English when they are receiving instruction. Yousaf et al. (2021) underscored the attitudes of students towards languages used in their social and academic lives, where they assign different roles to these languages in different domains of life considering Urdu and English as languages of formal professional areas.

Khan's (2015) research explored the opinion of students in Pakistani universities on acquisition of EFL. The study investigated the factors behind their motivation to learn the language and found that students were influenced by its importance in their future careers. In addition, Riaz and Ahmad (2017) conducted a study with college students in Pakistan to gauge their perspective on learning English, and whether they preferred using English or their native language. The results revealed their bonding and comfort in their native language but noted that English was felt to be more practical and significant for their future.

Alam's (2018) research exploring the perspectives of Bangladeshi college students on EFL considered perspectives of students towards fluency in English. According to the data, learning English was recognised as crucial for students' careers and their ability to communicate with people all over the world. In addition, Al-Khatib and Obeidat's (2019) study investigated the views of university students in Jordan towards English as a second language, and whether they preferred English over Arabic. The results showed that most learners had a favourable impression of the English language and understood its significance for their future success. Furthermore, Wu et al. (2022) examined the motivations and perceptions of students in a Malaysian university regarding English (L2). They examined what students thought English was useful for, why they were learning it, and how they felt about their own English skills. Students recognised the importance of English to their future success in school and the workplace but were also concerned about losing their original language and cultural identity.

These studies show that students' perspectives on English as a second language vary widely across institutions of higher learning. Many students appreciate the benefits of learning English

for their studies, careers, and international communication, but many also feel a strong connection to their original tongue and culture. Findings stress the need to foster English language proficiency while also protecting native languages and cultural traditions in the classroom. My topic is also concerned with understanding postgraduate students' perceptions and language attitudes towards English in Pakistan. Although linguistic changes towards English are taking place throughout South Asia, they are slower in Pakistan (Zaidi & Zaki, 2017) where factors such as socio-cultural aspects and complex interplay between indigenous languages contributes to a slow progression of English in the country.

Arshad et al. (2022) discussed teachers' perceptions regarding use of English in Okara, Pakistan and revealed that private school teachers are more inclined towards the use of English language considering it essential for a student's future. Teachers acknowledge the frequent use of their first language instead of English considering their main aim is to prepare students for exams rather than improve their language skills. Ahsan et al. (2020) stated that teachers acknowledge the frequent use of their first language while teaching as their main aim is to prepare students for exams rather than improve their language skills.

Tariq and Siddique (2024) stated several factors influencing teachers' attitudes towards English such as their socio-economic background, regional linguistic attachments and level of proficiency in English. They argued that due to lack of confidence or expertise in English language, the English language teachers in Pakistan tend to use Urdu in classroom practice. Thus, students are more anxious in conversation than in reading. This issue prompts the focus on speaking and presentation skills in my research, as students can become anxious when required to orally present their work in English.

Language anxiety is important in the process of language learning. Students often prefer rote learning and cramming instead of working on language skills which consumes more time. Exams are taken on a set conventional pattern that do not necessarily test the analytical and creative abilities of students. In comparison, language learning theories state that foreign language anxiety is a hindrance to the language learning process, and therefore only motivated students tend to focus on language acquisition. Molnar and Crnjak (2018) conducted a study on communication apprehension amongst undergraduate and graduate level students, and noted the factors behind their nerves, including a 'fear of negative evaluation'. Learners, in the educational setting often feel doubtful they can effectively communicate (McCrosky, 1987).

Nasir et al. (2023) suggested that teachers should provide a supportive and inclusive learning environment and encourage students, so they do not feel hesitant to communicate their ideas. However, Noor et al. (2015) noted that communication issues have been prominent in the in-service development sector. This shows an increasing need for effective communication skills in acquisition of jobs and professional growth, while there are also multiple challenges and

barriers in the development of effective communication skills. Mushtaq (2014) provided solutions to issues affecting the communication of Pakistani students, which focused on fluency and spontaneity. Furthermore, Binusa (2023) underlined that students from the field of Informatics Engineering revealed speaking anxiety; they noted the major indicators of this were a lack of confidence and fear of negative evaluation. Panhwar (2022) advocated that collaborative action research would help to collectively tackle the challenges in English language teaching in Pakistan, involving different voices in initiatives to improve the quality of teaching in large university classes. This study found students' active and passive stance in the classroom toward factors such as class timings and the teachers' attitude.

2.3.5 Social Factors Affecting English Language Learning

The role of social class affecting language learning is important in this study, as English has become the commodity of certain class in Pakistan. This study will consider the impact of cultural, linguistic and academic factors on students and teachers, which has fewer resources as a country and where a large segment of the population lives below the poverty line, making it difficult to access the necessities of life. Bourdieu's sociolinguistic theory (1986) highlighted the importance of social status in language learning and claimed that those in higher socioeconomic brackets have more opportunities to learn languages such as English. Brian et al. (2024) demonstrated the strong connection between the student's financial status and their English language skills, emphasising that students who are financially stable gets more opportunities and are exposed to English language from their early education, making them proficient once they enter higher education.

Students from affluent backgrounds can afford tuition and have access to more opportunities such as studying in a foreign university, which may be less affordable to those from less privileged households (Salinas, 2021). Thus, there is a pressing need to incorporate and design programs for less privileged students to mitigate this gap (Trebits et al., 2021). The cultural impact of English language acquisition of ESL students was discussed by Nisar et al. (2023). They stated that the students are heavily influenced by their teachers and parents' views and expectations regarding language acquisition and such factors can aid as well as pose to be a barrier for students learning. This aligns with Uba et al.'s (2023) study exploring the cultural impact on students learning of English language in Nigeria, in which they examined the disparities between private and public education. Furthermore, Halimi et al.'s (2020) study investigated all interconnected factors among Arab students in Kuwait, and these included their cultural background, the development of the student, and their language acquisition. They found that students feared being judged by society and their teachers which affected their language learning experience and reduced their motivation to learn. Capstick (2016) investigated the ways multilingual individuals in Pakistan and United Kingdom navigate

language through socially situated literacies, often relying on help from family, friends and communities instead of formal education in schools. Although their work focused on migration, it aligns with this study's context as it highlighted that language skill development is enhanced through peer interaction and supportive group.

It is critical to have the complete knowledge of social norms and practices to establish education policies that are inclusive, dealing with the inequalities and providing support to students from a range of backgrounds. For example, previous studies have indicated that continual language and cultural support is often needed for ESL students even after they are admitted to university studies (Peters & Anderson, 2021; Wang, 2020; Mabkhot & Alzahrani, 2023). Therefore, the first step in creating any language plan is to collect information about the language learners and their experiences (Long, 2018).

In Pakistan, English is considered a determining factor for progress, playing a key role in national development but it has also been controversial due to the criticism it has faced regarding inclusion and social justice (Suleman et al., 2024). Nevertheless, despite the difficulties in teaching and learning English in Pakistan, its status as a language signifies empowerment and better future opportunities – both on an individual and national level.

Since 1947, there has been a switch from Urdu to English as the official language in Pakistan; despite significant efforts to teach English, Haider (2024) stated the results are disappointing. Ahmed et al. (2024), on the other hand, stated that English as a medium of instruction is the cause of anxiety amongst students studying in public universities as they have diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

2.3.6 Native Language Usage

Nawaz's (2023) study investigated the significance of native language usage by exploring code switching in diverse classrooms in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The findings of the study suggests that using one's own language could turn out to be counterproductive as students were at ease using that instead of English. Similarly, Talal (2022) conducted research in Quetta and explored students comfort levels while using their language, that was clearly visible in the form of their increased level of confidence. Choudhary (2024) explored use of native language and its impact on code switching, the results reveal that bilingual students can benefit from using their native language. Students can be proficient in both their native language and L2 if they practice and use both at almost the same frequency (Weber et., 2015). Their work revealed that the student's linguistic competence can be influenced by the frequency of their native tongue usage, describing it as 'balanced bilingualism'.

These findings emphasised the significance of native language use frequency in several facets of language acquisition and processing. Regular usage of the native language can help in learning

new words, developing writing skills, becoming bilingual, learning to code switch, and preserving one's heritage language. However, research suggests that a balance must be reached so that the development of the target language is not stunted by an overreliance on the original language.

2.4 Presentation Skills and Learner Centred Dynamics

2.4.1 Presentation Skills in Higher Education

Effective presentation skills are a crucial element of an engineer's skill set; studies suggest it is essential for engineering students to articulate technical complex ideas to a non-technical audience in a clear and effective manner; this also enhances the employability of engineering students (Wu et al., 2023). The role of effective communication and being able to conduct presentations in a clear and effective manner is essential for engineering students. The effective communication skills of employees are crucial in successful delivery of their engineering projects thus, they not only need to focus on developing their technical knowledge but also aim to communicate their ideas to diverse audience in an effective way (Sun et al., 2021).

Moreover, these presentations influence student confidence and self-assurance in public speaking, enabling them to communicate effectively (Belaman et al., 2022). Studies have shown that a combination of theoretical knowledge and practical application is necessary to teach presentation skills to students. However, it is crucial to incorporate interactive methods such as peer feedback and interactive peer observation in order to boost students' confidence and foster an active learning environment (Lim et al., 2024). Activities like role play and dramatization increase the linguistic creativity and motivation of students enabling them to address linguistic barriers and in doing so boost their confidence (Biynazarova et al. 2024). If students are provided with interactive learning environments which are adaptable to their diverse styles, this would enhance their independent critical thinking and overcome their apprehensions to communicate (Blyznyuk & Kachak, 2024). Additionally, in their study, Aflah and Rahmani (2022) favoured interactive learning methods such as group discussion and role play to enhance active participation and motivation among students, while Namin et al. (2021) advocated the use of tools like PowerPoint, videorecording and constructive feedback to enhance the teaching of presentation skills highlighting the effectiveness of asynchronous video-based projects.

This requires the teaching of new strategies to language learners who are less successful in the English language. Although, a good language learner implements a more holistic top-down approach to language (Grenfell & Harris, 2014), the lack of proficiency in English amongst many HE students adds to their hurdles in learning presentation skills. Many Pakistani students struggle to conduct presentations in English which reduces their ability to practice in an

effective manner. Hussain et al. (2024) highlighted the challenges students face while transitioning from an Urdu medium background to English as they reach university. They also recommended that to resolve these issues pedagogical reform is necessary.

2.4.2 Student Motivation

As well as the role social factors play in English Language learning, motivation is also important and seems to stem from social factors, such as social status and culture. The connection between second language acquisition and student motivation has long been discussed but it's still debatable when it comes to its relevance in variety of social and cultural contexts. Vakilifard et al. (2021) highlighted the significance of intrinsic motivation in language learning describing the two kinds of motivations i.e. instrumental where one desires to reach their goals and integrative the urge to participate with the speakers of the language. This idea was criticised by Ashraf et al. (2021) and Raza et al. (2022) for being too Westernised and individualistic, especially in a country like Pakistan where English is considered as status symbol rather than a cultural integration tool. Furthermore, engineering students in Pakistan opt for English to reach global market and to fulfil their professional requirements not any integrative participation in a certain culture (Tasleem et al., 2022).

Dörnyei's (1994) study explored number of elements in order to motivate SLA. The results of this study imply that students with a better developed ideal self-image in the target language and who have had more successful learning experiences are more driven and proficient in the target language. On the other hand, Ryan and Deci (2000) highlighted the significance of intrinsic motivation in language acquisition using the perspective of self-determination theory. According to their findings, students who study a foreign language for reasons other than academic are less likely to be motivated and tend to produce sub-par results. Motivating factors like as control, mastery, and social connection are emphasised alongside struggles in teacher-centric Pakistani classrooms.

Where self-determination theory accepts universal validity, Raza et al. (2023) were more inclined towards structured ways of teaching due to their embedded conventional rote memorisation methods. Therefore, they ignored the idea of autonomy which they considered to be isolating. Lăpădat and Lapadat (2024) investigated what motivates people to study a second language from a sociocultural viewpoint. Their study delves into various models called according to their motivational stance, specifying integrative, instrumental, and cultural stances, among others. The authors considered motivation as a driving force that shapes one's attitude towards language learning. Whereas Raza et al. (2021) explained that students in Pakistan accept English because of its utility in a global context.

Khan's (2016) study of rural Pakistani classrooms revealed how systemic barriers (e.g., teacher demotivation, outdated curricula) fossilise motivation, trapping learners in cyclical "ought-to" selves shaped by exam-centric imperatives rather than personal growth. Derakhshan et al.'s (2024) study in Iran confirms this, revealing that only teachers' attitudes and support is not enough, and it cannot overcome the challenges like overcrowded classrooms, limited time provision etc.

Papi and Hiver's (2020) *Motivation Dynamics Framework* revealed that extrinsic factors are crucial in less developed countries like Pakistan, where students tend to learn and rely on English in order to attain good job rather than for their intrinsic motives. In addition, recent studies reveal that learner motivation for English language learning is a multifaceted construct. Nevertheless, Dittul (2012) argued that students who view learning English language positively demonstrate strong instrumental and integrative motivation, and this drive persists irrespective of external pressures. more recent research (Pathan et al., 2020) suggests that both internal resilience and external classroom conditions play crucial roles.

The interplay between motivation, language policies, and socio-cultural dynamics in Pakistan's English language learning landscape reveals tensions that challenge universalist theories. Moskovsky and Alrabai (2009) explained that instrumental motivation has greater influence on learning English as foreign language whereas English as second language learning is more dependent on integrative motivation. Moreover, Al Hosni (2014) highlighted that psychological factors such as fear and anxiety, shyness, lack of motivation and feeling less confident leads to speaking difficulties. Derakhshan (2022) suggested the interconnection between teacher and learner in order to mitigate these hurdles. Khan and Khan's (2016) findings underscored a paradox for students in rural Mianwali and Bhakkar who are driven by English's perceived mobility, yet teachers burdened by inadequate training and resources struggle to sustain pedagogical effectiveness. This disconnect mirrors Ullah & Ndiaye's (2023) observations in Saudi Arabia, where top-down MOI reforms often neglect grassroots teacher realities.

Similarly, Sadoughi and Hejazi (2024) found that learning strategies are directly linked with motivation, performances in curriculum tests, proficiency levels, frequency of interaction with native speakers, and with how long the students maintain L2 skills even when their language study has concluded. Some researchers have been working in a Pakistani context to determine the strategies used students and teachers and their degree of motivation to use them (Ahmed & Gill, 2014; Sehrish et al., 2014; Yaqoob et al., 2014), which promotes the role of motivational language learning strategies. Indeed, Derakhshan (2022) advocated that teaching a language is a versatile job and teachers must motivate students to learn a language effectively besides developing speaking, writing and reading skills. This resonates with Ushioda's (2020) ethical motivation agenda, which urged educators to balance skill development with learners' socio-

emotional needs. However, without institutional support - such as training in trauma-informed pedagogy or access to digital tools - Pakistani teachers remain ill-equipped to implement such ideals (Raza & Ahmed, 2023).

Khan (2016) found that the students from districts like Mianwali and Bhakkar (Pakistan) are keen and driven towards learning English whereas teachers lack this interest and motivation which pose to be one of the biggest hinderance in the process. Khan and Khan (2016) explored the difficulties in imparting ESL education among pre university learners from district of Minawali in Pakistan, proposing avenues for future in this area. Teaching English should be like teaching any other language. However, in the context of Pakistan, with its socio-cultural peculiarities alongside its history, ethnicity and multilingualism, it acquires a different overtone. For example, the reliance on English as the medium of education in HE means it exerts more value. Fatima and Qureshi (2024) argued that the higher education system needs to clearly state the medium of instruction as it is one of the most important variables in education. It is therefore necessary to analyse various language learning strategies within the context of this study to suggest improvements in the teaching methods used and enable better English learning outcome for the students.

Current frameworks fail to capture how Pakistani learners blend instrumental goals (e.g., jobs) with identity negotiation (e.g., resisting English's colonial stigma). Demotivation stems not from individual apathy but systemic neglect (e.g., lack of training, low wages), necessitating policy-level interventions (Khan & Raza, 2021). While English's dominance is entrenched, recent scholarship (Raza, 2023) advocates for multilingual pedagogies that leverage Urdu and regional languages as scaffolds rather than treating them as deficits.

2.4.3 Language Learning Strategies

Gul et al.'s (2021) study focused on integrating aspects of language and culture in Pakistani classrooms and reported a less productive and positive approach amongst language teachers towards the blending of culture and language teaching practices, showing limited alignment with local norms, Raza et al. (2022) critiqued such approaches as potentially reinforcing passive learning in an era where globalised education increasingly prioritises metacognitive strategies (e.g., self-reflection, digital literacy). This tension underscores a key debate, whether culturally resonant methods like those noted by Gul et al. (2021) inadvertently limit learners' adaptability to modern, technology-driven language contexts. The students preferred memorisation strategy was that which had been successful in the past and aided their learning process (Hsiao, 2004). While recent studies (Lin et al., 2023; Sukino et al., 2024) argue that overreliance on familiar strategies, such as memorisation, may hinder proficiency in communicative competencies (e.g., speaking, critical thinking) increasingly demanded by Pakistan's job market (Ashraf et al., 2021). For example, Ali et al. (2024) found that Pakistani university students who combined

traditional memorisation with use of technological gadgets (e.g., language apps) outperformed peers using rote methods alone.

Furthermore, Grenfell and Harris (1999) advised that new strategies can be taught to help language learners who are less successful. However, they assumed universal access to training resources, which overlooks a limitation in Pakistan's underfunded public education system (Raza et al., 2022). Students learn English through various methods but often select the strategies or methods that best suits them (Jannah & Wardah, 2022). While Sadoughi and Hejazi (2024) revealed that good language learners are risk takers as they try different methods and are more realistic in the time required for language learning. Moreover, they continue to develop their language skills on their own rather than only rely on teachers, the recent studies complicate this narrative by emphasising contextual constraints. For instance, Pinner (2021) argued that risk-taking behaviours are culturally mediated in hierarchical educational systems like Pakistan's, where teacher authority dominates, learners may avoid unconventional strategies (e.g., improvisation, peer teaching) to minimise perceived failure. This challenges Shoesbottom's (2007) universal claim, suggesting that autonomy and risk-taking are privileged in Western individualist contexts but less feasible in collectivist, exam-driven environments (Rose et al., 2019).

Therefore, teachers need to realise the importance of language learning strategies to make learning easier for students. Dörnyei (2020) contended that rigid style categorisations (e.g., visual/auditory learners) oversimplify strategy use, particularly in digitally mediated classrooms where hybrid approaches (e.g., gamified apps, video essays) blur traditional distinctions. Ameen's (2023) study of Pakistani university students found that students consider incorporating social media with formal instruction as a reliable source of information. Raza et al. (2023) explained that teachers rely on traditional textbook driven methods rather than employing variety of strategies to enhance students learning and the reason behind this is overcrowded classrooms and extra workload of teachers.

Engin's (2009) discussion on motivation in a Turkish EFL context reinforces an integrative approach that depends on the individual's desire to achieve and highlights the importance of a student's willingness to learn English language. In contrast, Papi et al. (2021) challenged its universality, showing that in collectivist societies like Pakistan, familial or communal pressures often overshadow individual "desire to achieve something", complicating Engin's individualistic framing. Ullah and Ndiaye (2023) found that Saudi learners of English simultaneously pursue job opportunities (instrumental) *and* social integration with expatriate peers (integrative), suggesting that rigid motivational categorisations inadequately capture modern learners' multifaceted goals. Ali et al. (2012) discussed methods such as dictionary strategy, contextual clues and computer assisted language learning to build vocabulary, and the

findings revealed more positive feedback from students using CALL in learning vocabulary instead of other methods because it aligns with their aptitude and as they use it in their daily lives. However, their effectiveness in Pakistan's under-resourced system remains untested which reflects a gap this study addresses.

Hussain (2017) considered that the learning and acquisition of a language are two different processes, referring to learning as formal way of gaining knowledge and acquisition as the unconscious process of learning through conversation. However, Loewen (2020) argued that digital tools (e.g., language apps, VR simulations) blur formal/informal boundaries, enabling learners to “acquire” grammar unconsciously through gamified tasks while “learning” via structured feedback—a synergy absent in Hussain's idea of learning and acquisition. In comparison, Habók et al.'s work on self-regulation in language acquisition strategies (2022) provided a thorough framework for analysing the methods through which people learn a new language. Learners' cognitive, metacognitive, and social techniques for improving their language acquisition are identified in this research, and the authors prioritises students' abilities to think strategically to effective language learning.

2.5 Teaching Practices and Innovative Approaches

2.5.1 HE Teaching and Learning Strategies

In Pakistan, HE teachers tend to rely on conventional teaching methods as many are not adequately trained in interactive learning strategies. Zafar and Iqbal (2015) explored the issues of lack of trained teachers in Pakistani universities, while Shah (2023) stated the need for continuous teacher training noting that a lack of adequate training leads to ineffective teaching. Studies also explore teachers' feedback on oral presentations, which is generally offered but on a limited scale (Wang et al., 2016). In addition, Tsang (2017) discussed the usefulness of oral presentation skills beyond university stating that it benefits students at a professional level. His article also discusses the need to keep a record of the presentation skills process and how the students' competencies develop over time. Nisar et al. (2023) highlighted that teaching communications skills should also consider students' diverse cultural needs, by integrating language and culture in Pakistani classrooms. Their study reported a productive and positive approach amongst language teachers towards blending culture and language teaching.

2.5.2 Teachers' Education and Training

Effective teachers tend to enable positive learning outcomes, and their role cannot be overemphasised in making a difference in students academics and their futures. Teacher's education and training is vital in maintaining the quality and effectiveness of instructive landscape. Ali et al. (2023) noted the significance of teacher trainings and professional

development regarding the process of learning and the effective assessment techniques linking it with students' achievements and growth in developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Teacher training and professional development programs are pivotal in keeping them motivated and enhancing their self-efficacy (Saeed & Aneesa, 2023). Their study conducted in Punjab confirms that these training approaches boost teachers' confidence resulting in greater commitment towards effective teaching from their side. Teacher training programs such as continuous professional development (CPD) by HEC aims at conducting workshops for teachers from higher education providing them the opportunities to incorporate innovative pedagogical approaches considering the diverse needs of students.

It is essential to consider the varied English Language competence amongst students enrolled at the government university in Lahore; the importance of English as the medium of education in an HE setting in Pakistan; and the significance of learning English for students' professional lives after university. This will be analysed in the academic context with a view to exploring possible teaching practices and methods. Rao (2018) underscored the impact of English language teaching on communication skill development of students by employing innovative teaching practices. He further emphasises on the need of training them to incorporate technology and teach communication and presentation skills courses in an effective manner.

Many teachers in Pakistan often find it challenging to use technology in their teaching practices resulting in the need to develop teachers' knowledge of computers and technology (Qutoshi et al., 2020). Hayat et al. (2024) also reflected on the integration of technology by English language teachers in DG Khan, Pakistan. Their study reveals teachers' experiences and challenges along with several factors determining their perceptions regarding integration of computers and technology. The education sector has witnessed massive change through integration of information and communication technology (ICT), making teaching a more productive and interesting process (Lin et al., 2017). Khan (2018) examined the need for a policy framework, curriculum and workshops that involve 'information and communication technology', emphasising the significance of incorporating ICT in teachers training programs in Pakistan. Akram et al. (2022) revealed teachers' perceptions regarding ICT in their study, that integration of technology not only make their instructions more interactive and engaging but also increase their motivation in the class.

Siddiqui et al. (2021) argued that the teacher training system in Pakistan faces several challenges such as lack of proper policy and planning, irregular training programs and teacher trainers are hired without any checks on their professional backgrounds, which means there is some concern about the training they undertake. A lack of understanding of educational theories raises questions as their competence to train teachers. Thus, sometimes a graduate with an

English literature degree without any prior teaching experience can become a teacher trainer, which can negatively affect the training of teachers and students' learning.

Fernandes et al. (2023) examined the impact of teacher development programs and continuing education on their performance, highlighting its need and that it should include innovative teaching approaches, diverse students' needs and target areas that requires urgent attention. Muammar and Alkathiri (2022) also considered effective teaching approaches and the provision of development programs for teachers. They noted that high-quality teacher education programs have distinct characteristics, including a focus on content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, clinical experience, mentorship, and professional development. The results highlighted the significance of extensive teacher training initiatives and the factors behind teachers' satisfaction who took these programs over the period of three years, which included appropriateness of program's objectives, activities and topics, the skill set trainers possessed and the successful achievement of programs objectives.

These studies show the importance of investing in teachers' education and training for the sake of their students. A well-developed training course for teachers includes time for theory, hands-on experience, technology integration, further study, and mentorship while equality, cultural fluency, and acceptance are also covered. Trained educators boost student involvement, participation, and achievement in the classroom. Therefore, identifying the most effective methods to train teachers for today's classrooms and schools is a crucial area of research.

2.5.3 Teaching Practices

Integrating effective pedagogical skills ensures quality teaching to achieve desired learning outcomes of students (Asadullah et al., 2024). On the other hand, Zamir et al. (2021) argued that not all teachers pay a lot of attention to the impact of their teaching practices, underscoring the need to develop students' critical thinking skills. However, there is a strong connection between the teaching practices and learning approaches of students, and they also adopt the learning strategies that fits with the teaching and evaluation practices of teachers (Zahid & Nawab, 2025). As this study discusses the teaching of communication and presentation skills courses where students are required to present in English. Nosheen et al. (2020) considered it challenging to develop students speaking abilities in English, further highlighting the need to incorporate innovative teaching practices to enhance students speaking abilities.

Ayub and Muhammad (2024) revealed the discrepancy in the existing curriculum and that its unable to fully equip students with essential speaking skills which are required to meet their future academic and professional needs. The effects of such loopholes in teaching practice and competency can be witnessed in universities in Pakistan as students from public sector institutes (majority of students) find it very hard to communicate in English whether with oral or written

skills. Language teachers, on the other hand, face many hurdles in meeting targets; various researchers have highlighted this as an important factor in language learning. Manan et al. (2017) and Manan (2015) revealed that English language is foreign to the socio-cultural ecologies of most Pakistani students which results in a reduction to their creative thinking and means they prefer methods such as rote learning.

Findings from Ayub et al. (2024) reflected that the speaking curriculum requires modifications by integrating more practical activities enhancing students' engagement and their speaking skills. They further added that the teacher's role needs to be more facilitative in practicing this curriculum and students also need to actively participate in group activities. Shahid et al. (2022) highlighted that teacher's uninterested attitude towards using English language affects students' potential to effectively communicate. They further add that factors such as ineffective teaching practices, outdated curriculum and lack of professional training for teachers contribute to poor communicative language teaching.

There is dearth of active learning practices in Pakistani classrooms as teacher-centred teaching practices are prevalent instead of incorporating practical and activity based pedagogical approaches (Ali et al., 2023). Ali et al. further discussed the curriculum that teachers are bound to follow, noting that it can reduce efforts to bring change and innovation to their teaching practice. This can leave no margin for creativity, as teachers are also bound to follow a process which can overlook individual needs and student differences. Moreover, they are not fully trained to implement the changes in curriculum into their classroom practices. Shah (2022) also confirmed the issues in implementing the curriculum modifications into their classroom practices, emphasising the often-overlooked role of teachers in decision making. She also added that even if trained teachers want to introduce innovative teaching practices to the classroom, they are bound to follow the textbook which reduces their creativity.

Luo and Derakhshan (2024) highlighted various classroom practices starting with the classroom environment which involves teachers' attitudes to students' relationships with each other. Second, is the enhancement of students' motivation and increasing their goals and beliefs in language learning. Third, is the promotion of self-motivating strategies and improvements to the quality of learning experiences. Finally, they include the autonomy of students, promotion of self-evaluation amongst them and ongoing feedback. Aflah and Rahmani (2022) also confirmed that teacher's appreciation and encouragement results in active participation of students in class.

2.5.4 Teaching Methodologies

There are several teaching methodologies employed in higher education to cultivate effective communication and presentation skills, underscoring student engagement, practical application, and reflective learning. Teachers use different methods to teach these skills at all levels with

every teacher possessing their own style and method of teaching. Although particular methods are preferred over others at certain times such as student-centred approach shifts the focus from conventional teacher-led lecture methods to active student participation enabling learners to take charge of their learning and progress, fostering critical thinking and communication skills (Motschnig et al., 2020).

Naz et al. (2023) explained that in a typical Pakistani classroom, whether its private or public university, the teachers teach in the same manner. The teaching methods in Pakistani classrooms mostly rely on narrative instructions and do not consider the needs-based approach as it does not target the reflective and communicative skills of students. These methods often prioritise rote memorisation over the development of students critical thinking and self-reflection (Kamran et al., 2023). The findings of their study further underscore the importance of integrating interactive teaching methods in higher education and providing insights for teachers to create a supportive learning environment. These methods also foster active participation, student engagement, teamwork and interpersonal communication, crucial for today's job market and professional environment (Rafiq et al., 2022).

Aftab et al. (2024) discussed that, in Pakistani classrooms teachers mostly use bilingual instruction methods. The findings of this study revealed that lecturers used code-switching to engage and encourage students, clarify complex concepts, and manage classroom environment. However, Al-Musthofa and D'Angelo (2024) suggested that bilingual education could lead to the development of cognitive and communicative skills. They explained that code switching can be helpful for the transmission and construction of ideas and for interpersonal relations in classroom environment. Choudhary (2024) discussed the significant impact of code switching on communication skills in diverse language learning contexts, highlighting the real-world application of code switching. Indeed, bilingual speakers usually adopt the suitable language for different contexts, e.g. using English language at work & Chinese at home or switching between two languages during the same conversation (Han et al., 2022).

One of the teaching methods that has been discussed thoroughly involves project-based learning. Kovalyova et al. (2016) highlighted the significance of project-based learning enhancing students' ability to present their work collaboratively. They further add that this method improves oral and written communication skills of Engineering students. Aflah and Rahmani (2022) suggested that a communicative, interactive and action-based approach needs to be incorporated in educational context, emphasising the positive impact of methods such as group discussion and role-play on students' performance.

The conventional lecture and discussion methods are employed at university level in Pakistan whereas teachers should employ mixed methods and bring innovative strategies to improve students learning (Syed et al., 2025). Indeed, Manan et al. (2017) and David (2017) reported

that the methods currently used in many Pakistani classrooms, such as the grammar translation method (GTM), leave no room for the creative competence of students and that the classroom activities in this environment are unable to fully support student development. Arif, Junaid and Niazi (2021) also confirmed that GTM and direct instruction are commonly used in Pakistani higher education. They also highlight the need of innovative methods which are according to the student's needs. Shah (2023) similarly addressed the need to understand the individual needs of the students highlighting that to yield better results, the teachers should use different strategies according to students' needs and competence.

2.5.5 Using Technology in Education

Integrating technology in pedagogical approaches has revolutionized the way presentation skills are taught e.g. students can record and share their presentations via Flipgrid, promoting the idea of peer feedback and self-assessment, which ultimately leads to improvement in oral presentation skills of engineering students (Miskam & Saidalvi, 2019). The incorporation of technology can significantly enhance academic engagement and social participation (UNESCO, 2023), facilitate flexible learning environments and allow learners to access educational resources anytime and anywhere, thereby fostering autonomy and self-directed learning (Basri et al., 2018). The incorporation of technology promotes educational inclusivity and preparing students for future challenges (Forbes Technology Council, 2024).

Students studying engineering in various departments tend to do their work on computers therefore, there is need for language labs or access to computers to support language and presentation skills, which would also enable the incorporation of technology. Sayaf et al. (2021) discussed the continued desire of students to integrate information and communications technology (ICT) and students' higher levels of satisfaction associated with it.

Technology provides learning spaces for teachers/instructors and learners where reviews and discussions of presentations can be done online with peers, teachers and the wider audience as well. As students tend to use social media platforms and technology, the provision of computer labs, the Internet and computers is essential. However, the university in this study currently lack sufficient facilities such as these which impacts teaching and learning. Galindo et al. (2019) highlighted the importance of technology in their study, emphasising the significant role of videos in oral presentations of students.

2.5.5.1 Audio Visual (AV) Aids

Students often use multimedia and give PowerPoint presentations using videos and slides. Students are given projects and activities by some teachers where they must make videos in groups and present them. Vishnupriya and Bharathi (2022) explored the way teachers can incorporate IT to help their students learn and practice English in an authentic environment and

enhance their learning abilities. They further add that the use of AV aids alleviate the monotony associated with traditional teaching practices. Jain and Sharma (2023) confirmed this by emphasising the integration of AV aids as a pedagogical approach, because it would stimulate cognitive engagement of students enhancing the learning environment in a classroom.

Al Aqad et al. (2021) highlighted the role of multimedia in English language acquisition of university students in Malaysia. The findings of their study reflect that students' attention spans are increased, and they tend to learn new terms enhancing their knowledge of accurate use of terminology and language. The university administration needs to facilitate students and teachers in this regard by properly training them (Kanwal et al., 2021).

2.6 Summary of the Literature Review

This literature review discusses presentation skills within engineering programmes in Pakistani Higher Education, highlighting the critical role of English language, teaching methods, and the challenges encountered. Research shows that although barriers persist such as students' apprehension, limited resources and a lack of professional development amongst teachers (Riaz et al., 2021; Hanif et al., 2024), employing interactive teaching methods, integrating technology, and providing adequate feedback is essential in developing student presentation skills (Lim et al., 2024; Blyznyuk & Kachak, 2024). However, studies also note that traditional teaching methods dominate which limits the potential for practical and experiential learning (Ahmed & Akhtar, 2019). In addition, there is a lack of focused research on impact of teaching in Pakistani engineering universities despite the global and local insights. Particularly there is lack of empirical evidence on how effectively teachers address these courses.

There is substantial world-wide research on the teaching of presentation skills, the research that is particularly done in Pakistani context is scarce. The existing studies mainly focus on communication skills in general giving limited attention to the aspect of presentation skills separately. This gap emphasises the need to study the teaching effectiveness in developing presentations skills of engineering students in Pakistan. This study focuses on providing actionable insights to improve the teachings of presentation skills in overall higher education in Pakistan.

This study highlights the gaps by evaluating the effectiveness of presentations skills teaching at a Pakistani engineering university. It seeks to provide meaningful insights for curriculum development, teaching approaches and policy making to enhances students' academic and professional competencies. Furthermore, the literature review stresses the importance of English language education within the global communication perspective. Building these skills do not only limit students to becoming linguistically proficient but also provide access to knowledge

and job opportunities, enabling them to communicate on global platforms thereby supporting their future career development.

This study adopts an integrated theoretical framework combining Wenger's Communities of Practice, Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, McCroskey's Communication Apprehension, and Long's Interaction Hypothesis. These perspectives offer a comprehensive lens to study how presentation skills are developed among engineering students within multilingual higher education contexts, apprehending social participation, experiential learning, affective factors, and interactive dynamics. The next chapter details how this theoretical orientation guided research design, data collection, and the process of analysis.

3 Methodology

3.1 Chapter Introduction

This chapter sets out my research philosophy and justifies the methodological choices for this study, which gave me an opportunity to thoroughly understand the perspectives of teachers and students regarding presentation skills at the university under study. This chapter explains my epistemological positioning as the teacher-researcher, as being a teacher at the same university enabled me to examine the subject from an insider's lens. This chapter presents the data collection methods, ethnographical approach, and qualitative methodology which includes my positioning and reflexivity. In addition, the chapter also describes the emic and etic perspectives of this study, and the ethical considerations. The research design, structure of the interviews, focus group discussions, observations are also discussed. Finally, a summary of the data sets is given - the interviews, observations and focus group discussions - followed by a brief account of the analysis adopted.

3.2 Research Paradigm

Researchers must acknowledge their fundamental philosophy and confine their study to a framework. The researcher's ontological and epistemological perspectives are key influences over the research design process. The way in which researchers communicate findings from their study is also influenced by their views about knowledge and reality. Understanding these philosophical foundations in detail and accounting for paradigms can reduce bias and enhance the quality of the research (Keong et al., 2023).

The ontological basis for this study is that the teaching and learning of presentation skills is subjective in nature, revolving around the individual opinions of students and teachers. This means there is no single reality but rather several realities constructed by individuals. This argument posits that the interpretation and understanding of teaching and learning are formed through social interactions within a university. My ontological perspective is formed on the basis that reality can be socially formed, but this construction is influenced by symbolic and material structural limitations that can be observed through empirical evidence (Banifatemeh et al., 2018).

The epistemological position in this study asserts that knowledge regarding the teaching and learning of presentation skills is acquired by comprehending the interpretations and meanings that teachers and students construct from their experiences. Knowledge is not objective or

detached but instead formed via active involvement and thoughtful consideration throughout instruction.

Here, ontological, epistemological, and methodological paradigms are examined to determine whether the choices made to address the following research questions were appropriate.

- How can the teaching of presentational skills in English be improved to meet the academic and professional needs of engineering students in a Pakistani university?
- According to university staff and students, what factors contribute to students' strengths and weaknesses concerning English presentational skills?
- Which teaching strategies are currently used by English language teachers and to what extent are they perceived to be effective by staff and students?
- What improvements to the current provision of presentation skills development are sought by staff and students?

A research paradigm can be characterised by its ontology (or the study of reality), epistemology (the knowledge of something), and methodology (what methods you will adopt to find it) (Ugwu, 2021).

The researcher's views on the acquisition of knowledge are impacted by their assumptions about the nature of reality, which in turn affects their epistemology. Within a given ontological framework, researchers are guided by epistemological viewpoints which determine what may be known and how knowledge can be achieved. Thus, conceptions of reality and knowledge are influenced by the interconnected fields of ontology and epistemology. As mentioned, ontology concerns the fundamental essence of existence and reality whereas epistemology centres on the study of knowledge and the criteria for determining what can be considered true (Pretorius, 2024).

Ylönen and Aven (2023) argues that ontology pertains to the structure and essence of reality, encompassing a theory of existence and its nature. On the other hand, epistemology focuses on the nature of knowledge and explores the connection between the knower (or knowers) and the knowable. As the two co-constitute each other and challenge the conventional wisdom that divides them, their relationship is complex. This relational approach highlights the contextual and situational nature of knowledge by emphasising that reality is not fixed but rather continuously co-created via a variety of interactions. While epistemology directs our understanding and interpretation of the universe, ontology offers fundamental presumptions about existence. This highlights the importance of a comprehensive approach that takes both factors into account simultaneously.

Epistemology concerns the knowledge acquired and shared, while the methodology accounts for the choices made in terms of the research methods applied; moreover, Sol and Heng (2022)

argued this directly depends on the researcher's ontological assumptions. Couper (2020, p.275) refers to epistemology as the study of knowledge, inquiring "what is knowledge?" and "how do we know something?" Considering the nature of ethnography and the specific setting of this research, my ontological stance perceives this study as a multifaceted social phenomenon that is shaped by the interactions and experiences of both teachers and students. Instead of being a fixed reality that can be objectively quantified, it is regarded as subjective and flexible, perceived differently by various persons.

Epistemologically, ethnography emphasises subjective experience and the perspectives that individuals give to their social environment (Luintel, 2020). My epistemological position acknowledges that the most effective way to acquire knowledge about teaching and learning presentation skills in a second language is by comprehending the actual experiences of learners and teachers from their own point of view. The link between a researcher's methodological choices, their ontology, and epistemology is a subject of debate among scholars. According to Al-Ababneh (2020), ontological beliefs shape epistemological assumptions, and both influence methodological choices.

These perspectives influenced my choice of methodology by:

- Requiring me to fully engage in the real classroom environment, where students can actively develop and use their presentation skills,
- Giving guidance to utilise qualitative approaches, such as conducting observations, interviews, and focus group discussions.
- Focusing to accurately capture the subtle social interactions, behaviours, and participant perceptions, thoughts, and emotions on the process of developing presentation skills in English.
- Fostering a reflective and iterative research process in which the findings can be adjusted and developed from the profound insights into participants' experiences.

Guided by these perspectives, my research technique sought to offer a comprehensive, contextual, and profound comprehension of the presentation skills development in L2 language acquisition. Ethnography, a qualitative research method, aligns with an interpretivist epistemological stance that comprehends social phenomena by examining the meanings attributed by individuals. Ethnography was chosen as a research method as it assumes that reality is shaped by social interactions and that knowledge is influenced by the specific context in which it is produced. Ethnography therefore aligns with the interpretivist perspective chosen for this study (Pervin & Mukhtar, 2022).

Ethnography is commonly utilised across various academic fields, but it has traditionally been linked with the social sciences. In these disciplines, ethnography is frequently employed to

reveal the social structure of different activities (Stein, 2024). Given that ethnography is a social endeavour, it does not take place in isolation. Thus, numerous individuals, not only the immediate participants, may have an interest in the outcomes of the research and how the findings are portrayed. By adopting this perspective, I aim to comprehend the process by which social reality is constructed, perpetuated, enforced, challenged, or transformed (Gergen & Gergen, 2015). This means adopting an interpretivist perspective recognising that everyone has their own unique worldview rather than a singular objective reality.

This study incorporates diverse datasets containing a range of opinions from participants with different backgrounds. As a teacher-researcher, I have an insider's perspective. These factors contributed to the adoption of an interpretivist approach for this study. This interpretivist approach employed a pragmatic methodology for data collection, such as conducting interviews and making observations. Gergen (2015) expanded on the idea of social constructionism and reinforces the idea that multiple realities exist which are based on different interpretations (since many people assign different meanings to the same occurrences). As a result, my research findings offer just one of many potential realities. In my role as an interpretivist researcher, I drew meaning from the data by considering the various ways in which research participants' beliefs, viewpoints, and behaviours were interpreted. In a classroom, the process of constructing meaning involves both teachers and students, as such the consistent causal connections established in the natural sciences cannot be applied to a classroom setting. I aimed to investigate how individuals understand events, by recognising that knowledge is subjective.

Wittwer (2025) introduced the concept of 'reflective empiricism' that involves subjective perceptions into scientific inquiry recognising the subjective role of researcher and underscoring that knowledge is constructed. To gain a deep understanding of the perspectives and opinions of an individual, the researcher must immerse themselves in the individual's environment. This means becoming an insider and establishing trust with the study's participants. I could engage with them on an intimate level due to my firsthand experience and expertise in the subject matter, as a teacher and faculty member at the university. Consequently, I successfully earned their trust, allowing me to explore participants' beliefs and thoughts, thereby obtaining deeper insights and an 'insider's perspective' (Bukmal, 2022).

3.3 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research provides meaningful insights from overall scenario where the researcher is interested in interpretations of the participants experiences and the meanings, they give to them (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). I selected a qualitative approach for this study because this supported the objectives of this research. The qualitative approach focuses on observation and

the contextualisation of behaviour in the field of communication skills maximising similarities between natural and socially identified groups and circumstances and is described as an effective model within natural settings that helps the researcher develop a level of detail from in-depth involvement within participants' actual experiences (Williams, 2023). A quantitative approach is commonly employed in evaluative studies as it focuses on the detailed investigation of complex social phenomena and provides comprehensive data by adopting tools such as observations and interviews that aim to offer valuable insights (Jamshed, 2014).

Qualitative research has many inherent advantages that render it appropriate for this study; the approach provides a comprehensive and meticulous account that incorporates personal elements and utilises various data gathering techniques, use technology, investigating the real-life experiences, social interactions and individual perceptions which makes it suitable and appropriate for this study (Lichtman, 2023). Moreover, the qualitative research is adaptable and by examining local perspectives, uncovering subjective reasoning, efficiency, flexibility, strong internal validity, and applying small purposive samples, it has the capacity to delve beyond the surface level understanding of phenomena (Mantula et al., 2024).

Methods refer to the instruments, techniques or strategies used in research (Kumar & Praveenakumar, 2025). This ethnographic research includes multiple methods to obtain in depth information on presentation skills in an engineering university in Pakistan, within the natural environment of the classroom. The research has been designed to examine the research questions posed which determine both students' and the teacher's perceptions alongside and the teaching practices for presentation skills in an engineering university in Pakistan. The study observes the determination of problems related to presentation skills courses at the university under study, the factors that affect language acquisition and the presentation skills of students, and the English language teaching practices at an advanced university level.

The research questions were tailored to investigate the impact of English language teaching provision on engineering students' development of required professional language skills. Research methods were selected to explore various factors such as students' performances and involvement during classes, the teacher's perceptions about the language skills, their provision, and students' feedback and opinion. Thus, the research employed ethnographic observations, focus group discussions, and semi-structured interviews as its primary research methodologies.

Qualitative research involves exploratory description and analysis which provides a comprehensive view of the events that take place in a certain circumstance or environment (Farooq et al., 2022). In the current study, a classroom environment provides the context, therefore, this study provides a detailed description of not only the environment but also the beliefs and opinions of participants. This study used open-ended questions that could lead to further discussion. Instead of asking yes/no questions or using scales (like in quantitative

research), I asked questions that invited participants to share their experiences, perspectives, and stories in detail. Participants' responses are often layered, revealing complexities, contradictions, and unexpected insights, for example a student initially say that they find presentations nerve-racking but with further probing will offer reasons for this anxiety such as a fear of public speaking in English. According to Shava and Nkengbeza (2019), a fundamental key to qualitative inquiry is the in-depth understanding of human behaviours and the reasons behind them. In qualitative research, data collection only takes place till the point of saturation (Sebele-Mpofu, 2020).

Qualitative research has been defined as a part of social science that results in the acquisition of detailed non numerical narrative. However, Locke et al. (2020) explained that qualitative research is much more than just the lack of numbers, highlighting key features such as its open-ended nature, the potential for reflexivity, and the natural setting of the research context. Yahya et al. (2023) explained the significance of qualitative research in the field of applied linguistics highlighting its core features such as philosophical underpinnings, scope and research design, discussing qualitative research from various perspectives. This empirical qualitative research-maintained validity and reliability, by maintaining suitable ethical research standards. Researchers have subsequently recognised the importance of qualitative research and that it can address key factors in society and culture including situations which impact language acquisition (Pandey, 2025). This qualitative research has been conducted in an engineering university in Pakistan where the key participants were deliberately selected, and conclusions derived from cases which were not indicative of the whole (Subedi, 2023).

Presentation skills involve a variety of intricate activities that cannot be simply quantified. Qualitative methodologies can capture the complex nature of this intricacy, encompassing the nuances of nonverbal communication, the involvement of the audience, and the flexibility in giving presentations. Quantitative evaluations typically prioritise observable and countable results, such as the frequency or duration of speech. However, such inquiries cannot offer detail on the learning experiences, presentation skills and the internal cognitive processes of students. Various significant contextual elements are present in the social setting where the teaching and learning of presentation skills occurs, therefore qualitative research was chosen as it provides valuable insights into these elements. Quantitative research does not examine underlying processes but instead focuses on numerical categorisation, whereas this study applies qualitative approaches to consider such processes and the extent to which teachers are successful in imparting knowledge, which includes feedback, rehearsal and self-reflection.

Rauteda (2025) referred to the insufficiency of quantitative methods to explore the detailed and in-depth knowledge of an issue highlighting the aspects of context sensitivity and socio-cultural influences. Ghanad (2023) further explained that this approach creates numerical data whereas

qualitative generates narrative accounts. This reveals that quantitative research generally does not gather narrative data, which is often essential for this kind of study. Attaining an in-depth firsthand account of students and teachers regarding presentation skills is important to understand the process. Quantitative tools are not designed to investigate the meanings that individuals give to their experiences. On the other hand, qualitative approaches enable the exploration of perspectives and attitudes of learners and teachers. According to Taherdoost (2022) methodologies in qualitative studies include empirical materials such as humans' real-life experiences and problems by getting deeper insights into them which cannot be explained by numbers. Quantitative research typically necessitates the formulation of a predetermined hypothesis and the establishment of variables at the outset of the study (Ghanad, 2023). This approach may not accommodate the identification of novel and emergent themes, which qualitative research is better equipped to capture.

3.4 Ethnography

Historically, anthropologists have employed ethnography as a method to investigate the cultural characteristics of various populations. According to anthropologists such as Spradley (1979) ethnography refers to the process of describing a culture. The fundamental objective of this activity is to comprehend an alternative way of life from the perspective of an indigenous population. This study's approach is most appropriate for researchers gathering firsthand experiences from participants by observing and actively engaging with them. Ethnography offers numerous advantages compared to alternative study methodologies and is pivotal for colleges and universities (Anderson, 2021). Moreover, the ethnographic tradition, as defined by California State University (2023), involves the study of a cultural or social group, or individuals within the group, through prolonged periods of observation and immersion in their activities, events, rituals, and settings. For this research, it consisted of in-depth interviews and extensive observations.

Steadman (2024) considered ethnography as the ultimate research method by explaining that there is no genuine substitute as it portrays the pragmatic detail of daily lives. She advocates the significance of this approach in her study on the development of teacher identity considering it beneficial for other educational topics. The appeal of ethnography is heightened by the "everydayness" of the actual tasks, and the real-life context in which the tasks occurred. Thus, ethnography can excel at providing an in-depth understanding of a particular cultural group or setting. Ethnography relies heavily on observation of naturally occurring interactions. I used this by observing classroom dynamics, student presentations, and teaching methodologies. As an ethnographer embedded in such classroom, I took detailed field notes during presentations, observing how students support each other during practice sessions, and documenting the

teacher's feedback strategies. I also conducted focus group discussions with students and interviewed teachers, asking open-ended questions about their experiences, challenges, and perceptions by immersing myself in this setting, I gathered rich, contextual data that revealed the intricate ways that classroom practices shaped the learning and teaching experience. I was interested in the lived experiences of students and their teachers in the study, and as a result, was convinced that ethnography was a potent methodology to gather answers to my inquiries.

According to Caulfield (2023), ethnography needs to be flexible and can be modified according to changing events. This study involved many participants and considered data which could not be predicted beforehand, which meant that room was required for modifications. Irshad et al., (2021) described ethnography as the philosophical study of the cultural life of individuals within a framework, underscoring the nature of ethnography and the significance it brings in Pakistani research landscape. They also referred the ethnographic research as the manifestation of writing a textual context after conducting the research for a certain period of time. Papen (2019) explained the use of observations and field notes in ethnography highlighting the role of researcher in conducting observations to capture the cultural nuances. In this study, the observations were video recorded to supplement the field notes; indeed, rewatching allows the researcher to revisit the scene, noting details missed or that had not been written down. A lot of communication is nonverbal, such as facial expressions, gestures, posture, use of space, field notes can capture a description, but a video lets the researcher see subtle cues firsthand, such as how students interact with each other, the instructor, and the learning environment. Thus, videos act as a tool to revisit the field experience with greater depth and accuracy. Even without transcription, it provides invaluable context and detail that enrich the field notes and strengthen the analysis. Talbot (2023) reveals in her ethnographic study on students in Australian schools, that human complexity and behaviours can be understood through ethnography which are not available through other methodologies.

Ethnographic observations were conducted to reveal the culture of the classroom environment. I had a prior knowledge of the university environment as I have been a faculty member at the university in the respective department. The information provided a valuable narrative of the classroom environment in natural setting. Talbot (2024) considered the involvement of the researcher as crucial as human behaviour cannot be evaluated without their involvement and their subjective perceptions. Using ethnographic techniques, the researcher takes the language class as cultural event where the communication takes place within their own norms which are evident through nonverbal and verbal interactions. Thus, the observer can gain a clear view of the classroom events and note the norms and behaviours which can be overlooked by teachers and planners during lesson planning and grading processes. Therefore, the focus of the ethnographic technique is to observe ideas behind behavioural patterns within a particular

community. It depicts naturalistic behaviour where the member's opinion is consulted (Lim, 2024).

The observer takes views from various classical and contemporary positions recording behaviour through recording field notes. Field notes not only include the notes taken by the observer on paper, but also video and audio recordings which capture and provide an account of lived experiences within a social setting (Wargo, 2021). One can also observe intricacies of human behaviour through ethnography that may not be observed through other methods. Ethnography provides a platform to answer detailed questions such as how, what if, and why. Hence, it is not limited to hypotheses about certain social settings. For example, the researcher needs to be aware of the people in the group, their powers and their rights to opinion. Therefore, time needs to be invested to understand the extent to which people in a community can freely express their views.

Speldewinde (2022) considered ethnographic approach to be commonly used in educational research where in-depth exploration of teaching and learning takes place. Haraldsson (2024) considered ethnography to be not only a methodology to test a hypothesis but also a means to discover data which offer a comprehensive account of specific naturalistic behaviours in a certain social setting. Ploder and Hamann (2021) explained ethnographic research involves various practices such as interviews, recordings, seeing, observing, listening and documenting etc. The classroom in this study is a bilingual setting and the people come from various parts of the country, which provided an opportunity to gather rich data for this qualitative research. Furthermore, Risku et al. (2022) explained that qualitative research and ethnography offer the philosophical tenants and processes necessary to ensure academic rigour. This includes the techniques and procedures used to manage confidentiality. Typically, it can also involve providing participant information sheets, establishing informed consent, and ensuring the appropriate storage of data (Caeymaex et al., 2024).

Ethnographic research is a valuable method for studying and gaining in-depth insights of teacher-learner's opinions and experiences along with the role of socio-cultural elements in the process (Decosta et al., 2022). Within literature, researchers have placed importance on ethnography over other empirical methods as it generates data which provide a deeper understanding of human behaviours and provide a base for further research. Lewis et al. (2024) proposed that any setting where there are social interactions, such as a building, family in a house, or a classroom, can be utilised in an ethnographic study such as their study in the domestic environment provides rich data of culture and interactions. Susanto et al. (2024) referred to ethnography as the complex study of cultures as there are many social situations where differing cultures are involved.

3.4.1 Positioning and Reflexivity

Positioning in ethnographic studies refers to the researcher's placement within the research context, which questions the binary distinction between insider or outsider (Rai,2020).

Reflexivity entails a thorough examination of one's own biases and assumptions during the entire study process. Indeed, critically examining our own positions is crucial as researchers continue to offer a fundamental undertaking in qualitative research (Shai, 2020). Reflexivity is fundamental in ethnographic research and improves the interpretive authority of the researcher (Bieler, 2021). Lichterman (2025) explained that an ethnographer must determine, among other things, how to position themselves within the ethnographic text that comprises the research report, moving beyond simple insider outsider dichotomy and focusing on the impact of their positioning on interpreting and presenting the data.

Given the intensive involvement of the researcher in the ethnographic research process, it is advisable to employ the first-person form in the research report. Ethnographic writing is most effectively characterised as vivid, evocative, and descriptive. It is academic writing but also necessitates the use of imagination to depict as realistically as possible scenes, sights, scents, feelings, experiences, and people. This facilitates the reader's immersion in the experience, enabling them to sense and comprehend precisely what you did.

As an employee of the university (research context), I possessed an insider's view which meant it was important to foreground my background to emphasise my role in the study. Indeed, Creswell and Poth (2018) argued that our beliefs and philosophical assumptions are influenced by our personal experiences, beliefs and vision. I completed my degrees in English and Education and during my work experience I have taught at several levels, although mainly university, which has influenced this research. I have some experience of facilitating student presentations in courses I have taught and found that most students were hesitant to present, and especially those at Level 2 English, many of whom did not perform well which eventually resulted in low marks/grades. I have taught in a private school to secondary classes which gave me an understanding of the opportunity such students receive over those attending government schools. A large sector of students coming to university come from government schools. Teaching at different levels and interacting with teachers and parents from different educational institutes from varied sectors gave me experience of education methodologies in general. Creswell and Poth (2018) explained that although one's positioning is significant in research, it is overlooked in most other contexts.

I was part of a university faculty facing challenges in fostering effective presentation skills in our students. While offering invaluable insights, my insider perspective also demanded a heightened awareness of my own positionality, particularly how my role as both teacher and researcher could shape the study. During classroom observations, my presence as a fellow

teacher, rather than an external observer, might have influenced teachers' behaviours and they might have consciously or unconsciously adjusted their teaching style. However, I spent sufficient time in the classrooms to normalise my presence and allow both teachers and students to acclimatise to being observed.

In addition, I was mindful that true honesty might require a level of critical distance that our shared context made challenging. Teachers might have been hesitant to be critical or share challenges knowing I was also part of the same system. During interviews and focus groups, I used questions that could lead to further discussion and encouraged participants to share their honest perspectives. I was also apprehensive that students participating in focus groups might feel pressured to provide positive feedback or avoid criticising the presentation skills program, especially if they knew it reflected on their teachers. During the interviews and focus groups, I used questions that led to further discussion and encouraged participants to share their honest perspectives. Moreover, I regularly assured participants of their anonymity and used pseudonyms to protect their identities. I also stored the data securely, reminding them that their honest feedback was crucial to improving our teaching practices

I employed methodologies for this research which provide opportunities for both students and teachers to articulate their views. Additionally, I utilised several strategies, including the observation of departments which were selected on merit, to gather data from multiple perspectives, including top, average and weak students. This study also aimed to explore the attitudes and beliefs of university students towards their presentations, as well as the instructional methods and teaching techniques used in their classrooms.

According to Olmos-Vega et al. (2023), the term "reflexivity" is used to refer to a collection of activities that are not only continuous but also include cooperation and are complex. Using these activities, researchers can self-consciously assess, appraise, and evaluate the ways in which their subjectivity and context impacts the process of research. Reflexivity concerns influence of researcher in a study and includes their views, beliefs and experiences. In this study, I had prior experience of teaching students which enabled me to explore this subject in depth as I was deeply connected to the context. At the start of the study, I had an idea that teachers adopt varied methodologies in the development of presentation skills, and I needed to observe them in practice to gather data concerning these dimensions.

Being an insider/researcher and sharing the institutional and linguistic context with participants gave me a position to distinctively observe, interpret and engage with experiences of participants. The status of an insider helped in rapport, rich data collection and nuanced understanding of class dynamics. Although there were difficulties being an insider and holding a position that could influence the responses and potential to be biased. Reflexive journaling was maintained during the process of data collection and analytical procedures in order to

document personal reflections, observations and interpretations. The credibility was further strengthened by applying triangulation across observations, interviews and focus group discussions. Utmost importance was given to ethical considerations, keeping in account the power dynamics, participants confidentiality and consent, confirming that students' autonomy and researchers influence on data interpretation is valued in research practices.

3.5 Data Collection

Data collection is a complex process that includes a lot of hurdles such as accessing people, coordinating with them, and dealing with their concerns. These problems can have a substantial impact on the accuracy of the data. For example, difficulties such as participants discontinuing their involvement can result in incomplete datasets, which can impact the analysis. The students showed interest in open discussions about their experiences during these courses and while giving presentations. The development of a deep connection with participants led to a trustworthy environment and the gathering of more thoughtful data. As I was an insider and familiar with those involved, it was comparatively easy to build connections with participants to enable an environment of trust and more honest responses. Thus, although a few challenges emerged, the process was manageable.

I found access to participants - especially teachers - was difficult. During my time away from university, I only had contact with two teachers. Nevertheless, students seemed enthusiastic about the process although they were all new to me as I had not taught them. Students' language difficulty posed a challenge as they preferred Urdu instead of English to openly communicate, thus the focus group discussion was held in both Urdu and English, which later was translated and transcribed in English. I used straightforward and easy language, in Urdu and English, to boost effective communication during my focus group discussions.

The challenges encountered included the availability of participants due to their busy schedules. In addition, one of the teachers declined to take part which posed a challenge when inviting students to the focus group as they only had a one-hour break during which they needed to take their lunch. Eventually we found the slot when they were all available. Although I wanted a mixed gender group, some of the women did not want to be recorded as they are veiled; I tried to reassure them that they would be safe, and their data would not be used for any purpose other than this study. I was also concerned that they might offer restricted responses, due to a fear of being judged, or communicate their responses to their teachers. I assured them of the study's confidentiality and their anonymity but at the same time stressed the need for honest responses from them. Another challenge was the collection of rich and detailed data for analysis which was a time taking process. Utilising data analysis techniques such as thematic analysis, which

was chosen as the analytical approach for this study, can help the structure and comprehension of extensive volumes of qualitative data.

3.5.1 Researching Multilingually: Rationale and Decisions

This study was conducted in a Pakistani university involving a multilingual environment where students and teachers are using multiple languages such as Urdu, English and their regional languages to interact both socially and academically. Language is not only considered as a medium of interaction in such environments, but taken as means to construct, express and negotiate the meanings. Therefore, a multilingual approach was adopted for this study so that participants narratives and opinions could be captured in an effective manner that depicts their authentic interaction practices.

During the process of data collection, the participants were given leverage where they could share their thoughts and experiences in the language, they felt most comfortable in. This decision was taken in order to obtain more natural responses from participants particularly students who might feel anxious in responding in English. This resulted in focus group discussions begin conducted in Urdu to make students more comfortable in openly communicating their thoughts. Teachers were also given the flexibility to respond in the language of their choice. However, the interviews with teachers were done in English showing their professional linguistic preferences.

Another major reason behind this decision of opting for multilingual approach was to avoid benefitting specific voices and marginalizing others by asking them to respond in English. Holmes et al. (2022) underscores that multilingual research needs careful consideration of how linguistic preferences impact generating and interpreting data, along with the researcher's ethical responsibility of representing participants narrative in an authentic manner. In this context, there is a direct link between linguistic choice and the factors such as power, identity and participation. By allowing participants to draw on their full linguistic repertoire, a more inclusive and representative account of their opinions and experiences could be obtained.

After the process of data collection according to language choices, it was crucial to carefully consider the process of translation and transcription. Therefore, instead of approaching transcription and translation procedures as technical, they were considered as reflexive and interpretative. Translation and transcription were done by a transparent and systematic process. Firstly, the audio recordings were transcribed in the original/actual language and afterwards translated into English for analysis. In order to preserve accuracy and meaning, translations were carefully reviewed and cross-checked against the original recordings. Attention was given to keep the participants' intended meanings intact, particularly at occasions where linguistic nuances carried contextual significance. There were certain culturally embedded idioms and

expressions that did not have exact equivalents in English, such situation required interpretative decisions to be taken. Careful consideration was given to the participants' contextual meaning even if there was somewhat adaptation in wording.

Holmes et al. (2022) underlines that research in multilingual contexts demands explicit documentation of linguistic choices, translation processes, and researcher reflexivity to ensure methodological rigour and ethical integrity. Following these principles, this study applied a reflexive and transparent approach to language use and translation, confirming that participants' narrative was represented in an authentic way without compromising analytical consistency. There was constant need of critical reflection in order to avoid unexamined assumptions, which resulted in constant reflexive engagement to see if my language choices, interpretations and analytical decisions impact the representation of participants' narrative.

Additionally, during the process of analysis, specifically during the development of codes and sub themes/ themes the multilingual data had several implications. As the process of analysis was carried out in English, there was this constant need to confirm that the actual meaning of participants' voices were not missed or oversimplified during translation process. To avoid any such discrepancy, codes were iteratively revisited referencing back to the transcripts (original language). This approach helped in retain the authenticity and in maintain the analytical rigour.

Thus, this study adopted multilingual approaches to maintain conceptual accuracy and clarity in analysis. On one hand, this study provided rich and comprehensive data, on the other hand, there were certain translation and interpretation related challenges. This study aims to ensure transparency, credibility and maintain analytical and methodological rigour by recognizing these complexities and adopting a reflexive approach.

3.5.2 Research Design

I chose to employ an ethnographic technique since it aligned with the objectives of my research and enabled the collection of diverse perspectives on the participants experiences at the university under study. By utilising a qualitative design, I was able to actively engage in classroom observations and attentively listen to the opinions of both students and teachers. This kind of ethnography significantly helped to build an in depth understanding of the structural, socio cultural aspects of presentation skills classrooms. Ethnography is essentially a narrative that is supported by dependable qualitative data, and its credibility is derived from an active involvement in ethnographic research (Madden, 2017). According to Datta and Mete (2025), ethnographers should directly experience the customs of a group, combine their observations with interviews to understand how the group interprets their experiences, and use information from others to enhance their understanding. This study involved observations which were followed by focus group discussions and interviews. The research is a single site study at an

engineering university in Lahore. The participants included teachers from the department, who were involved in teaching communication and presentation skills courses, and the students studying these courses.

My theoretical framework also influenced me in choosing methodology such as Wenger's (1998) CoP guided me for conducting classroom observations, as the theory considers learning to be a social process which occurs as result of share practices. Thus, it was crucial to explore students' collaborative learning and group work process in natural classroom environment to understand the teaching, learning process of presentation skills development in this community.

The classes observed were selected on merit, and included those achieving top, middle and bottom marks; this means data were gathered from students with a range of abilities. All teachers were selected and agreed to give an interview. The students from the observed classes were asked if they wanted to take part in the discussions. Although I initially intended to conduct purposive sampling by selecting students who gave presentations during the observed classes, when they were asked, almost all the class volunteered, hence those whose presentations were observed were selected. Students were initially asked after the class if they would be interested in participating in focus group discussions on presentation skills, and those who expressed an interest were given a 'Participant Information Sheet' to read before confirming a decision, but almost all expressed a positive interest. As I only needed around six to eight students, I selected a mix of those who had given presentations alongside other students from the class.

The taught course included, communication skills, technical report writing and presentation skills, and functional English. Teachers followed course descriptors/outlines and assessment criteria to achieve the set CLOs and Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). The course descriptors for these courses (see Appendices F-I) provide detailed outlines on which teachers base the classroom content and discussion. Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) is the regulating body that ensures quality according to their standards of accreditation, Program Educational Objectives (PEOs) constitute the major goals and objectives followed by Program Learning Outcomes PLOs which are set by PEC.

This study employed a combination of classroom observations, interviews with teachers, and focus group discussions with students to explore how engineering students develop presentation skills.

Participants: 27 undergraduate engineering students from three departments were purposefully selected to capture a range of linguistic backgrounds, academic performance, and prior experience with presentations. Participants were recruited after classroom observations and they were taking presentation skills or related courses, ensuring their direct engagement with the

phenomenon under study. Total of 7 teachers were selected for the interviews who were involved in teaching these presentation skills courses in different departments all across the university.

Observation Scope: Classroom observations spanned six weeks, that covered lectures and presentations by students. Each observation lasted approximately 60–120 minutes, concentrating on teaching methodology, student participation, peer interaction, and language used during presentations. A total of 5 sessions were observed, each lasting approximately 60–120 minutes. Observations were non-participant in nature, with the researcher adopting an observer role. Field notes were recorded during and immediately after each session, focusing on student participation, peer interaction, teaching strategies, and language use during presentations. An observation focus was maintained to ensure consistency across sessions. The observations were also video recorded, in order to cross check if anything is missed in field notes. Journal was also maintained for reflexivity and, it was the practice to document the researchers' reflection after each observation.

Interviews and Focus Groups: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 7 teachers, each lasting 30–45 minutes. Questions addressed experiences of preparing and delivering lectures, teaching pedagogy as well as reflections, challenges students face, their confidence, and peer support.

Focus group discussions were conducted with students in groups of (6 to 8 participants) from different departments, allowing for interactive discussion and shared reflections. These discussions focused on students' narrative on their experiences and challenges in process of learning presentation skills, perceived hurdles, peer support, feedback mechanism and preferred teaching methods. The discussions also involve their linguistic challenges, stage fright and anxiety to give presentations.

Procedural Rigour: Detailed procedural documentation ensured consistency across data collection. The use of multiple data sources (classroom observations, interviews, and focus groups) enabled triangulation, strengthening the credibility of the findings. Data collection and initial reflections were conducted iteratively to ensure alignment between emerging insights and subsequent data generation.

3.6 Participants and Sampling

3.6.1 Study Site

The institution in Lahore, Pakistan that provides the context for this study is a public sector professional engineering university. There are various faculties in the university from which a

few departments were selected (based on merit) for the collection of data; this helped to gather a range of data and establish a comprehensive account. Communication skills, technical report writing, and presentation skills are taught across all departments. These subjects are compulsory, which tend to be offered in two semesters. These courses are run by the department dedicated for these programs.

Observations were conducted in typical university classrooms located in their respective departments. Classrooms were big enough to accommodate more than 50 students although the class size during data collection tended to comprise around 45 students, leaving empty space at the back of the classroom. As this was a government university classroom it did not have air conditioners although there were 2 to 4 fans in each classroom. Teachers usually stood at the front of the room where they can use the multimedia equipment. Classrooms remain the same for all courses. There were issues with the availability of PowerPoint multimedia in some classrooms which one teacher stated posed a challenge for their lecture. The focus group discussions took place in a common room which was quite spacious so that students could be comfortably accommodated. In comparison, the interviews with teachers were conducted in their respective offices where the room size was not particularly big but accommodated a computer table and three to four chairs alongside a book rack.

3.6.2 Research Sampling

Makwana et al. (2023) highlighted the significance of the sampling strategy as it needs to be a representation of the whole population under study. The study involved teachers and students as participants. Given the narrow scope of this research, a straightforward procedure of sampling was employed to choose participants. Purposive sampling was applied based on merit, which included the departments where the observations were carried out, the students taking the presentation skills courses, individuals who presented during the observations, and teachers involved in delivering these courses. Each participant agreed to take part in the study and provided their consent at the start of the data gathering process. Additionally, they were notified that their involvement would have no impact on their scores at the institute.

The interviews involved teachers (who consented to participate) who taught the presentation skills courses at the university, whilst students were randomly selected from departments which were chosen for their merit. The classes chosen for observation were also based within these departments and students were selected from the classes observed. The students indicated different academic, social and economic backgrounds and came from different regions of Pakistan. The focus group mainly aimed to answer to the following types of questions:

- Factual questions: Information regarding individuals' characteristics such as age, gender. Details on participants' academic background and socioeconomic status were gathered during an informal introduction before beginning the focus group discussion.
- Behavioural questions: Trends, inclinations, actions and lifestyle.
- Attitudinal questions: Perceptions and beliefs regarding their studies and presentation skills.

Participants were asked questions regarding the teaching and learning of presentation skills courses and information regarding participants' demographic variables was gathered. Open-ended questions were used most because they allow for participants to be more expressive and share their thoughts, ideas and beliefs.

3.7 Data Collection Timeline and Process

Throughout the data collection process, I actively sought connections and points of convergence between different data sources:

- **Triangulation:** I compared data from observations, interviews, and focus groups to identify areas of agreement, contradiction, or unexpected insight. For example, if a teacher emphasised the importance of providing constructive feedback, but students in their class reported feeling a lack of support, this discrepancy became a point of further exploration.
- **Iterative Analysis:** Gathering data from one source, often prompted me to revisit and re-analyse data from the earlier stages. For instance, a teacher's comment about a specific learning outcome could lead me back to the course outline document and CLOs to examine the wording.

Table 3.1 details the data collection timeline and process.

Table 3.1: Data Collection Timeline

Phase 1 Setting the Stage	Phase 2 Teacher Perspectives	Phase 3 Student Voices
Classroom Observations: I began by observing presentation skills classes across different disciplines, focusing on teaching methods, students' presentations, and classroom dynamics. These observations were crucial for grounding my understanding of the research context before conducting interviews or focus groups.	Teacher Interviews: I conducted semi-structured interviews with teachers and explored their pedagogical approaches to teaching presentation skills, their experiences with existing support systems, and their perceptions of student needs and challenges. I deliberately conducted interviews after the observations to allow my emerging understanding of classroom practices to shape my interview discussion.	Focus Groups: I facilitated focus groups with students from the observed classes. These sessions provided insights into students' experiences with learning and performing presentations, their perceived challenges, and their suggestions for improvement. After observing their classrooms and interviewing their teachers, I framed the focus group discussions so they resonated with participants' specific learning contexts.
Document Review: Alongside observations, I reviewed relevant university documents, including course outlines, assessment criteria, and any existing policies related to presentation skills development. This provided a formal framework against which to compare actual classroom practices and teacher perspectives		

While I observed classes across a range of disciplines, my interviews focused on teachers involved in teaching the presentation skills courses and students from the observed classes (particularly those who gave presentations). This allowed for a deeper exploration of the connections between teaching practices, student experiences, and institutional policies within specific learning environments. By carefully sequencing my data collection, engaging in continuous reflexivity, and actively seeking connections between different data sources, I aimed to construct a rich, nuanced, and trustworthy account of the presentation skills complexities in the university context.

The study helps to understand significant aspects of the subject which informs further research also delivering a comprehensive description of the issue and recommends solutions or practical implications (Lim, 2024). The interview process was inspired by Seidman (2019) as it involved two types of interaction with key participants: teachers interviews and students focus group discussions. Both types of discussions incorporated the open-ended questions aligning with the research questions that were designed for the study as well as observations gathered during the classes.

The reason for using multiple tools rather than relying on one was to develop in-depth knowledge and reliable data. The interviews and focus group discussions presented empirical evidence of the research issues alongside the information gathered from observations. Areas to investigate included: the need of presentation skills for engineering students, their future employment opportunities, marketing and presenting themselves with confidence, communicating at international fora, securing more esteemed positions/jobs. It explored participants' attitudes towards using English for not only presentation skills but also reading, assessment, classroom discussion, and social interaction.

This research has been conducted in one of the engineering universities in Lahore, Pakistan, and there are various branches of the university in different cities. Moreover, many universities in Pakistan follow similar trends by incorporating presentation and communication skills courses within their programmes. This study would be valuable to wider range of audiences such as government universities with students from similar backgrounds.

3.8 Document Review

The document review was a supplementary tool offering contextual background that fits with the concept of institutional practices that determines participation as presented by Wenger (1998), also aligning with Kolb's (1984) cycle of structured learning tasks. For example, course descriptors provide a detailed breakdown which determines the extent to which designed content is delivered to students and to what extent they have to meet the criteria by the end of these courses. At the start of this study, I went through two global models of English language which are used to describe language performance: ACTFL (*American's Performance Descriptors for Language Learners*) and CEFR (*Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*). These provided an overview of the levels of proficiency in language skills. Reviewing course descriptors and assessment criteria for presentation skills after a period away from the university was a helpful way to re-familiarise myself with the research context. The following describes how this exercise aligned with ethnographic practices:

Course documents reveal the values and expectations concerning presentation skills within the university. They offer insights into what constitutes "good" communication in this context. By analysing these materials, I gained an insider's perspective on how presentation skills are taught, learned, and evaluated. This is crucial for ethnographic research, which prioritises understanding a culture from within. Secondly, course descriptors and assessment criteria served as valuable data sources for my research. They provided concrete examples of language use, learning objectives, and assessment practices. Several courses are taught at the university to meet students' presentation, communication and writing skill needs (detailed in Appendices 6-9).

Courses are designed to enhance communication skills in English by firstly focusing on speaking skills as developed through qualities for delivery, presentation practice, and activities which improve pronunciation and syntax structure. Secondly, they are also addressed in writing skills by conducting graded activities at different levels so that engineering graduates have an advanced level of writing and speaking. These courses also help to introduce engineering students to research activities like report writing, presentation delivery, and research conduct. These courses provide students with feedback which helps to develop their preparedness for corporate culture. Students are also expected to participate in team activities, so they experience teamwork, leadership, and social responsibilities. Special emphasis is placed on the group activities which develops individuals into leaders and improves their teamwork abilities. The main objective of these courses is to enhance undergraduate engineering student's proficiency in spoken and written English. By integrating listening, speaking, reading, and writing in an improved context, courses aim to develop students' contextual use of English.

As PEC is the single body which establishes and ensures quality assurance and standardization of engineering programs across Pakistan. All Pakistani universities need to get their programs accredited through PEC. Teachers keep updating the learning outcomes of courses and restructure modules to cater for the changing needs of students alongside the goals set by PEC. PEOs are broad descriptions of the outcomes graduates should achieve, the goals and objectives need to be aligned with that and linked to students learning outcomes and assessments. It is expected that all students have achieved the PLOs set by PEC. The twelve PLOs/graduate attributes provided by the PEC have been adopted by the university for its engineering programs, and the institution ensures that these PLOs are achieved by their respective CLOs (see Appendix A).

These details not only helped me align my study with the aspects I needed to observe and discuss with teachers and students, but I also used the insights gained from this review to guide my observations of presentation skills classes and develop the questions for interviews and focus groups. There was no obvious change in the teaching and assessment of presentation skills

over this period. Teaching staff remained the same and the course descriptors and evaluation criteria also followed similar patterns. By carefully reviewing these materials through an ethnographic lens, I gained valuable insights into the culture of presentation skills at the university and developed a more nuanced research knowledge.

3.9 Observations

Observations offer valuable insights into teaching and learning interventions in educational research providing the opportunity to gather data pertaining to an extensive spectrum of behaviours, to document a diverse array of interactions, and to candidly examine the subject of evaluation (Dimitra et al. 2024). Observations and field notes are data collection tools providing real time and authentic representation of educational environment than any other method of data collection (Asgari et al., 2021). One of the biggest advantages of utilising observations is that the researcher can record the events and interactions as they take place, considering it as the best suitable method to gather nonverbal data such as gestures, expressions and movements (Farid, 2022). As mentioned earlier in section 3.5.1, the reason behind choosing observations was influenced by Wenger's (1998) CoP which highlights that the concept of learning takes place through participation in real practice. Based on which, the classroom observations were chosen to capture shared practices and interactions of students in a natural, more authentic setting, noting Wenger's (1998) dimensions such as domain, community and practice. For example, observing occasions reflecting shared repertoire and mutual engagements among students.

Moreover, using observational methods, the evaluator can gain insight into matters that staff or participants are either oblivious of or unwilling or unable to openly discuss in a focus group or interview (Harvey, 2018). The purpose of choosing observation for this study was to develop my familiarity with the different methods used by my colleagues in their classes and to discover inconsistencies between theory and practice, particularly when teachers have a welcoming attitude towards student's suggestions/ideas. The inclusion of classroom observations was also guided by Long's (1996) interaction hypothesis, which highlights the significance of interaction in development of a language. The observations also aimed at exploring teacher students and peer interactions during the class and to what extent they contribute in developing effective presentation skills.

In ethnographic research, classroom observations serve to illuminate the connections between learning, social practices, and discourse in both L1 and L2 classroom environments. In ethnographic research, classroom observations are employed to examine the behaviours, interactions, and students level of engagement within educational environments (Sattar & Biria, 2016). According to Haraldsson et al. (2024b), naturalistic observations occur in the field, and

for ethnographers this refers to a cultural environment. Recognising the setting within an ethnographic technique is imperative for a comprehensive viewpoint, therefore the investigator endeavours to comprehend and encapsulate the circumstances in which individuals engage. Thus, I employed observation in my ethnographic study to obtain a comprehensive perspective on students' experiences in the classroom environment. I conducted an observation of each classroom for a duration of 1 to 1.5 hours over a span of three days which enabled me to engage with participants in their environment.

In their study on organisational culture in a Turkish firm, Yiyit and Arsalan (2020) highlighted that data gained through observation can effectively supplement the information gathered through other data collection methods. Through observation, qualitative observers have the chance to perceive items that may commonly go unnoticed by individuals in their environment, and it focuses on understanding the beliefs, behaviours and culture of the group under study (Faster Capital, 2024). Researchers can also uncover information that individuals may be hesitant to disclose during the interview. According to Balcom (2021), through observation a qualitative researcher can also uncover the norms and values that constitute an institution's culture by examining displayed objects, observing interactions between individuals, and analysing communication with the outside world.

The observations in my study aligned with the ethnographic technique, where I specifically examined the structural, social, and cultural context of higher education and how these factors influenced the positions of participants in their respective courses. I observed the students in their natural classroom setting to note the activities they were indulging in throughout the class, i.e. using phones, talking to each other or participating in the class. By observing teachers during classes, I observed the methodologies they used and discovered other dimensions of the learning context.

Deggs and Hernandez (2018) emphasised that an ethnographer's observation can be assessed through the quality of their field notes. They argue that field notes are not just records of the observations but combining them with reflective techniques, will result in more nuanced understanding of research. I followed Creswell and Creswell's (2018) observation technique which uses a single line to divide the page; on one side are descriptive notes and on the other are reflective notes (see Appendix L). The descriptive notes for this study included information on various aspects such as the physical location, conversations, a picture of participants, activities, etc. Additionally, this form was used to record demographic data regarding the specific time, date, and location of the observed field setting. I developed an observation protocol that was guided by my research questions, which focused on understanding the teaching and learning experiences of participants involved with presentation skills in the university setting. Table 3.2 illustrates the observation protocol. This observation protocol helped me gather consistent and

relevant data across different classroom settings, allowing for meaningful comparisons and analysis.

Table 3.2: Observation Protocol

Classroom Context	Teaching Practices	Student Engagement & Behaviours	Technology Integration	Data Recording	Reflexivity
Course: Name, discipline, level	Explicit Instruction: Did the instructor directly teach presentation skills?	Participation: Were students actively engaged in presentation-related activities?	Tools Used: Did the instructor incorporate technology into the presentation?	Field Notes: Detailed field notes using the protocol as a guide.	Personal Reactions: Notes of my own reactions and emotional responses
Instructor: Teaching experience, departmental affiliation	Activities & Assignments: What types of presentation-related activities did students engage in.	Collaboration: How did students interact with each other during group activities?	Effectiveness: Was technology used effectively?		
Classroom Environment Size, layout, available technology	Feedback Mechanisms: How did the instructor provide feedback on presentations?	Nonverbal Communication: What were students' nonverbal cues during presentations?			
	Classroom Climate: Did the instructor foster a supportive and inclusive environment?				

According to Balcom et al. (2021), observation has the potential for the observer to influence the circumstance due to their background and experiences. It is therefore useful to develop an understanding of the distortions and biases that qualitative researchers are prone to introducing during the observation process to mitigate their impact. The authors advocates that the

researcher's ongoing self-examination and introspection are crucial components of field research.

Aside from the descriptive notes, I created a distinct private field-diary/research journal to record my personal reflections including my emotions, viewpoints, and observations of the individuals I encountered and engaged with throughout each day. After each day, I consistently took the time to engage in introspection. I documented my reflective observations, which encompassed my contemplations, conjectures, emotions, concepts, intuitions, impressions, and biases prior to and following my interactions with individuals in the environment. I consistently maintained this technique during my observations in the field. Engaging in consistent self-reflection enabled me to take responsibility for my personal biases throughout the study process.

On the difficulties associated with observation, Shahshahani (2023) argued that this method may be restricted to observable external activities. Participants may exhibit characteristic behaviours when they are aware of being observed. As a result, the observer may lack the ability to perceive the internal thoughts and emotions of individuals. Therefore, regardless of the field in which data is gathered, researchers can only comprehend occurrences that are situated within their broader social and historical context. Observation methods are valuable tools for qualitative researchers due to their versatility and usefulness and combining them with other methods such as interviews enhances their validity and reliability (Dimitra et al., 2024). They furnished me with methods to assess the nonverbal manifestation of emotions, to comprehend how participants interact with individuals in diverse activities and circumstances, and to monitor the duration of different activities. It enabled me to verify the definitions of terminology used by interview participants and to witness occurrences that participants may be reluctant to disclose.

Bufahja et al. (2024) underscored the significance of the combinations of field notes and video recordings to gather the data on classroom interactions in detail, getting deeper insights into the educational context. Without any situations being overlooked. I took field notes during the observations and noted my reflection in the research diary afterwards. Additionally, the observations were also video recorded. Murphey et al. (2021) advocated the use of technological advancements for ethnographers as they get access to a range of tools to record data in an unobtrusive manner.

Ethnography, which relies on the in-depth study of a particular cultural group or context through immersive observation and engagement, is highly relevant in education field, involving observation, which is characterised by a strict adherence to specific guidelines. When implemented, this method enables a fieldworker to utilise the cultural context of a specific environment, which includes the info learned and revealed by the participants or members of that setting, to explain the observed patterns of human behaviour (Soldevila-Pérez et al., 2023).

Observations conducted for this current study revealed that lessons were designed to incorporate presentations, teaching practices and learning experiences as well as the classroom activities such as group discussions. However, some factors interrupted the observation, for example interruptions due to electricity shortages, the absence of multimedia, and students walking in during the class. In addition, being part of the university gave me more room to observe the natural behaviour of students; after a while most tended to forget I was sitting at the back of the room observing. My engagement with the class was very limited to ensure a true picture of the site and participants. For example, I did not comment or provide feedback during the conversation. The classrooms provided a feasible social setting to obtain realistic data on a specific group.

I aimed to observe three hours of lectures per teacher from one department (which had two sections), and for three departments, I aimed to observe 18 hours of lectures. In the end, I conducted 10 hours of observation (with one observation from an extra department). Some departments did not have two sections as the courses were being taught in one section due to smaller numbers of students. Moreover, teachers divided their lectures according to their own preferences, so instead of delivering a three-hour lecture, some delivered two lectures a week which gave me one to two hours of observation instead of three. The observations were conducted in natural classroom settings, and the application of multiple data collection methods helped me to gather a variety of perspectives. The schedule was followed for the observations (shown in Appendix B).

3.10 Focus Group Discussions

The questions were formulated for the focus group discussions with students from different engineering faculties. The students were mostly those who volunteered to participate; the discussions mainly involved questions such as, the effectiveness of teaching regarding presentation skills, how they can bring improvements in themselves, and what teaching methodologies they consider more effective (see Appendix C). The discussions were also video recorded to enable a detailed account, and thus recorded body language, and the participation level of students. All students agreed to participate in the focus group discussions; in fact, they seemed more inclined to participate in the focus groups than the teachers in the interviews. There were six students in each group, and the meetings lasted between an hour to an hour and a half.

In ethnography, the participant selection process identifies individuals with the potential to offer comprehensive and pertinent information. The generation of valuable data is significantly facilitated by an individual's willingness to participate completely in a group discussion; this is

easier to attain in a homogeneous group (Dahal et al. 2024). In this study, the students demonstrated a willingness to partake in the focus group discussions and the subject matter investigated was one they were all grappling with. The majority willingly participated, although the number of female students was comparatively small compared to male students.

Nergin et al. (2022) highlighted the value of recruitment that it has a significant impact on the quality of data collected also addressing the need to view challenges related to cultural sensitivity and adaptability, which can enhance and optimise the engagement of participants after identification. In their study on social networking in Victoria, Australia, Nguyen et al. (2023) discussed recruitment strategies; they employed various techniques to enlist appropriate participants such as - door-to-door canvassing, recruitment questionnaires, or telephone inquiries - among others. In addition, local networks, contacts, and the provision of incentives can be utilised to recruit participants. Nevertheless, the reliance on local contacts for recruitment has drawn criticism due to its reliance on their availability, willingness, and accessibility, and it also shows the researchers lack power which may result in sampling where the participants are chosen based on the access i.e. convenience sampling (Nguyen et al., 2023).

An additional factor that warrants attention is the quantity of participants consulted. The participants ratio in this study (between six and eight) is generally considered adequate (Tran et al., 2021; Guest et al., 2016). Hennink and Kaiser (2022) presented a structured review to identify sample size for saturation highlighting that saturation is often achieved within 4–8 focus group discussions, especially in research which has homogenous population and narrowly defined objectives. When the number of members exceeds twelve, group dynamics become challenging to regulate and there is a risk of fragmentation into two or three smaller groups, with each conducting an autonomous discussion, thus the larger groups lead to reduced idea generation, it is considered as “blocking effect” (Galanti, 2019).

Due to the limited number of participants and the one-time nature of focus group discussions, it is not possible to conduct an exhaustive discussion of a topic through one discussion. Nyumba et al. (2018) suggested conducting focus group discussions until a discernible pattern arises and further groups fail to generate novel information. While some studies may reconvene groups for subsequent meetings, this can be challenging as circumstances and individuals may have changed (de Souza et al., 2024).

Resolving this matter requires the identification of a practical location for the discourse. Furthermore, participants should be situated in a comfortable and familiar environment that provides ample space to accommodate various activities that occur during the discussion, including exercise sessions, evaluation tasks, and sample examinations, thus tailoring environment according to participants needs (Muijeen et al., 2020). The FGDs were conducted in an unoccupied staffroom furnished with a sizable table and chairs, and the environment was

relatively quiet. One focus group discussion occurred in an unoccupied classroom within one of the engineering departments.

In-depth interviews are also known as ethnographic, concentrated, and unstructured interviews. These interviews involve actively engaging the participant in conversation about a certain topic or issue related to the research questions or topic being studied. Frequently, in-depth interviews complement participant observations by offering a means to articulate and explain social aspects of everyday life, while observation provides insight into the actualities of daily existence. Focus groups in this study were organised in a similar manner, with adaptable questions to promote a conversational atmosphere and a non-intimidating setting. Interviewing is essential in situations where it is not possible to directly witness behaviour, emotions, or individuals' interpretations of their surroundings. The researcher must perform an unstructured, open-ended interview, record the interview on audio, and transcribe it (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). Additionally, the researcher should take precautions to guarantee the safety and privacy of participants.

Focus group discussions were conducted in which the researcher/observer sat with the group who discussed points on presentation skills based on the research questions. Bajnok et al. (2024) believed that a focus group is time efficient data collection method as it incorporates several participants simultaneously which avoids the need for individual interviews. The focus group is an interactive session where the conversation can lead from one point to another; this means it elicits a range of perspectives from participants and encourages participation by offering various ideas for discussion (Chai et al., 2024).

The decision to gather students' perceptions via focus group discussions was also inspired by McCroskey's (1977) communication apprehension, by recognising that it might be uncomfortable for students to openly share their experiences in a formal setting. Creating a discussion environment that is peer-based provides students with a platform where they can comfortably express the challenges and hurdles, they face in communication. Brown (2016) advocated adopting a 'Socratic circle' for active participation with less intervention by the researcher. In a 'Socratic circle' participants tend to sit in a circle which enables them to see each other and interact. In this study students were a little nervous but sitting in a Socratic circle encouraged them to participate. The Socratic circle aims to encourage discussion between participants or at least provide them with confidence to speak by seeing the others speak, as her study highlights the significance of sitting in circle to encourage the discussion posed to be beneficial. Within the focus group discussion, when some students were not particularly interactive others spoke about their classroom experiences and the issues they face with conducting presentations. There were a few participants who did not speak at all so to elicit their opinion they were asked about their agreement or disagreement on certain points.

During the first focus group, participants were given PIS and consent forms. They were asked to read the information and give their consent to participate, answering questions regarding their experience of learning presentation skills. The students were then asked the pre-determined questions, and the researcher tried not to intervene while they were speaking, thus giving them the opportunity to offer their perspectives rather than leading them with ideas. All discussions were set up in a similar manner. The aim was to promote a meaningful discussion and gather variety of ideas from the group. I acted as the facilitator and encouraged the participants to speak. When they diverged from the focus of the discussion, I intervened to bring the discussion back to the topic. The major points offered were also captured in my field notes.

Although the research design included interviews with participants from three specific faculties; to gain richer data the research was also extended to other faculties. Hennink and Kaiser (2022) suggested conducting additional interviews to check the accuracy of the answers and obtain a richer account of the data. One of the focus groups had six individuals of which four were girls who remained unusually quiet. Although the researcher wanted to hold a mixed gender focus group, despite encouragement the female participants did not say much, therefore another (single sex) focus group meeting was arranged to gather a more detailed perspective. The questions were based on learning experiences and how much students believe presentation skills add value to their professional abilities. I developed each question as an open, non-leading inquiry while encouraging students to share their experiences.

3.11 Interviews

Interviews are inquisitive in nature and allow the researcher access to in-depth information from a range of perspectives (Taherdoost, 2022). He also described an interview as an encounter between the researcher and participant through a variety of means (face to face, via telephone, or through group discussion) which provides an opportunity to obtain historical detail by employing various question strategies. According to McGrath (2018), in qualitative research, there are a set of standards on which interviews are conducted, which enables the accurate recording of each conversation.

The structure of the questions in interviews and focus group discussions was also guided by Kolb's (1984) theory which highlights learning through reflection, experience and active experimentation. Interviews and focus group discussions aimed at exploring students' engagement, reflective thinking and practice to enhance their presentation skills. The questions of both interviews were based on a subjective pattern that gathered teachers' opinions on the university and students' views on learning presentation skills. A recent study by Ruokonen-Engler (2025) highlighted the relational element, noting the need to establish a relationship

between the observer and participants before conducting a detailed interview that includes participants' narratives of their experiences.

More than one meeting was held with participants to give them a detailed understanding of the study, and to obtain their consent. The researcher also offered assurances of confidentiality so that the participant felt secure to offer accurate and honest information. DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019) described interviewing as a method where the researcher is an instrument with the capability and flexibility to efficiently pose questions and skilfully interact during a discussion. This method of qualitative research also opens an avenue for the researcher to develop an insight into the experiences of others and gather opinions based on those experiences.

A researcher is also an observer and has an opportunity to gain an understanding of participants in the study. This can lead to an understanding of their feelings and their impressions of events which offers detailed meaning for a study (Wilhoit & Kisselburgh, 2015). In their study on Pakistani doctoral students, Waheed et al. (2019) conducted interviews with twenty participants. They highlighted the significance of interviews as they provided an in-depth understanding of the factors influencing participants' decisions.

A recording device was used to record participants' perspectives, although some points were also noted alongside, and each interview took place in a private comfortable environment to encourage participants to share their experiences and views. Although there were pre-determined lengths for the interviews, each varied according to the participant responses. Rogers et al. (2021) suggested that interviews should be times according to participants level, however young participants may require less time for their responses as they may not offer detailed answers. For this study, the interviews took between 30 to 40 minutes whilst the focus group meeting significantly varied in length. Ponizovsky-Bergelson et al. (2019) emphasised the need to tailor the duration of interviews when working with younger participants. They also noted that focus group discussions with young learners can be short as they may have a shorter attention span. Although the students in this study were adults, other factors led to their precise answers. The length of each interview was managed to avoid impacting on the teacher's routine activities.

According to Elhami and Khoshnevisan (2022), interviews should be based in daily life but are a more professional conversation. Interviews can thus be described as an oral questionnaire. Participants are more willing to speak than to write while an interview allows the researcher to communicate with the participant and maintain a good connection. It also provides a chance to indulge into questions that are emerging from interviewee's responses and therefore offers a more comprehensive account than a questionnaire.

Ruslin et al. (2022) described semi-structured interviews as an arrangement between both types of structured and unstructured interviews. The questions are designed and formatted beforehand, but the interviewer can ask questions that emerge during the conversation or from the participant's response. DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019) highlighted the significance of semi structured interviews in the situations where the interviewer is fully aware of the context and can lead discussion with the open-ended wide array of questions.

In this study, they provide an account how the classroom mechanism works and how they deliver and learn presentation skills courses. The semi-structured interviews considered factors that influence the learning of presentation skills, the extent to which teachers believe they are achieving their goals, and their recommendations to improve teaching and students' learning. After taking field notes and conducting ethnographic observations, the semi structured interviews were transcribed, which involved listening to the recording several times. The teachers were given PIS and their consent recorded on the consent forms. The views offered in Urdu were translated into English. After transcribing, the responses were divided according to the relevant research questions, while comments and recommendations were written separately to observe similarities between participants. The responses were categorised to help answer the research questions and to identify whether any new concepts had emerged to offer a new direction for further research.

3.12 Triangulation

To augment the validity, the study employed triangulation, which refers to the combination of a range of research methods and data sources to develop and validate the findings. The findings derived from observations, interviews and focus groups were triangulated to strengthen the reliability and provide enriched results. Triangulation enabled a comparison of results from various data sources to develop a more nuanced interpretation of the findings. It ensured that the findings were corroborated through multiple lenses which minimised the impact of subjective interpretations inherent in qualitative research. To identify convergence and discrepancies, responses from diverse groups were analysed. By confirming that the interpretations were grounded in multiple forms of evidence, the triangulation process provided a more robust framework to discuss the findings and offer conclusions. For example, the field notes from the observations suggested that the lecture method was not sufficiently engaging for students, however relying on findings my observations and field notes would not have been sufficient unless also confirmed by the students and teachers involved. This provided assurances from multiple lenses, which might have been overlooked if the study relied on any single data source. Thus, employing triangulation not only provided validation but gave a more holistic and credible picture of the topic under study.

As triangulation was employed by combining data from three distinct sources, this approach gave a multifaceted understanding of the research questions and provided an opportunity to verify the results. The observations provided insights into participants' behaviours, the classroom environment, interactions during the class, and contextual nuances that might not have been articulated verbally by other tools. During the interviews teachers gave their perspectives and experiences, providing a rich individual narrative of the topic under investigation. Similarly focus group discussions not only illuminated the personal perspectives of students but also facilitated interesting and useful exchanges between students, unveiling their collective perspectives, shared experiences, and points of disagreement.

Each data set was systematically analysed and compared to identify the points of convergence and divergence. For example, the observational data indicated that teachers did not provide sufficient feedback to students collectively or individually, which aligned with participants' comments in the interviews when they shared concerns about the lack of feedback for future presentations. The teachers agreed but also recognised the impact of time constraints and large student cohorts. Another example included participant perceptions of the teaching methodology adopted. Observational data indicated that students showed more engagement and interest in group activities/discussions as they frequently interacted with peers and teachers in this context. The teachers' perspectives corroborated this, as most considered these methods more engaging and motivational; however, they also expressed concerns that these methods were more time consuming. After comparing these datasets, I was not only able to validate the findings but also identify deeper meanings to address potential biases from single data sources. Table 3.3 explains the triangulation process and provides information on how each data set contributed to a more comprehensive analysis.

Table 3.3 highlights findings from a specific area, as derived from the range of data from interview, focus group meetings and observations. The conclusion and insights detailed synthesized the findings and actionable insights of each theme. It also describes how triangulated data from the data sources contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the specific concept, highlighting one area that requires improvement. Thus, Table 3.3 illustrated how triangulated data from observations, teacher interviews, and student focus groups contribute to a comprehensive understanding of an issue and highlight an area that needs improvement through fostering interactivity, addressing language barriers, and revising assessment practices.

Table 3.3: Triangulation of the Data Sources

Theme/Aspects	Observation	Interview (Teachers)	Focus Group (Students)	Conclusion/Insight
Effectiveness of Teaching Methods	Teachers used a lecture method employing multimedia and slides and hardly interacting with students.	Teachers feel constrained due to limited time and the large number of students in classes, making it difficult to apply interactive techniques	Students indicate the need for more individual feedback and expressed a desire for more interactive sessions.	Current teaching methods are theoretical, lacking the interaction with and engagement of students.
Challenges regarding use of English language in presentations	Many students were seen reading from slides and were reluctant to use English.	Teachers find it difficult to support varying levels of English language proficiency amongst students.	Students shared views about feeling anxious using English and that this affects their confidence.	One of the major hinderances is the language barrier that affects students' confidence.
Administrative support	A lack of resources such as old dysfunctional devices in the classroom	Teachers are not provided sufficient resources; A lack of confidence in English limited participation.	Students agreed that there were limited resources and no available elibrary or presentation software.	Lack of resources affect the process of teaching and learning in the classrooms.
Assessment and Feedback	General feedback and individual performances were overlooked.	Teachers admitted they give general feedback as they cannot cater to all students during the class. They have a massive workload and struggle to give individual feedback in the allocated time.	Students mentioned they receive limited feedback and teachers can be too harsh and derogatory in front of the class.	Adequate assessment based on individual needs is necessary to improve students' presentations.

3.13 Ethical Considerations

According to Sim et al. (2021), ethics are an extremely sensitive matter as it involves the rights of the people involved in study. They provided a checklist for ethics which suggested that transparent official channels should be adopted, and formal permission should be taken before starting the project. Therefore, they indicate the importance of conversing with potential participants to inform them of the main themes of the research, and to ensure they are informed about both confidentiality and anonymity, and the process of managing and storing data.

Thus, it needs to be ensured that the researcher holds the ethical and moral values, which need considering before, during and after the collection of data. In the United Kingdom, the 'Data Protection Act' have the control to ensure that consent is taken before collection of data. Kyi et al. (2024) suggested that it is always reasonable that the participants should be approached in a formal manner by providing a written request for participation and they should also be given full information regarding the use of the data obtained from them.

I was granted permission to continue with my study in September/October 2018 by the ethical committee in the then School of Education at the University of Strathclyde. The consent forms were taken from participants before they were interviewed or observed (see Appendix N).

Memon et al. (2024) emphasised participants' rights to research dignity and privacy, asserting that the research may benefit from participants but does not have the right to cause them stress and it should be culturally sensitive and involve family role where necessary. The participants of this study were told that they could exercise their right to leave at any moment; all were assured that their names would not be mentioned anywhere, and that their data would be destroyed after a specified period of time. The teachers concerned about their lectures begin recorded were advised the recording and data would remain confidential and would not reach any of their colleagues or manager. They were also informed about pseudonyms and that they would remain anonymous.

Students were similarly reassured about their presentations and that offering their honest views would not affect their grades. I have ensured that pseudonyms are given to the participants, and no kind of information is revealed through any means. all research methods in this study. As Pascale et al. (2022) emphasised, individuals participating in a study should not be identified by any person including the researcher. In addition, I endeavoured to assure the anonymity of the university. Thus, although I knew the institution and individuals who had provided the information, I would not reveal any identities publicly. I maintained confidentiality in terms of the information participants shared; I ensured I kept the data at a safe and private place at home instead of university where only I had access. I aimed at getting consent before which the participants were fully aware, they were provided with PIS and verbally assured regarding protection and confidentiality. The informed consents were taken, aspects such as intrusion and

any kind of deception were avoided, assurance of no harm and manipulation was given in a respectable manner (Verbeke et al., 2023).

It is crucial to consider ethical considerations in the following three stages:

- 1) Prior to the start of the research process,
- 2) While collecting and processing the data, and
- 3) After the end of the study.

Before the research process started, legal considerations were taken into account, which vary from country to country. The UK's 'Data Protection Act' stipulates the need for transparency in the collection of research data in UK universities, thus requiring consent forms and participant information sheets. In addition, the university requires an application for ethical approval from each research student which is reviewed by a committee. For this study, I completed the ethics application and sent it to the University of Strathclyde's ethics committee for review. The ethical form included the provision of participant confidentiality, ways to avoid stress on the participants, an outline of the research methods intended, and a list of proposed interviews (individual and focus group) questions. Potential hazards were also discussed in the application and how I intended to address them. The department took several rounds to ensure nothing was missing after which permission was granted.

As well as providing Participant Information Sheets to all participants, I verbally explained the details of the study (Appendix M). In addition, participants were given consent forms, giving them the authority to decide whether to participate along with an outline of how they would be contributing to the understanding of presentation skills at the university. Akuffo (2023) stipulation of confidentiality to participants was particularly assured with those who were reluctant after going through the PIS. These individuals were verbally assured that their data would not be revealed to anyone, and that they could give their opinion freely. Surmiak (2020) interviewed Polish researchers studying vulnerable populations and stressed that the gathering of sensitive information increases the responsibility of the researcher to maintain confidentiality. For example, some participants were concerned about being video recorded despite assurances that classroom strategies and presentations would not be shared. This issue took time to address and required some rescheduling. Participants were also assured that they could interact in Urdu if they found it more comfortable than English.

It took some time to build trust from teachers that their responses would be treated confidentially, whilst the few students who expressed concern were assured about confidentiality quicker. After providing students with the PIS, some questions emerged which were verbally answered; all questions were addressed to enable the student to decide about participation. Some interesting ideas were also discussed regarding the use of the English

language in Pakistan, including how students tend to deal with English as a status symbol in the country.

3.14 Establishment of Research Quality

An effective research strategy necessitates meticulous planning, and it is common for this strategy to incorporate a pilot study, which serves as a logistical test and a small-scale experiment. A pilot study serves to acquire information prior to a large-scale investigation and enhances the quality and efficiency of the main study (Regional Educational Laboratory Appalachia, 2024). It provides opportunities for the early detection of shortcomings in the experimental design or procedure proposed and allows for their remediation (In, 2017). Moreover, in qualitative research, the concept of a pilot study assumes significant importance when an investigator wishes to document the social practices and culture of ‘others’ (Aziz & Khan, 2021). Hence, it is imperative they acquire knowledge of novel concepts via an experimental study to prepare for forthcoming challenges. Pilot studies can be comprehended through the lens of Heidegger's hermeneutic circle, which implies that to develop understanding, one must possess a practical sense of the domain in which a phenomenon is situated.

Nevertheless, the pragmatic benefits of conducting a pilot study are evident in research spanning the entire qualitative continuum. A considerable number of ethnographic researchers have acknowledged these benefits, either openly or tacitly. The methodological perspectives of researchers may impact the way they implement a pilot study in qualitative research. In addition to that, pilot study increases the validity and reliability of the research (Muasya & Mulwa, 2023). Pilot study is pivotal to maintain ethical reflexivity by allowing the researcher to evaluate the factors such as their biases and positionality (Lees et al., 2022). Many researchers utilise a pilot experience to develop their research queries (Malmqvist et al., 2019), gather contextual data, and modify their investigations. Nevertheless, comprehensive reporting on prototypes in retrospective accounts of research in action has been uncommon, and there are few philosophical justifications for this predicament; instead, numerous pragmatic considerations render such choices appropriate. However, the use of pilot studies remains largely unexplored and under-considered, which means that novice researchers may be ignorant of its advantages in ethnographic research. It is also possible that researchers underutilise pilot studies, and neglect to recognise the advantages that can result from an initial engagement with the field.

Previous researchers have employed this methodology to assess the soundness of their findings by soliciting participant feedback on research accounts before they are published (Thomas, 2016; Chase, 2017). While the responses I obtained were affirming and bolstered my

confidence, they were only marginally beneficial in improving the study. Rather, participants consistently expressed that the interview was completely thorough and sufficient.

Transparency in the research design, attention to the validity and dependability of data, and the capacity to establish trustworthiness are critical determinants of the validity and dependability of ethnographic research. Ethnography meticulously records social environments, interpersonal connections, and routine encounters; it also captures sentimental and introspective elements which enhance its credibility. To bolster credibility, internal validity can be strengthened by applying data triangulation, reflectivity, and member checks, while it is also important to consider external and internal dependability.

In ethnographic research, scholars engage in firsthand observations of subjects' daily lives to develop an intimate understanding of phenomena; this contributes to the generation of dependable and credible research outcomes. Furthermore, in ethnographic studies, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are critical determinants of validity and reliability as they ensure the trustworthiness of the findings (Arslan, 2022). The ontological, epistemological, and theoretical perspectives of researchers determine the validity and dependability of ethnographic research, which influences the methods selected and assure both credibility and trustworthiness (Rafat & Nasrabad, 2018). The trustworthiness and validity of ethnographic research are compromised by the collaborative nature of the data collection process, the continuous development of interpretations, and the researchers' accountability for the data's integrity.

3.15 Piloting

To ensure the research instruments functioned as intended, pilot research was carried out at one of the departments after gaining ethical approval. I piloted focus group interviews at both departments. Focus group interviews provided an insight into students' opinions in a relaxed environment, and all information (including body language and facial expressions) were recorded and for later analysis. Their body language and expressions were recorded in handwritten notes, and the degree of vocality in answering questions, alongside any evident nerves or confusion were also captured. My aim was to identify their experience of learning presentation skills and the course teaching at their department.

The researcher must carefully consider the significance of a reasonable question to be asked before commencing an interview, regardless of the type of interview conducted. The students were asked regarding their presentation skills and teaching practices at the university, the challenges faced during presentations, and how they dealt with them. Although the first group discussion lasted for 40 minutes, I took field notes during the discussion to supplement the data

collection. The second group discussion lasted an hour and was captured on video as well as in field notes. As it was an open-ended discussion I aimed to obtain a wide range of information. Students felt more comfortable responding to questions when sitting with a group with similar interests. I obtained more spontaneous responses as the discussion led from one topic to another, and as one student's response triggered another. The discussions were mainly conducted in Urdu; although I asked the questions in English, students were more comfortable replying in Urdu.

For the focus groups, participants were invited in the classroom where the video recording device was placed; they were identified through random sampling as most students from both classes volunteered. As mentioned above, the participants were ensured about confidentiality when they were provided with the participant information sheets and consent forms. The pilot study commenced after participants had read the PIS and signed the consent form; students were also verbally asked if they were comfortable sharing their views was the main idea, as they needed to be at ease. The pilot participants were therefore asked:

- Is everything clear and you have received sufficient instruction?
- Do you find it difficult to understand the language or statements in the PIS or consent form?
- Do you have any reservations in answering any of the questions?
- Are you comfortable with being video recorded?
- Is there anything else you would like to say about this discussion?

There were a few impacts on the pilot study including unexpected delays due to strikes in the country which saw the university close, and exams which made it difficult to access students for the required time. Nevertheless, many students confirmed their interest in these discussions, one of their teachers also encouraged them to get involved, also helping me to identify a time to meet and share the theme.

The piloting of the semi structured interview with teachers was not as difficult and time consuming to coordinate, as the teachers were more available during the exams. Thus, I interviewed one of the teachers to identify whether there were any issues with the instrument. The interview was conducted in an office in the department; it was a relatively quiet area which meant it was appropriate for video recording. I ensured that my body language is comfortable so that teacher can easily discuss their views instead of feeling stressed. I started with greetings and thanks for their participation in the research; we conversed in Urdu and gave an account of my research. We went through the PIS and discussed the topic which she indicated was useful as it included one of the agendas discussed in meetings with the university chairpersons. I used the voice recorder and reassured the participant about the confidentiality of the session and their data. I also reassured them that the session was solely for the purpose of the research and that

their name would never be revealed. I advised that they would be given pseudonyms. During the interview I offered channelling signals to the participant such as nods, verbal agreement to make them feel comfortable. I also offered feedback through gestures that confirmed their views were important for my research. I did not refrain from giving a polite negative gesture to indicate when more detail was needed. I gave encouraging gestures during the discussions/interviews and remained quiet at other times to give the participant the opportunity to speak. I asked about their opinions on various aspects, with specific focus on the learning of presentation skills. Finally, I gave an opportunity to the participant at the end of the discussion to add anything else they felt was important and thanked them for their time. The participant/teacher was escorted to the exit door after the pilot interview to demonstrate courtesy.

I also piloted the observation in the classroom of the same department and checked where I should be positioned, and whether there were any logistical issues to address (e.g., visibility, noise). I obtained informed consent from both the teacher and students, emphasising the pilot's purpose and that their participation was voluntary. Nevertheless, I was concerned about if the length of observation allowed for the capture of a representative sample. There were also issues with the clarity of voice during the presentations as some of the students had a low voice. To address this, I quietly explored alternative observer positions closer to the front of the room. I also tested the recording device for some time to identify its working and results.

3.15.1 Challenges Encountered during the Process

Gaining consent from the teachers was difficult and delayed the start of the research; for example, one teacher gave verbal consent but then did not want to be video recorded during the observation, and eventually they withdrew their consent. There were few teachers who did not want their full lecture to be recorded, so instead they allowed portions where they were teaching “presentation skills” to be recorded. However, but I stayed there throughout the lectures to take field notes on the portions not recorded (I took field notes during entire lectures with or without a video recording).

There were several changes in teachers’ schedules which extended the process more than expected. Some national strikes/issues also caused delays which meant the university was closed for full days. Moreover, the availability of students was another challenge I did not expect to face, as they had very busy schedules, and 12 noon to 1pm was the main slot that they were available. However, this time was their lunch time. In addition, I wanted to hold the focus group discussions after their lectures on presentation skills which further took time to coordinate.

The pilot study revealed that students felt pressured to be observed and recorded, and some of the teachers were also apprehensive about being recorded. Although I wanted to have a mixed gender group the women observing veil initially refused to participate while being recorded. I explained that the videos would remain with me and would be strictly for research purposes. This convinced them that they could participate without any fear, and they gave their consent. Similarly, the students concerned about the recording of their presentations were ensured that the video would not be shown anywhere else, nor affect their grades. Furthermore, several of the teachers only agreed to be recorded during their teaching of presentation skills. To compensate field notes were taken of the complete environment.

3.15.2 Validity and Reliability of the Research Instruments

This needs to be ensured as part of the planning process. Firstly, Hayashi et al. (2019) considered validity in terms of the accuracy, appropriateness and usefulness of the conclusions made from the data analysis considering it a continuous process. There are two types of validity, one is internal that determines the accuracy of outcomes and then external validity is to describe the level of the application of these findings to other scenarios or settings. Ahmed and Ishtiaq (2021) considered reliability and validity to be crucial in research, highlighting that reliability is linked with the truthfulness in data collected. In this study, the sample was purposefully selected based on merit to elicit data from key departments/faculties of the university.

I ensured validity and reliability by conducting a comprehensive review of existing literature on L2 presentation skills. I considered effective pedagogy in these contexts, and the specific challenges and needs of Pakistani engineering students. I also ensured that the instruments aligned with the specific learning objectives and content of the presentation skills courses evaluated. I also used a variety of instruments to capture different facets of the constructs and compared the results obtained with those from other established measures of presentation skills or L2 proficiency. I conducted pilot tests with all instruments with a representative sample of participants to identify any issues with clarity, cultural sensitivity, or ease of use.

Ethnography relies heavily on the researcher's interpretations. Personal biases and assumptions can influence data collection, analysis, and reporting. In addition, the presence of a researcher can alter the behaviour of participants and potentially affect the authenticity of the data. Students knowing they are observed during presentations might overperform, which would not reflect their usual skills. Moreover, ethnographic findings are deeply embedded in the context studied which means generalisability to other settings can be challenging. This study investigates the effectiveness of presentation skills teaching in an L2 context within a Pakistani engineering university. While the findings offer valuable insights into this specific setting, it is crucial to approach their generalisability with caution. There are several engineering universities, and the same university has several branches. These (public) universities have a

similar kind of environment in terms of resources and student populations. Thus, the findings are not limited to one university but could also be applied to other similar institutions.

3.15.3 Participants

I chose students from different faculties which offered perspectives from different departments, although all students were taking presentation skills courses. The participants were teachers of communication skills, technical report writing, and presentation skills courses, and student participants enrolled on these courses. Observations included both teachers and students whose details are listed in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Participant Information

Demographic Variable	Teachers	Students
Age Range	30-50	18-20
Gender	Female	Male, Female
Educational Background	M.Phil.	High School, Undergraduate
Teaching Experience	3-10 years	N/A
Subject Area	Communication skills, technical report writing and presentation skills, functional English	N/A
Geographic Location	Urban	Urban, Suburban, Rural
Teaching Institution Type	Public School, University	N/A
Type of School	Public School, Private School	Public School, Private school
Language Proficiency	Fluent, Proficient, Basic/Intermediate	Basic/Intermediate
Socioeconomic Status	Middle-income, High-income	Low-income, Middle-income
Ethnicity/Race	Punjabi	Punjabi, Sindhi, Balochi, Pathan, Siraiki, Kashmiri

The methods, sources and techniques for this study are listed in Table 3.5:

Table 3.5: Methods, Sources and Techniques for the Study

Method	Source	Technique	Approach	Research Questions
Observation	Participants: Students and Teachers	Ethnographic observation	Handwritten Field Notes, Video recording	RQ 2,6
One to One Interview	Participants: Teachers	Semi structured open-ended questions	Handwritten Field Notes/Transcripts, Audio recording	RQ 1,2,3,5,6,
Focus group interview/discussion	Participants: Students	Semi structured open-ended questions in Socratic circle	Handwritten Field Notes/Transcripts, Video recordings	RQ 3,4,5,6

3.16 Academic Precision and Credibility

To obtain a fair and honest representation of the participants, their narratives of their classroom experiences, and the researcher/observers' experiences and reflective thinking were needed to ensure an appropriate data quality. Denzin and Lincoln (2017) strongly recommended that trustworthiness is given the greatest importance to maintain impartiality. Thus, protocols for observations, interviews and discussions were established and confidentiality, privacy, safety were ensured to maintain the accuracy of the data. This helps to produce productive and valuable outcomes and provides a deeper, clearer understanding of human experience and interaction. As I have been a teacher as well as a researcher at the university it was my ethical responsibility to remain unbiased and not compromise the empirical outcomes. My role was as a facilitator of the interviews and a non-participant observer during the observations. Takyi (2015) described the observer as someone who is from outside and not part of the environment, thus need to maintain a distance while gathering information during the research process to maintain the ethical standards and validity of the research.

It is essential for a researcher to provide ample information to participants to let them know the value they will be adding through their contribution. The protocols guided the data types that were to be gathered from the methods applied, which were based on objectives and research questions (Flanagan, 2024). Moreover, informal discussions with the faculty head of departments and vice chancellor proved useful during the data collection process. Finally, the trustworthiness and safety of the data was ensured from feedback by advisors who recommended the adoption of several techniques.

3.17 Organising the Field Work

Procedural steps need to be addressed before initiating a study so that the researcher knows the techniques to collect and maintain data during the collection process (Bhandari, 2022). Bingham (2023) presented five phase process for the collection, storage, transformation and composing of data. They explained that the transformation of data means arranging a large amount of information in a way that allows the researcher to review it and organise it in a systematic order to draw inferences, find responses for the study, and reach conclusions. The data gathered during this study involved transcripts, observation field notes, interviews and focus group discussions.

Field notes taken during the observations considered the instructional methods of the teachers and the interactions amongst students during the class, whereas the observations of the students' presentations included various aspects of presentations, environment of the class and students' teachers' engagement. The handwritten field notes were later typed and modified by incorporating detail, after which the notes taken during this interviews/discussion were typed.

This chapter provides details about how the of data collection process occurred. The research methods are discussed in detail along with variety of components, such as participants, sampling, field notes, and time spent on each method, were also discussed in this chapter. The schedules according to which the data was collected, the techniques and approaches used were also discussed detailed in tables. This chapter has given a detailed account of the rationale behind qualitative research and the ethnographic approach while providing comprehensive info on how the of data collection took place.

3.18 Positionality: Emic and Etic Perspectives

It is essential to realise the importance of etic and emic perspectives in research. An etic viewpoint is the one that involves objective and outsider/external perceptions on reality (Creswell & Poth, 2018) while an emic view is explained as the perception of the native/insider with their own cultural and personal experiences to provide an in-depth understanding of reality (Bausch et., 2024). Elshazly (2023) explained etic and emic influences as the variety of narratives provided by a particular culture and the information gathered from the subjective perspective of the researcher. The subjectivity of the researcher ensures the provision of fair data without any biasness. Indeed, according to Vigo-Arrazola (2023) researcher reflexivity represents the etic influence when gathering information in the classroom culture. However, if a qualitative researcher only adopts an etic perception in their study, they risk ignoring the intricacies and ideas that can only be gathered thorough observation and interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Insider positions assumed by researchers are essential for qualitative investigations as they offer distinct benefits although they also pose particular challenges (Chammas et al., 2020). Similar to Roxburgh's (2022) reflection on the "in-between" role, I had a dual cultural position in this study, namely of the researcher and teacher, which required the careful management of rapport, neutrality, and ethical boundaries. Being an insider/researcher, I shared the language and culture amongst other traits with participants which helped to build rapport and rapidly obtain data which ultimately supported the study process. Being an insider gave me an advantage in navigating sensitive areas, such as when female students were reluctant to be recorded, as I had a prior understanding of the social context of the study. However, in some situations researchers can face challenges in managing conflicting responsibilities, which can pose hinderances to objectivity and accuracy when interpreting the findings. My role as an insider enabled me to grasp the distinct perspectives of participants enabling a deeper understanding of cultural sensitivities.

To address both subjective and objective biases, I have provided a comprehensive account of the research methodology applied along with reflective notes to illuminate my position within this research ensuring an objective standpoint and the maintenance of impartiality in both progress and outcomes. Utilising detailed and profound explanations, along with participants' comments, helped to diminish any biasness or favouritism. It increased my consciousness of predetermined aspects and minimised the elements of subjectivity (Peddle, 2022). Ensuring a harmonious combination of emic and etic views is crucial in achieving an accurate portrayal of participants' experiences and views. Thus, all qualitative studies share the same fundamental characteristics, which include: an objective to acquire understanding and meaning, and researchers being the main source to gather and then analyse data.

3.19 Data Sets

To comprehensively analyse the qualitative aspects of teaching and learning presentation skills in a university setting, the researcher needed to collect a substantial range of materials, which can be obtained by summarising the datasets as follows:

3.19.1 Document Analysis

Document analysis is considered a systemic procedure to analyse documents in both electronic and printed form (Khaloufah, 2025). A thorough review of the university program learning outcomes and course learning outcomes revealed a clear emphasis on effective communication as a desirable graduate attribute. For instance, in the course documentation, PLO 10 stated that, "Graduates will be enabled to effectively communicate in both written and oral forms," highlighting the institution's recognition of the importance of communication skills, including

presentation skills, for professional success. Similarly, CLO 2 explicitly states that, "students will have the enhanced English language communication," demonstrating a commitment to equipping students with this specific skill. Although the importance of communication is acknowledged, the PLOs and CLOs lack detail on specific presentation skill requirements. This misalignment between the stated learning outcomes, the observed teaching practices, and students' perceived needs highlights the need for a more structured, integrated approach to the development of presentation skills at this university.

There were several categories and lists I encountered when reviewing course outlines and assessment criteria to evaluate presentation skills. These were as follows:

1. **Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:** Academic documents outlining the key objectives and intended learning outcomes for students focused on presentation skills and include the ability to:
 - Design and deliver clear, engaging, and well-organised presentations.
 - Use effective verbal and non-verbal communication techniques.
 - Create visual aids that support and enhance oral communication.
 - Analyse and adapt to specific audiences.
2. **Content and Topics:** Course outlines provide detail on the specific content areas and topics covered, such as:
 - The process of designing a presentation from conception to delivery.
 - The difference between informal and formal presentations.
 - Modes of formal presentation.
 - The purpose of oral presentations.
3. **Assessment Criteria:** Documents should present the criteria used to assess presentation skills, which might include:
 - Content accuracy and depth.
 - Clarity of the message and organisation.
 - Visual design of presentation materials.
 - Delivery skills (articulation, pace, volume, and body language).
 - Audience engagement and interaction.
4. **Methodology for Assessment:** Includes how the presentations will be evaluated, such as:

- Rubrics with detailed performance levels for each criterion.
 - Teacher's observational notes and scoring.
 - The breakdown of marks.
5. **Resources and Materials:** Course outline might list the resources provided to support students in developing presentation skills, such as:
- Textbooks, articles on effective presentation techniques.
 - Access to technology like presentation software or recording equipment.
6. **Policies and Procedures:** Details are given for class policies concerning:
- Attendance and participation expectations.
 - Submission guidelines for presentation materials.
 - Academic integrity and originality in creating presentation content.
7. **Non-Verbal Communication:** Documents also include aspects, such as:
- Appearance and dress code.
 - Body language.
 - 'Vocalics'/paralanguage.
 - Importance of time and space.
 - Significance of listening.

3.19.2 Observations

From the ethnographic observation data in a presentation skills classroom at the university (research site), the categories and lists included:

Teaching Strategies:

- Lecture: Direct instruction on specific presentation skills.
- Demonstration: Modeling effective presentation techniques.
- Interactive Activities: Encouraging students to practice skills through group activities.
- Feedback Sessions: Providing constructive critiques on student presentations.
- Peer Review: Facilitating peer-to-peer feedback opportunities.

Student Presentation Elements:

- Introduction: Ways to start a presentation including greetings, hooks, or outlines.
- Body: Organising the main content, use of evidence, and transitions between points.
- Conclusion: Strategies for summarising and making a final impact.
- Q&A Sessions: Handling audience questions and maintaining poise.
- Visual Aids: Types of visual aids used, such as slides, posters, or props.
- Engagement: Techniques for keeping the audience engaged.

Challenges Students Face:

- Language hurdles: English language fluency issues.
- Technical Difficulties: Usage of equipment and presentation tools.
- Time Management: Struggles with keeping presentations within the allotted time.
- Anxiety: Signs of nervousness and stress during the presentations.
- Audience Interaction: Difficulty engaging or reading the audience's reactions.

Success Factors

- Preparation and Rehearsal: Evidence of practice and being well-prepared.
- Clarity and Conciseness: Communicating clearly and avoiding overcomplication.
- Confidence: Exhibiting self-assuredness and composure.
- Responsiveness: Ability to adapt to audience feedback or unexpected issues.
- Use of Feedback: Incorporating the feedback received from teachers or peers.

Observation Notes

- Non-Verbal Communication: Body language, eye contact, and gestures.
- Audience Response: Level of engagement and feedback from the audience.
- Delivery Style: Differences in oratory style, pace, and tone.

By categorising ethnographic observation data into such lists, I could better analyse the dynamics of a presentation skills classroom, identify effective instructional methods and common student obstacles or success strategies. Further examples of prevalent categories and lists documented in the observations and the descriptions in field notes are discussed as follows:

Effective communication techniques used in classrooms encompass both verbal and non-verbal skills, which includes eye contact, body language, and vocal variety. The application of

technology plays an important role, as well as the merits and drawbacks of utilising remote technology for virtual presentations or presentation software such as PowerPoint.

My observation included content structure which involves the conventional way students arrange their presentations, including the incorporation of signposting to direct the audience and the inclusion of an introduction, body, and conclusion. Also observed during the class were the engagement strategies or approaches adopted by students to captivate their audience, such as the utilisation of narratives, inquiries, or interactive components. Students' confidence, anxiety and recurrent patterns of nervousness or confidence during presentations, and strategies used to manage these emotions were crucial observation during their presentations. As this university has students from various regions in Pakistan, the impact of cultural differences plays a vital role; thus, the influence of cultural diversity on the students' presentations was also observed. Several other aspects were noted including the usage of AV aids to engage audience, the impact on students' presentations after receiving guidance, and the knowledge imparted to them.

My research employed a combined inductive and iterative approach to analyse the qualitative data, which aimed to establish a rich understanding of presentation skills in the observed classroom settings. This involved a process of moving between data sources and refining my analysis each time. Field notes were reviewed after each observation session, while initial impressions, emerging questions, and potential connections were also noted. I used a format that included the date, time, location and descriptive notes. I recorded objective observations of what I saw and heard and reflective notes in which I jotted down my initial thoughts, questions, and emerging insights.

In addition, video recordings were used as powerful *complementary* data to enhance, validate, and provide a richer context for the textual analysis I conducted with my field notes. I positioned my camera to capture whole class interactions such as teacher instruction, group activities and students' presentations. Video recordings were used to observe nonverbal signals such as body language involving posture, gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, confidence, anxiety, engagement and how students position themselves while presenting.

Given its time-consuming nature, I transcribed key segments relevant to my research questions which mainly included teacher feedback. I transcribed instances where the teacher provided specific guidance on presentation skills, student challenges or moments when students articulated difficulties or exhibited anxiety, and segments that showcased effective presentation techniques or positive teacher-student interactions.

I first engaged in reading and re-reading field notes and viewing video recordings to identify salient concepts, behaviours, interactions, and participant perspectives. Codes were developed which were initially descriptive, but closely reflected the language used by participants or those

observed in actions. Examples included: Teacher feedback strategies, student anxiety manifestations, the use of visual aids, and peer collaboration. As the coding progressed, I regularly compared new data segments to existing codes, refining and merging codes as patterns emerged. This iterative process helped to identify relationships between codes and to group them into broader categories. Through this ongoing comparison, overarching themes began to emerge, representing significant patterns in the data. These aspects offered insights into the complexities of teaching and learning presentation skills, also addressing the research questions of the study.

3.19.3 Interviews

The following are some categories and lists for semi-structured ethnographic interviews with teachers delivering presentation skills teaching at the university:

I. Teacher Background and Beliefs:

- **Teaching Experience:**
 - Years of experience teaching presentation skills.
 - Other courses taught (to understand their teaching style and approach).
 - Experience of students giving presentations in English.
- **Beliefs about Presentation Skills:**
 - Elements of effective presentations.
 - Challenges students face in developing these skills.
 - How they believe presentation skills are best taught and learned.

II. Course Design and Pedagogy:

- **Course Outlines and Materials:**
 - Development of a structured presentation skills curriculum.
 - Content development, delivery, visual aids.
 - Teaching materials and resources used (e.g., textbooks, online tools, sample presentations).
- **Teaching Methods:**
 - Teaching methods employed (lectures, demonstrations, group work, peer feedback).
 - Creation of a supportive and constructive learning environment for presentations.
 - Student anxiety and building confidence.
- **Assessment:**
 - Assessment of presentation skills in the course.
 - Criteria used to evaluate student presentations.

- Feedback mechanisms (e.g., written feedback, peer review, self-reflection).

III. Use of Technology and Visual Aids:

- **Integration:**
 - Role of technology in teaching presentation skills (e.g., presentation software, online platforms, video recording).
 - Preparing students to use technology effectively in their presentations.
- **Visual Aids:**
 - Guidance on creating and using visual aids.
 - Addressing common issues like text-heavy slides or ineffective visuals.

IV. Challenges and Adaptations:

- **Challenges:**
 - Challenges faced in teaching presentation skills at university level.
 - Adapting teaching to address the diverse needs and skill levels of students.
- **Student Considerations:**
 - Teacher support to students in developing presentation skills.
 - Strategies used to address language barriers or cultural differences in presentation styles.
 - Student strengths and weaknesses

I also used probing questions during the interview to encourage teachers to elaborate on their experiences and the insights that led to a greater understanding of the teaching and learning of presentation skills. A discussion of the categories and lists gathered from the interviews is as follows:

- **Aspects of teaching methodologies:** Teachers discussed the various methodologies they use such as interactive learning, task-based or conventional lecture methods and the extent to which they find them effective in improving students' presentation skills.
- **Challenges faced in teaching:** These were also discussed during the interview during which teachers discussed the hurdles they face when teaching students with various linguistic and cultural backgrounds (L2 learners). These include language hurdles and cultural inhibitions among students including limited resources. Student involvement in the class was discussed, particularly how teachers engage students during presentations and the techniques they use to encourage them and establish an interactive learning environment.
- **Feedback provided:** The techniques adopted to provide constructive feedback were discussed. This included: managing the balance between criticism and motivation and

language improvement strategies involving teaching methodologies to improve the language competency of students leading to improved presentation skills.

- **Cultural differences:** The differences and strategies teachers adopt to navigate these differences among students and establish a neutral harmonious classroom environment were considered. Other ideas that were discussed during the interviews included the utilisation of technology in classrooms, multimedia, PowerPoint presentations, language learning apps, updating the course descriptors, and adding or amending the curriculum design to enhance presentation skills.
- **Evaluation criteria:** These were important throughout the whole teaching and learning process for presentation skills. Teachers also shared their ideas about the methods used to assess presentations skills, whether there are any rubrics, and how they divide marks in the presentations. They also considered the teacher's perspectives about the role of English in academic success and professional development of students and whether it impacts their teaching strategies. This involved the personal beliefs of teachers concerning the teaching and learning of presentation skills and the ways it impacts their choice of methodology.
- **Professional training and development:** Teachers shared thoughts on their development in terms of teaching presentation skills and whether they are offered opportunities to develop their practice to improve their teaching methodologies.

The topics and themes arising from this study provides an account of teachers' perceptions and experiences in teaching these courses. Investigating these data provided insights for future teaching methodologies and curriculum development.

3.19.4 Focus Group Discussions

The focus group discussions with students provided a comprehensive account of their perceptions and experiences regarding presentation skills courses and how they are taught. The following are some categories and lists derived from their responses to the questions (see Appendix K):

1) Student Perceptions of Presentation Skills:

a) Importance:

- i) Importance of presentation skills for their field of study and future careers.
- ii) Whether presentation skills are sufficiently emphasised in their curriculum

b) Confidence Levels:

- i) Confidence in their current presentation skills
- ii) Aspects they find most challenging (e.g., public speaking anxiety, content Organisation, visual aids)

2) Experiences in Presentation Skills Classes:

a) Course Structure and Content:

- i) Topics and skills covered in the course.
- ii) Whether the course content is relevant to their needs and interests.

b) Teaching Methods and Activities:

- i) Most effective teaching methods (lectures, demonstrations, group work, peer feedback, practice presentations).
- ii) Activities they find particularly helpful or unhelpful.

3) Assessment and Feedback:

a) Assessment Methods:

- i) Assessment of presentation skills.
- ii) Opinions on assessment.

b) Feedback Quality

- i) Types of feedback
- ii) Whether the feedback specific, constructive, and helpful for improvement.

4) Technology and Resources:

a) Technology Use:

- i) Integration of technology within presentation skills class (e.g., presentation software, online platforms, video recording)
- ii) Adequate support in using technology.

b) Resources and Support:

- i) Availability of resources (library resources, writing centre support)
- ii) Support in developing their presentation skills

5) Suggestions for Improvement:

a) Course Content and Structure: Changes recommended to the course content or structure

b) Teaching Methods: Preferred teaching methods

c) Resources and Support: Additional resources or support to improve presentation skills

6) Impact of Presentation Skills Development:

a) Academic Performance: Impact of presentation skills on their overall academic performance.

b) Career Readiness: Prepared to present themselves effectively in job interviews or other professional settings.

As mentioned in the ‘Presentation Skills Course’ list, important aspects included whether students feel there is requirement for these courses in their degree programs, and whether they consider them necessary and useful, or simply necessary as graded courses. Students’ opinions

on the role of presentation skills in their future endeavours were explored, and whether they perceive that these courses will play a role in their future academic and professional careers.

Participants considered student satisfaction in presenting in English and their progress in learning to present in L2. I was able gain insight into their reflections on this process, including what they expected and the extent to which they have achieved their goals. As English is not the first language of these students, their preferences were considered in terms of language (particularly which students found simpler or less complicated) and how they rank them. Students discussed the presentation barriers and referred to various factors that pose hurdles in presenting such as peer pressure, a lack of confidence, stage fright or insufficient time to prepare.

Another important aspect discussed was their satisfaction with the teaching methodologies and the extent to which students were satisfied with the teaching methodologies used in the classroom. They also considered more effective methods in supporting the acquisition of proficiency in giving presentations. This also provided significant insights into their demands and inclinations. Students discussed about ways to improve teaching methodologies, and their preferred teaching and instructional strategies. Also, students considered their satisfaction with the instructions given to them and the extent to which they consider them sufficient and clear or detailed.

Students provided comprehensive feedback on the duration of the course and time allotted, and a concern raised by most students was the adequacy of time to prepare. Other issues raised included the provision of resources by administration as many students seemed concerned with the availability of resources such as multimedia, whether they have access to the sufficient, useful materials and to resources such as the library. Other aspects identified in the discussions included learning and practice outside the classroom whereby students discussed about taking time out to read material outside engineering context and if they have opportunities to practice conversations in English (L2).

3.20 Analysis Approaches

In his study on the interpretation of cultures, Geertz (2017) described ‘thick description’ as a means to comprehend behaviours and norms in a cultural setting by becoming involved in the social context under study. I was fully involved as an insider and researcher so provided a ‘thick description’ through my observations. As ethnographic research is driven by investigation and inquisitiveness rather than testing a hypothesis, data was gathered to understand the cultural and social settings. By employing an inductive approach, I carefully examined data to identify

recurring patterns and themes, which were then used to construct a framework that elucidates the social phenomena investigated.

Data were utilised to build narratives which effectively communicate the personal experiences of participants within their cultural milieu. Given the anthropological focus of this work, this approach closely corresponds with the ethnographic tradition. The emphasis on detailed analysis and self-awareness aligns with ethnography's aim to comprehend cultural phenomena through the lens of an insider. Thus, my research notebook functioned as a record of my personal experiences and choices throughout the study. Forberg and Schilt (2023) discussed ethnographic data analysis methods in digital contexts, noting they are useful if a study aims to accurately capture and represent the real-life experiences of participants and if the researcher's role as an observer-participant is meant to be reflective and essential to the investigation.

According to Ahmed et al. (2025), thematic analysis revolves around recognition of patterns ultimately using them as categories to process the analysis., while Braun and Clarke (2006) described thematic analysis as an approach that can be applied to many theoretical frameworks. This analytical method was used in this study to identify patterns and trends. The field notes were taken manually as I was recording as well as writing down points during process of data collection. Braun and Clarke (2006) explained that coding is done to observe and find significant patterns and trends after which, themes can be deduced. Chapter 4 will discuss these elements and outline the analysis of the data for every tool used in this study.

3.21 Chapter Summary

This chapter explained my research philosophy and how it underpins my methodological choices; it includes a rationale for the methodology employed. The chapter provided an account of my epistemological and ontological stance. The qualitative and ethnographic approach towards research was elaborated in this chapter, and how my positioning and reflexivity influenced these processes. The research instruments used for the study were separately outlined and summaries of the data sets were given. The ethical aspects, including the emic and etic dimensions were described, whilst the analysis section explained the Braun and Clarke framework employed to analyse the data. The approach used for the interpretation of data, coding and generation of themes will be discussed in Chapter 4.

4 Data Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This analysis chapter outlines the analytical process undertaken to examine the qualitative data collected through classroom observations, teacher interviews, and student focus groups. The chapter explains how the data were systematically analysed to address the study's research questions. A thematic analysis approach was employed, guided by Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase process, which includes familiarisation with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. Manual coding was used to identify 21 preliminary sub-themes across the data sets, which were later refined and organised into five overarching themes that structure the findings chapter. Triangulation was incorporated to ensure credibility, enhance trustworthiness, and identify converging or contrasting perspectives. The following sections describe this analytical process in detail, leading into the thematic presentation of findings in the subsequent chapter.

Tracy (2024) underscored that qualitative studies have a humanistic focus as prioritising participant agency in meaning-making. Following Cohen et al. (2018), qualitative data analysis involves systematically organising, interpreting, and contextualising data to uncover patterns. This qualitative approach can also be described as the interpretation of explicit and implicit dimensions of meaning making in the material which can have subjective or social implications. Indeed, analysing data through qualitative approach is mostly a combination of rough and detailed analysis aiming to arrive at statements that can be generalised by comparing various materials, texts or cases (Flick, 2022). However, Tracy (2024) stated that a qualitative approach prioritises the contextual understanding of behaviours and values over generalisation.

Qualitative analysis, as Creswell and Poth (2018) acknowledge, is an iterative process that embraces complexity rather than linearity, while Kogen (2024), highlights the importance of engagement with participants narrative to construct meaningful insights in social contexts. According to Flick (2022), a range of methods can be used for qualitative data analysis, however the main concern is to analyse how far the analytical approach fits in with data collected. For example, if we apply limited content analysis to a large amount of data from narrative interviews there is a risk that much of the potential data is lost. Thus, it is important to adopt an appropriate method for the data collected. As Saldaña (2021) explains, the approach for this type of data aims to assemble or reconstruct the data into a more understandable manner, to allow the researcher to search for patterns and themes by sorting and coding.

This study employs a qualitative, ethnographic approach, grounded in the work of Hammersley and Atkinson (2019) and Green and Bloome (2015) for reflexive fieldwork to examine learning

strategies in university classrooms and how cultural and linguistic factors shape teaching practices. This chapter will structure discussion using the six-step process of thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006). Thematic analysis was selected to analyse the data in a systematic manner that ensures rigor. This approach also fits with the immersive ethnographic design of the study which involves prolonged engagement in classrooms providing in depth understanding of the impact of cultural, linguistic and environmental factors on development of presentation skills. The data was inductively coded following this six-phase process where the participants narratives were prioritised along with maintain commitment to the ethnographic context. Braun and Clarke's later development to their approach highlighted the reflexive engagement of the researcher, which resonates with this study's examination of cultural factors in construction of themes.

Braun & Clarke (2006) and Nowell et al. (2017) described thematic analysis as a useful process that can be used to explore various participants' perceptions and opinions from multiple data sources. It offers unanticipated insights and identifies similarities and differences. I chose thematic analysis as my data sets were very big, and thematic analysis was considered valuable to summarise the key elements of substantial data sets; ensuring that a well-structured approach is adopted to manage the data (Nowell et al., 2017). Braun and Clarke (2006) considered immersion in the collected qualitative data a vital phase in the analysis for involving in-depth engagement, and ultimately developing a coherent narrative to provide findings which contribute to the overall comprehension of the phenomenon studied (Nowell et al., 2017). This aligns with my ethnographic study as I have been fully immersed in data and my positioning provided a deep insight into the mechanism of the university.

The analytical procedure applied in this chapter is guided by the theoretical framework discussed in Chapter 2. The theoretical perspectives such as Wenger's Communities of Practice (CoP) highlights the social and participatory aspects of presentation development of students, while aspects such as practice, feedback, and reflection shaping these skills are underscored by Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (ELT). McCroskey's Communication Apprehension theory discusses dissimilarities in student confidence and desire to speak, and Long's Interaction Hypothesis highlights the significance of interactive approaches. Altogether, these lenses provided a structured approach to coding, categorizing, and interpreting the data, confirming that the analytical process was both systematic and theoretically informed.

4.1.1 Inductive Approach

This study employs an inductive approach to reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; 2022), where themes were derived directly from qualitative data without alignment to pre-existing theoretical frameworks. Perera (2023) highlights the significance of inductive analysis in her study on students in Sri Lanka underscoring the effectiveness if inductive analysis in

gathering real experiences of participants. This approach also fits with the ethnographic context of this study involving prolonged engagement in classrooms closely observing the impact of various factors on students' skill development.

The transcripts and observational notes were coded line by line to identify the patterns, with reflexive practices (Braun & Clarke, 2022) confirming that during the development of themes researchers' subjectivity was seriously examined. This iterative process allowed unexpected aspects such as the role of 'informal peer interaction' in reducing presentation anxiety and fostering a supportive environment. Transcripts and field notes were analysed line-by-line to generate initial codes, which were then grouped into themes through iterative refinement. This process ensured fidelity to participants' voices while accommodating emergent insights into classroom dynamics.

4.2 Preparation of Raw Data

In accordance with the considerations outlined in the ethical form I ensured the proper steps were taken to assure anonymity before starting the analysis. The process started with a familiarisation with the data which I achieved by typing up transcriptions of all the recordings. I relistened to the audio after completing the transcriptions to ensure precision and to check if there was anything missing.

Transcriptions were done for the discussions and interviews along with the field notes that were taken from observations, while the video recordings were also watched to check if anything was missed during the observations. I chose to transcribe the teachers interviews and students' discussions to ensure accuracy to capture views of both groups. I opted for field notes and video recordings for the observations to enrich my contextual understanding without unnecessarily transcribing everything; this allowed me to focus on main events. In addition, my self-reflection from the observations was documented in a research diary/journal.

Each data type served a different purpose; the transcript of the interviews documented individual perspectives providing verbatim data for detailed thematic analysis. The transcriptions of focus group offered different opinions, and these interactions helped the researcher understand collective and shared opinions. However, the transcription process posed some challenges, as students spoke over each other which made it challenging to discern individual voices. I addressed this by replaying the video multiple times, to check anything that was unclear. I noted these sections as '(unclear)' or '(overlapping)'. I also relied on contextual cues to infer meanings such as during a focus group where two students spoke at the same time; I captured the words of the speaker that were clearer and mentioned the overlapping statement as '(agreeing to the importance of feedback)'.

I also prioritised anonymity and confidentiality so any detail that could identify individuals was removed from the transcripts in accordance with the ethical form for this study. I kept identities on a spreadsheet where real names and pseudonyms or encrypted identities were given; these were later saved on a hard drive and password protected. In addition, during the data collection phase, specific people were mentioned, and they were also given coded identities. I also advised that participants maintain confidentiality by upholding their ethical duty to the process.

To avoid any inconsistency, I diligently viewed each transcript in accordance with its audio recording, carefully reading and listening so I could guarantee the precision and accuracy of the data. Following Ose's (2016) suggestion, manual coding method was selected for this study. Although it was meticulous and required additional time and concentration, this approach provided an opportunity for further immersion in the data, enabling me to deeply connect with participants' perspectives when developing the codes.

4.3 Data Analysis Process

As this study employed thematic analysis, it offered flexible and structured method to identify, analyse and interpret patterns in this qualitative research. It allowed me to examine participants' accounts through step-by-step guidelines which encouraged an open inquiring approach to emerging themes from the data. The strengths of Braun and Clarke's framework is its emphasis on transparency and precision, which ensures credibility and traceability in the results.

However, researchers need to make subjective decisions which may involve bias. I maintained reflexivity when analysing the data and kept checking my decision making during the process.

Critiques like Lochmiller (2021) argued that if thematic analysis is not properly applied, it can lead to the oversimplification of complex qualitative data. She warns that coding and categorising themes can minimise the richness of participants' narratives. Braun and Clarke (2013) recognised that if the researcher is not deeply immersed in the data or contextual factors, there is a risk of oversimplification in the way the themes are constructed. Their method is often criticised for not aligning with a theoretical framework; however, for me this was a strength as it allowed me to analyse data independently. To address the critiques of oversimplification, I maintained reflexivity and used several coding cycles during the process which also helped me to capture the multifaceted nature of participants narrative.

I transcribed data from participants interviews and discussions and observations, and reread the documents many times, making marginal notes about significant remarks or ideas. After that I generated an index of terms and developed pre-codes that included semantic and latent coding. Semantic codes are those where the meanings are expressed verbally whereas latent codes describe underlying meanings (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I reviewed the codes to check for any

missing data and after the extraction, themes were generated which led to the results and their presentation. According to Bryman (2016), some writers combine themes and codes whereas others build them up from groups of codes. In my case, the themes emerged from the codes.

Additionally, Blair (2015) argued that honesty is required during the coding process as it is important that the researcher derives the codes responsively. Thus, such factors were considered when coding the transcripts, keeping the researchers' views in mind to enable clarity when organising the coding. Furthermore, the coding needs to be done through means that are suitable for the researcher (Glaser & Straus 1967).

4.3.1 Coding

Codes are the labels given to the data transcriptions while themes reflect the main elements for analysis and are derived from the codes (Nowell et al., 2017). Firstly, I conducted the initial coding, which involved scanning and identifying the codes. After that, I organised them so that none of the key concepts were omitted. I conducted several rounds to ensure nothing was overlooked when grouping the codes and pre-codes. The codes were highlighted in the transcripts, which made it was easy to identify patterns, as large amounts of raw data were involved. The data analysis process followed an inductive approach and data-driven process for coding rather than relying on pre-existing coding framework (Braun & Clarke 2006). Table 4.1 offers an example of coding generation.

Table 4.1 describes key challenges affecting presentation skills development, identifying the issues from various perspectives. This table provides examples of some codes and pre codes from the data analysis which offers insights into challenges in the teaching and learning process.

1) Constraints Faced by Students:

Limited opportunities, background diversity, anxiety, and lack of confidence that hinders students' abilities to perform well in presentations.

2) Factors Affecting Student Performance:

Broader issues such as educational background, prior exposure, and motivation levels that influence how students develop and demonstrate their presentation skills.

3) Challenges in Teaching Presentation Skills:

Structural and institutional barriers such as large class sizes, insufficient time allocated to communication skills due to the focus on technical content and limited institutional support for humanities-oriented skills.

Table 4.1: Sample Coding Generation

Pre-Codes	Codes
• Not getting a lot of opportunities • Less time for presentation skills • Mocking others during presentations • Different backgrounds • Different exposure levels	Constraints
• Anxiety • Lack of motivation/confidence • Schooling • Background	Factors affecting performance
• Less time to teach communication skills • 40 and more students in class • Too much technical content and very little time give to communication skills • Institutional support: More towards engineering than humanities	Factors affecting teaching

4.4 Reflexivity Protocol

This study acknowledges the importance of reflexivity, recognising that a researcher's background and perspective can influence the research process. To address this, I thoroughly analysed and captured my own reflections in a research journal. For example, I captured the following preconceived notion:

Before I started my observation, I was assuming that students would be reluctant to take part in group presentations because of issues like lack of proficiency in English or stage fear etc. I also thought they would be overshadowed by the ones with better English language skills.

Furthermore, the field notes from the observation revealed:

As the presentation started, all of the group members seemed enthusiastic and took part despite their level of English. Although two out of three members completely relied on a blend of reading from slides and delivering memorised content, [they] still managed to be composed and equally participated throughout the presentation. Interestingly, contrary to my assumption the proficient student was motivating and encouraging rather than dominating them.

My reflection explains this as follows:

My initial idea that the student with better English language skills would dominate his group members is challenged in this observation. I have observed team effort and collaboration among group members. My preconceived notion also adhered that the students with weak English language would be shy in taking active part in presentations, but their teamwork made them take equal part in the presentation. However, this insight addresses the importance of peer support and collaborative effort in presentations.

During the data collection process, I recorded participants' remarks and my own thoughts. As a teacher at this university, this may have affected their opinion of me as the researcher (for example, when criticising the teaching methods and the role of teachers and the university administration). Therefore, I avoided making assumptions based on anything that was not explicitly mentioned by participants, maintaining an objective stance during the data collection and analysis.

I continuously questioned my own perceptions to ensure I stuck to the data collected from participants and avoided any prejudice. This practice helped me to acquire an in-depth insight which ultimately enhanced reliability of this study. Keeping the possibility of prejudice in mind and my involvement of colleagues as participants, I carefully selected my language to ensure it did not give any hint of coercion or bias. Indeed, Lynch (2024) stressed the importance of reflexivity and maintaining boundaries when conducting research in one's own institution. This aligns with Kennedy et al.'s (2024) view that it is important to be transparent when explaining one's influence and role as a researcher. They also consider positionality as a critical factor in understand power dynamics and ethical issues during research.

Thus, to maintain transparency and positionality, I followed following steps:

- **Prompt Transcription:** Interviews were transcribed immediately following each session, allowing for the timely reflection and identification of potential biases in my initial interpretations. I chose to transcribe the interviews myself, as Lopez (2023) stated that it provides the chance to immerse oneself and identify the themes beforehand, although it can be time consuming.
- **Open Dialogue:** I fostered open communication with participants, encouraging them to share their perspectives and experiences openly and honestly. Adopting open dialogues allowed participants to share their true opinions and experiences. This reflexive approach ensured that the results signified participants' actual views on presentation skills instead of being led by my beliefs or influenced by the context of the study. Diaz et al. (2023) note the significance of open communication as it fosters a comprehensive understanding and is suitable for qualitative methods.

- **Positionality Awareness:** I consistently acknowledged and reflected upon how my positionality within the university could influence the research process. Holmes (2020) explores researchers' positionality in qualitative approach addressing effects of personal beliefs and identity on the research process. He also describes reflexivity as a means to address biases to ensure the authenticity of the results and emphasises the need to critically assess their influence on the research findings. This aligns with Sostar et al., (2024) who described the ethical complexities of being an insider and suggested ways to maintain transparency. I regularly documented my reflections after each observation and interview, providing insights to ensure my beliefs and opinions were transparently added to the analysis. Following the suggestion by Olmos-Vega et al. (2022) on ongoing reflexivity I constantly revisited my statement to re-evaluate any pre-conceived notions.

4.5 Observational Analysis

Observational field notes involved the participants interactions along with the events taking place in the classroom. The field notes of this study's observations provided the account these teachers and students interactions, while onsite investigations were hand-written to capture more detail. Creswell and Creswell (2018) provided a framework on how to take field notes during an investigation while a lesson is taking place. These field notes and transcriptions were scanned and stored electronically to ensure their safety. The data for observations predominantly came from field notes. According to Silverman (2008), several questions need to be considered when conducting observations and writing field notes, which include:

- What are people doing? What are they trying to achieve or accomplish?
- How exactly are they doing this?
- What is their understanding of the process?
- How do they perceive it?

As a researcher, I posed analytical questions such as:

- What am I witnessing?
- What do I conclude from that?
- What kind of information should I capture?
- Why do I include that?

Based on the above questions I took field notes and observed:

- What are the students and teachers doing during their presentation/ communication skills class?
- What are they trying to achieve or what are their goals?

- How does the teaching and learning process take place?
- How are they taking it?

Alongside responses to these questions, several other features were considered:

- What other things do I observe at the site that could relate to my research?
- What do I need to do with my data after collection?
- What amount of data/recording is sufficient?

4.5.1 Analysis and Interpretation of the Classroom Observation Data

I have observed presentation skills classes from three different engineering faculties, including top, medium and low merit. I took field notes and video recordings of the classroom as the number of students in each class numbered around 40 to 50, and capturing a video recording made it easy to observe things that were overlooked during the observation. I also observed the students' presentations and whether there were any differences from the presentations of students from different faculties? Were the teaching methods of teachers varied? Did students' performance vary due to other significant factors such as their academic background? I observed the presentations of students and most volunteered for the focus group discussions, thus I was able to ask about their schooling and linguistic background.

4.5.2 Factors Observed in Teaching

4.5.2.1 Teachers' Command over English Language and Presentation

Most of the teachers used Urdu and English as instructional media in the classroom. Urdu was the dominant language as the teachers did not seem to be very fluent in English.

4.5.2.2 Teaching Method

During my observations I discovered that most of the teachers used a conventional lecture method during which the class sat listening to the steps to follow in the presentations and there was limited interaction with the students. I observed two classes where teachers used a lecture method and held a group activity. I observed the teachers to be more interactive with students.

4.5.2.3 Student Involvement

Students were observed sitting quietly during the lectures while some sat at the back whispering and others were seen checking their cell phones. Murmuring from the students was also heard during the class. Students in the classes where a group discussion and activities took place appeared more involved and active during the class; they responded promptly to the teacher whenever she asked for their feedback.

4.5.2.4 Incentives

Teachers were observed giving verbal praise to students in the form of ‘ok’, ‘alright’, ‘well done’, ‘thank-you’ following students’ responses. However, no material or physical incentives were given to students. Teachers’ attitudes towards students also played a vital role in their performance. During my observations, I observed greater involvement from students, particularly when the teacher had a kind and supportive attitude. In contrast, students seemed reserved in classes where the teachers were less interactive and encouraging. Students also mentioned in the focus group discussions that there were teachers with taunting attitudes. Although I did not witness taunting or discouragement, my presence or the classes being recorded could have influenced this.

4.5.2.5 Physical Facilities

Physical facilities are essential for any classroom scenario. Most teachers interviewed complained about the lack of facilities which was echoed by the students. This was also observed by the researcher as most of the classes did not have access to multimedia. I observed a teacher asking the class representative (CR) whether he had checked the availability of rooms with multimedia. He replied, “maam, I did check but there is none available at the moment”. I have also observed a teacher sending the CR to ask admin staff to arrange access and then waiting for 10 to 15 minutes. However, the CR returned with a negative reply, which meant the teacher lost time and gave the lecture using white board and reading the slides from her laptop. One of the teachers took a class in the computer lab as multimedia was available and the lab was vacant at that time.

Classrooms were considered too big to accommodate 40 to 50 students and whilst they were airy (using fans) there was no air conditioning. In summer, the temperatures are really high, and lectures frequently stop when there is an electricity shortage. Additionally, there is no electronic access to the library, hence if they need to read anything students must go to library and retrieve the source. These factors were observed and mentioned during discussions. A lack of printers and computers were also observed, and this was also mentioned by participants.

4.5.2.6 Time

The time allocated for the lectures seemed insufficient. During the students’ presentations I observed that teachers were in a hurry as they wanted the maximum number of students to present during that period which meant teachers also rushed their lectures. After the class, students immediately dashed out as they had to go to take their next class. Teachers and students frequently raised this issue in discussions with them.

4.5.2.7 Academic Background

Students' and teachers' academic backgrounds were significant; during the observations I noticed that students from the government schools seemed less confident and used their English language skills less frequently. The same was observed amongst teachers as many were more inclined more towards Urdu although used both languages during the class. There were a few students from grammar and English schools, and I also observed their presentations to compare. Besides the content and slides shown, there was a marked difference in their confidence, language, command of English and fluency. They also did not make any grammatical mistakes which were witnessed amongst students from government schools.

4.5.2.8 Students' Presentations

Student's presentations were also observed, including whether they followed the teachers' instructions given in lectures on presentations. Students were given different timings by different teachers and gave their presentations accordingly. Of the issues with their presentations, the most common were grammatical and pronunciation errors, while many of the students seemed to have memorised the content on the slides. I observed a few students to be reluctant in delivering presentations and they requested to skip the tasks and instead present a hard copy of it in assignment form.

Teachers marked the presentations based on:

- Their fluency, grammar, pronunciation of English.
- Their confidence and command of the language and content they presented.
- Time management
- Question and answers at the end

The allocation and total marks varied between teachers, but the presentation was mandatory as all students were expected to deliver. Due to the lack of time, only one teacher took a small and then a major presentation. Teachers explained it was not possible to teach all students in one semester and assess their presentations but agreed that more presentations could improve students' confidence and skills. Students also confirmed that more chances to present would enhance their confidence and reduce their anxiousness when facing an audience and speaking in English. Some students indicated that they would be more confident presenting in Urdu, than in English.

4.6 Thematic Analysis: Step-by-Step

Step 1: Familiarisation with the Data

The analysis began with immersive engagement with the dataset, which included:

- Classroom observations where detailed field notes from observing classroom sessions, focusing on teaching of presentation skills, students' presentation delivery, peer interactions, and teachers feedback were taken.
- Semi-structured interviews with seven teachers, transcribed verbatim, exploring pedagogical strategies, curriculum design, and challenges in teaching presentation skills were conducted
- Transcripts from four focus groups (n=27 students), capturing student perspectives on anxiety, motivation, and skill development.
- Institutional documents (e.g., syllabi, curriculum guidelines) were reviewed to contextualise classroom practices, though these were not primary data sources.

Initially, I familiarised myself with the data which involved transcribing the data and revising the collected information. I repeatedly viewed my transcripts and listened to the recording's multiple times. I watched the videos from the observations in case I missed anything significant in my field notes and added any missing information. As Castleberry and Nolen (2018) suggest, I familiarised myself with the data to enable a deep understanding and enhanced my analysis. During this phase, I fully immersed myself and gave sufficient time to familiarise myself with the data.

Transcripts and field notes were read multiple times to immerse in the data and note initial impressions. A researcher journal/diary documented emerging patterns, biases, and insights during familiarisation. I examined the transcript from each participant/group and thoroughly highlighted the relevant information. Before coding I spent 1 to 1.5 hours viewing each response from participants/groups to actively connect with data. I then started the pre-coding after examining each transcript carefully, (Braun & Clarke, 2021) to build a solid foundation for the coding process. This results in better organised and well-structured analysis. I distinguished the terms that seemed significant, and highlighted phrases and labelled them according to the content in the phrase. This pre-coding step resulted 171 labels, and as mentioned earlier, the initial coding was done manually coding and documenting using Microsoft Word. For example,

"... during repeated readings of teacher interview transcripts, recurring themes included teachers' emphasis on lack of confidence among students in presenting" (e.g., "students are reluctant to give presentations"). Classroom observation notes highlighted patterns like "students giving reasons to take their presentation later" (e.g., "some students wanted their presentation to be done after rest of the class"). Focus group discussions revealed emotional barriers, such as a student stating, "My voice shakes when I present in front of the class." Supplementary documents, like the course outlines, confirmed the institutional focus on "practicing presentations to boost confidence."

This shows identification of the challenges (lack of confidence, fear of facing audience) and communication barriers (anxiety, reluctance to speak).

Step 2: Generate Initial Codes

Once the data was thoroughly examined and understood, the next step was to create basic codes. I initially used early observations during the pre-recording phase to generate the initial codes. Indeed, Braun and Clarke (2012) recommended that the researcher initially identifies appropriate data extracts pertaining to the research topics of the study. The subsequent phase involved generating a full inventory of codes. I meticulously scrutinised the pre-coding data, analysing those entries that possessed comparable meanings. Labels and quotes with comparable attributes and significance were combined within a unified code; for example, I combined the terms "student anxiety," "student's confidence," "students feedback," and "students' motivation" because these codes had the same meaning. The pre-coding label "student anxiety" represented the levels of anxiety experienced by students when presenting in English, such as the dread of making mistakes and unfavourable self-perceptions.

- The concept "student confidence" was also captured which referred to their faith and trust in their capacity to communicate effectively.
- The term "student feedback" encompassed student evaluations of feedback provided for presentations, including assessments of its usefulness, clarity, and cultural sensitivity.
- The pre-coding label "student motivation" highlighted the impact of student motivation on improvements to their presentation skills, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, as well as the perceived value of the skill.
- Given that students' attitude and emotions consistently appeared during presentations, these pre-coding descriptors were consolidated into "student perceptions." This was established to capture subjective experiences of students during presentations.

During this phase, I frequently referred to data to verify the precision of the freshly identified code in terms of the accuracy of participants' expressed narratives. After conducting a thorough examination, I managed to condense the initial codes into a unified collection of 67 codes, enhancing accuracy by incorporating valuable insights from the participants.

Another example of the integration of pre-coding labels resulted in the emergence of the code "Language focus." The pre-coding labels that contributed to the construction of this code included language pronunciation, with particular emphasis on the pronunciation abilities when delivering training such as clear articulation, intonation, and stress patterns.

In total, 67 codes were generated from the data collected from the data sets, a codebook with a comprehensive list of these codes was created, complete with their corresponding meanings and instructive examples (included in (Appendix P). I individually determined the definition of each

code. For example, I coined term 'stage dread' to describe situations where students experienced anxiety during presentations. Codes were generated manually through an inductive, data-driven process. Transcripts and field notes were analysed line-by-line, with descriptive labels (pre-codes) assigned to capture key concepts in participants' own words. Codes were refined iteratively to consolidate overlapping ideas and prioritise focus. The manual coding process involved:

1. Line-by-line analysis: Transcripts from teacher interviews (n=5), student focus groups (n=2), and field notes from classroom observations (n=3) were annotated manually.
2. Marginal notes: Initial pre-codes (e.g., "nervousness," "feedback" and anxiety) were jotted in the margins.
3. Code consolidation: Pre-codes were transferred to sticky notes/spreadsheets, grouped by similarity, and refined into focused codes (e.g., "barriers," "teachers support").

Table 4.2: Example Codes and Data Exerpts

Example of Codes and Data Excerpts:			
Data Excerpt	Pre-code	Code	Sub-Theme
I memorise to avoid mistakes	Rote learning	Student Learning and Development	Skill Development Over Time
Our teacher did not tell where we need to improve	Feedback	Resources and Support	Personalised Feedback
Fear of being ridiculed during presentations made me nervous	Peer pressure Mocking others during presentations	Constraints and Barriers	Challenges and Solutions

4. Iterative Refinement: Overlapping codes (e.g., "peer pressure" and "mocking others") were merged to avoid redundancy, resulting in a final codebook of codes.
5. Inductive Coding: Codes like "peer pressure" and "individual feedback" emerged directly from participant language (e.g., "always try to present at the end" and "mam did not highlight the mistakes").
6. Code Merging: For example, pre-codes like "peer pressure" (from focus groups) and "unwilling to present" (from observations) were merged into the code 'peer pressure' to capture the broader concept of social dynamics affecting performance.
7. Reflexivity: A coding journal documented decisions to ensure consistency (e.g., why "individual feedback" was grouped under teachers support).

Step 3: Searching for Themes

After generating the initial codes, I began the organisation process which was based on similarities and the identification of broader themes. Following Braun and Clarke's guidelines for thematic analysis, I searched for meaningful patterns and repetitive features. This examination revealed several distinct patterns, particularly around instructional methods, self-confidence, and feedback dynamics. Certain codes consistently highlighted key aspects of the presentation process. For instance, the code "self-confidence" frequently emerged as participants emphasised the importance of strategies aimed at boosting students' self-assurance. This underscored the role of such strategies in developing effective presentation skills. Similarly, the codes "body language" and "appearance" appeared repeatedly. Participants stressed the significance of non-verbal communication, noting that students' anxiety and confidence levels were often evident through their body language and attire.

Recognising the interconnected nature of these codes, I categorised them under the umbrella term "Non-verbal Communication." This category reflected the broader significance of non-verbal cues within the presentation process. Through this iterative analysis and synthesis process, I condensed the initial 50 codes into distinct categories based on shared patterns and characteristics.

Step 4: Reviewing Themes

A full review and improvement process was carried out before the themes were identified. It was important to ensure that data that is coded and the raw data were consistent during this phase (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Steps taken included a full review of the coded data, going through the complete data set one last time full and then make changes to the possible ideas. The most important aspect of this process was an accurate fit between the emerging themes and research questions which needed to capture the variety and details of the data.

Therefore, the thematic analysis focused on real data to ensure that the chosen codes correctly showed the subtleties and trends present in the raw qualitative data. This alignment was important for retrieving the themes from the classified data which were then refined and aligned. These themes offered clear answers to the study questions. After carefully following these steps in the thematic analysis, the researcher moved on to the next part of the research process having checked that the coded data were reliable and accurately reflected the complexity and depth of the original data.

Step 5: Defining Themes

Codes were grouped into 21 preliminary sub-themes based on shared focus and relevance to the research questions.

Example Progression:

- **Codes:** *Peer feedback, collaborative work, group dynamics* → **Sub-Theme 3 (Learning Environment and Support).**
- **Codes:** *Anxiety, fear of judgment, physical symptoms* → **Sub-Theme 7 (Confidence and Presence).**
- **Codes:** *Industry-specific communication, real-world tasks* → **Sub-Theme 13 (Relevance and Real-World Application).**

Table 4.3 exemplifies some of the links between the codes and the sub-themes.

Table 4.3: Linking Codes and Sub-themes

Sub-Theme	Example Codes	Thematic Focus
Sub-Theme 3: Learning Environment and Support	Motivation, Peer Influence, Resources	Social dynamics shaping skill development
Sub-Theme 7: Confidence and Presence	Development, Communication and Presentation Skills, body language	Emotional and physical barriers to delivery
Sub-Theme 13: Relevance and Real-World Application	Industry communication, employability	Connecting classroom learning to careers

Sub themes emerged to explore how university staff can improve the English learning outcomes for students, are as follows:

Sub Theme 1: Curriculum Design and Delivery

This relates to how well the current curriculum aligns with the specific English language needs of the student body and considers their disciplines, career aspirations, and existing language proficiency levels. It involves the use of materials and activities that are relevant, engaging, and reflect real-world English language use. This include incorporating multimedia, guest speakers, or project-based learning and focusing on the extent to which the curriculum promotes active learning and collaboration among students. This could involve incorporating pair/group work, discussions, debates, and presentations. This theme also relates to the potential of technology to enhance English learning, such as using language learning apps, online platforms, or blended learning approaches.

Sub Theme 2: Assessment and Feedback

This theme focuses on the use of assessment tasks that mirror real-world English language use, such as presentations, simulations, case studies, or projects and how effectively staff provide ongoing, constructive feedback that addresses individual student needs and learning styles. It also includes exploring strategies to help students develop their self-assessment abilities.

Sub Theme 3: Learning Environment and Support

This theme examines how staff provides a positive and supportive environment that values diversity, promotes risk-taking, and reduces language anxiety. It also explores opportunities for students to support one another through peer tutoring, language exchange programs, or study groups. It includes an investigation of the availability and accessibility of resources like language labs, online materials, writing centres, and tutoring services. These themes provide insights into the multifaceted ways in which university staff can contribute to improving English learning outcomes for their students.

Sub Theme 4. Command of Content

Where students demonstrate a deep understanding of the topic, support claims with evidence, present accurate information, and confidently answer questions or when they struggle to explain concepts clearly, lack confidence, lack evidence to support claims, and have difficulty responding to questions.

Sub Theme 5. Clarity and Organisation

When students structure the presentation logically, use clear and concise language, transition smoothly between points, and create a coherent narrative or ramble or have a disorganised delivery, lack a clear structure, use jargon or overly complex language, and have abrupt or unclear transitions.

Sub Theme 6. Engagement and Delivery

When students are able to speak clearly and confidently, use vocal variety to maintain interest, make eye contact with the audience, use appropriate body language, and demonstrate enthusiasm for the topic or use a monotone or rushed delivery, avoid eye contact, fidget or use distracting movements, read directly from notes, and lack energy or passion.

Sub Theme 7: Confidence and Presence

Students appear confident and composed, handle questions with poise, demonstrate a positive attitude, and connect with the audience on a personal level, on the other hand they may appear

nervous or anxious, avoid eye contact, speak too quickly or softly, and lack confidence in their delivery.

Sub Theme 8. Pedagogical Approaches and Rationales

This explores why teachers favour certain approaches and analyses the perceived advantages and limitations of each approach for this specific student population. It also investigates how teachers balance language instruction (vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation) with presentation-specific skills (structure, delivery, visual aids), the rationale behind the chosen balance and its impact on student outcomes. This theme included how teachers adapt their strategies to accommodate cultural differences in communication styles, presentation norms, and student-teacher dynamics, analysing the effectiveness of these adaptations in fostering a culturally inclusive learning environment.

Sub Theme 9. Strategies and Their Effectiveness

This theme focuses on the effectiveness of teaching methods in conveying presentation skills and involves student perceptions of these methods including their impact on confidence and performance. The use and effectiveness of active learning techniques (e.g., role-playing, simulations, peer feedback, group projects) in developing presentation skills was one of the major points discussed during the data collection process and how these strategies address the specific needs and challenges of non-native English-speaking students. This theme includes how teachers integrate technology (e.g., presentation software, online platforms, multimedia tools) to enhance presentation skills development, analysing the perceived benefits and challenges of integrating technology for both teachers and students.

Sub Theme 10. Assessment and Feedback

This theme relates to the types of assessments used to evaluate presentation skills (e.g., rubrics, peer evaluations, self-assessments) and how well they align with the learning objectives (mentioned in document review section) and specific needs of the student population. It involves the types of feedback provided to students (e.g., written, oral, individual, group) and how it addresses both language and presentation skills and the effectiveness of feedback in guiding student improvement and building confidence.

Sub Theme 11. Challenges and Solutions

This includes identifying the specific language challenges faced by non-native English-speaking engineering students when developing presentation skills. It also incorporates the strategies employed by teachers to overcome these barriers, their effectiveness and the factors contributing

to presentation anxiety in this student population. Finally, it includes the analysis of strategies that are positively impacting confidence and reducing anxiety.

Sub Theme 12. Active Learning and Engagement

This theme explores students' preferences for strategies that actively involve them in the learning process and go beyond passive listening. The preference for hands-on activities, simulations, or role-play over traditional lectures are included alongside the value placed on opportunities for peer feedback and interaction. The interest in using technology or multimedia to practice and enhance presentations is also captured.

Sub Theme 13. Relevance and Real-World Application

This theme focuses on students' desire for strategies that connect presentation skills to their future careers as engineers. Encapsulated are the preference for assignments that simulate real-world engineering presentations (e.g., design reviews, project proposals, technical briefings); the value placed on feedback that addresses industry-specific communication norms and expectations; and the interest in learning from and interacting with practicing engineers.

Sub Theme 14. Personalised Feedback and Support

This theme examines students' preferences for receiving tailored guidance and support to address their individual needs and challenges. Included re: preferences for specific, actionable feedback on both content and delivery aspects of presentations; value placed on opportunities to practice and receive feedback in a low-stakes environment; and interest in accessing resources and support services tailored to their individual learning styles and goals.

Sub Theme 15. Intrinsic Motivations

Explore how the development of presentation skills contributes to students' sense of self-assurance and belief in their ability to communicate effectively. Investigate to what level students find preparing and delivering presentations inherently engaging and enjoyable. Examine how learning presentation skills aligns with students' broader goals of personal development, such as improving communication skills, overcoming fears, and expanding their comfort zones.

Sub Theme 16. Extrinsic Motivations

Explores students' perceptions of the mastery of presentation skills and whether this is considered essential for achieving good grades, completing assignments, and succeeding in their academic pursuits. The sub theme investigates the extent to which students view strong presentation skills as crucial for future career prospects, job opportunities, and professional success. It includes the acknowledgement that the ability to deliver effective presentations

contributes to students' sense of social belonging, peer recognition, and positive feedback from instructors or mentors.

Sub Theme 17. Contextual Factors: Influence of the Learning Environment

Explores instructors/teachers role in developing a positive and conducive learning environment that motivates students to develop their presentation skills; investigate how peer interactions, group projects, and opportunities for collaborative learning impact students' motivation to engage in presentation-related activities; and examines how the use of real-world scenarios, authentic materials, and tasks that connect to students' interests and aspirations influence their motivation to learn and apply presentation skills.

Sub Theme 18. Skill Development Over Time

This theme focuses on tracking changes in specific communication and presentation skills from the beginning to the end of the four-year program. It measures changes in fluency, clarity, organisation, and delivery; assesses improvements in non-verbal communication, such as eye contact and body language; and evaluates the ability to adapt presentations to different audiences and contexts.

Sub Theme 19. Impact of Teaching Methods and Curriculum

This theme explores the relationship between specific teaching methods employed during the four years and observed improvements in student skills. It analyses the impact of active learning activities, project-based learning, or technology integration; evaluates the effectiveness of feedback mechanisms and opportunities for practice; and investigates the role of curriculum design in fostering communication and presentation skills.

Sub Theme 20. Student Perceptions and Experiences

This theme centres on gathering qualitative data on students' own perceptions of their communication and presentation skills growth over the four years. It explores students' self-perceived confidence and competence in communication and presentation; identifies aspects of the teaching system that students found most beneficial or challenging; and gathers feedback on how the program could be improved to better support skill development.

Sub Theme 21. Alignment with Workplace Expectations

This theme examines the extent to which the communication and presentation skills developed during the program align with the expectations of future employers. It compares program outcomes with industry standards and employer expectations; investigates students' preparedness for workplace communication scenarios, such as presentations, meetings, and team collaborations; and gathers feedback from alumni or employers on the effectiveness of graduates' communication and presentation skills.

Sub-themes were critically reviewed for coherence, distinctiveness, and analytic value using Braun and Clarke's criteria. Table 4.4 shows the list of final themes and examples.

This phase involved merging overlapping sub-themes for example, *"Pedagogical Approaches"* (Sub-Theme 8) and *"Strategies and Effectiveness"* (Sub-Theme 9) were combined into Theme 2 (Teaching and Learning Strategies) and discarding weakly supported sub-themes with limited data (e.g., *"Extrinsic Motivations"*) were either integrated into broader themes or excluded. Sub-themes like *"Curriculum Design and Delivery"* (Sub-Theme 1) and *"Alignment with Workplace Expectations"* (Sub-Theme 21) were merged into Theme 3 (Curriculum and Learning Environment) to reflect how institutional structures shape skill development.

Table 4.4: Final Themes with Examples:

1. Presentation Skills and Delivery

- **Codes:** Body language, pacing, fluency, audience adaptation.

- **Sub-Themes:** Clarity and Organisation (Sub-Theme 5), Confidence and Presence (Sub-Theme 7).

- **Example Data:** *“I do not make eye contact as that makes me nervous.”*

2. Teaching and Learning Strategies

- **Codes:** Task-based learning, group discussion, role play.

- **Sub-Themes:** Pedagogical Approaches (Sub-Theme 8), Active Learning (Sub-Theme 12).

- **Example Data:** *“Role-playing helped us practice real-world scenarios.”*

3. Curriculum and Learning Environment

- **Codes:** Institutional support, curriculum structure, resource constraints.

- **Sub-Themes:** Learning Environment (Sub-Theme 3), Real-World Application (Sub-Theme 13).

- **Example Data:** *“The curriculum prioritises engineering courses, leaving little time for presentation practice.”*

4. Student Motivation and Support

- **Codes:** Encouragement, self-assessment, peer support.

- **Sub-Themes:** Intrinsic Motivations (Sub-Theme 15), Personalised Feedback (Sub-Theme 14).

- **Example Data:** *“supportive classroom environment does play a positive role, and I feel more confident and motivated.”*

5. Impact and Outcomes

- **Codes:** Employability, skill retention, workplace alignment.

- **Sub-Themes:** Skill Development Over Time (Sub-Theme 18), Workplace Expectations (Sub-Theme 21).

- **Example Data:** *“developing good communication skills is crucial for their academic and professional growth.”*

Step 6: Writing the report.

The last step of thematic analysis process is written report. The themes were reviewed thoroughly and their alignment with research questions was examined, presenting the themes in a well-organised and coherent manner. A total number of 21 preliminary/sub themes emerged providing the insights into the practices and challenges in presentation skills context. For example, the aspects of presentation anxiety and linguistic barrier were mentioned by both groups of participants highlighting the barriers in giving effective presentations. Similarly, ‘student centred approaches to learning’ included practicing, self-motivation, and peer feedback and collaborations, students integrate to enhance their presentations. In order to ensure the clarity and coherence, themes were analysed in relation to the data set and were supported by direct quotations from the data. This stage also ensured refinement of narrative confirming the logical interconnection and presentation of themes. The final report underpins the complexities of presentation skills development and offers in depth understanding into the way students navigate the hurdles in their academic environment.

4.7 Chapter Summary

The chapter discussed the analysis of this qualitative ethnographic study which exploring impact of presentation skills teachings on skill development at an engineering university in Pakistan. The teaching methods used, the challenges students and teachers face and the impact on their roles have been examined.

The data collection process involved six observations, seven interviews with teachers and four students focus group interviews. To analyse the data gathered, Braun and Clarke’s (2006) thematic analysis was adopted. After applying the six-phase analysis process, several sub themes emerged which were later summarised into six main themes. The main themes and their alignment with the research questions are discussed in next chapter which will summarise the findings, conclusion and recommendations. These suggestions will consider students, teachers, institutions and policy makers involved with presentation skills for engineering students using the English language.

The process of analysis that was used in this chapter was guided by the integrated theoretical framework, allowing the study to link observed patterns and themes to established theoretical frameworks. The primary lenses adopted for the study was Wenger’s CoP and Kolb’s ELT, that supported interpreting students’ social participation and experiential learning in presentation tasks, while the other perspectives such as McCroskey’s Communication Apprehension and Long’s Interaction Hypothesis gave insight into affective and interactional factors. This

theoretical grounding sets the stage for next chapters, where the findings are presented and interpreted in relation to these frameworks.

5 Findings

5.1 Introduction

This research investigated the effectiveness of current strategies for developing presentation skills among undergraduate engineering students at a Pakistani university. The motivation for this study stemmed from the recognition that although presentation skills are crucial for academic success and professional careers, concerns have been raised about the adequacy of existing pedagogical approaches. This study investigates major issues and challenges related to presentation skills development among engineering students, focusing on students' strengths and weaknesses, current teaching practices, and areas for improvement. To address these concerns, an ethnographic approach was employed that incorporated qualitative data collection methods. Data was gathered through the observation of presentation skills lessons, interviews with teaching staff, and focus group discussions with students. Flexible, open-ended questions were posed in the interviews and focus group discussions to elicit comprehensive insights into perceptions and experiences of participants. A thematic analysis was conducted of the qualitative data from these three research methods and recurring themes and patterns were identified and coded to uncover key factors influencing presentation skill development. The findings from the qualitative analysis were then triangulated to give a more robust and nuanced insights into the data and formulate answers to the four research questions.

This chapter represents the findings of this study derived from data collected from classroom observations, teachers' interviews, students focus groups, and document analysis. The findings are thematically arranged and aligned with the research questions. This chapter emphasizes on presentation of data, while interpretation and theoretical integration are addressed in next chapter. This chapter is structured according to the findings, themes and their alignment with the research questions, and the findings related to current teaching practices are presented. This chapter explores student and staff perceptions of strengths and weaknesses in English presentation skills, examining the perceived effectiveness of current teaching strategies. It integrates the findings to discuss improvements to the teaching of presentation skills and addresses the overarching goal to enhance student preparedness for academic and professional contexts. Furthermore, I have used the research questions to organise the data, (RQ2, RQ3, and RQ4) whilst the discussion section addresses the main research question, RQ1. The findings section is therefore organised around the study's research questions, with themes presented under each question's context, e.g., themes addressing RQ 2 are grouped, followed by those related to RQ 3 and 4, concluding with the themes linked to RQ 1. The discussion section that follows interprets these findings considering relevant literature and theoretical perspectives.

Table 5.1 summarises the data collection methods, process of analysis, and the contribution to findings.

Table 5.1: Data Collection Methods, Analysis Process and Contribution to Findings

<i>Research Questions</i>	<i>Methods</i>	<i>Analysis</i>
RQ2. According to staff and students, what factors contribute to students' strengths and weaknesses concerning English presentational skills?	- Contextual data - Observations - Interviews - Focus groups	- Document review of syllabi & assessment procedures - Test results - Ethnographic analysis of observed lessons: what happens? - Thematic analysis of contributory factors - Thematic analysis of contributory factors
RQ3. Which teaching strategies are currently used by English language teachers and to what extent are they perceived to be effective by staff and students?	- Observations - Interviews - Focus groups	- Ethnographic exploration of observed lessons: what do teachers do? - Thematic analysis of strategies according to effectiveness - Thematic analysis of strategies according to effectiveness
RQ4. What kinds of improvements to current provision for developing presentation skills are sought by staff and students?	- Teacher interviews - Student focus groups	- Thematic analysis of improvements sought - Thematic analysis of improvements sought

5.2 Contextual Data

It is essential to be able to present effectively in university education as students need to be able to communicate their knowledge and ideas clearly and persuasively (Amir et al., 2024). The curriculum review shows that students are required to develop and deliver presentations in specific presentation skills courses and in their subject specific programmes. Thus, it is imperative to understand students' expectations of what they are required to do, to analyse the influential contextual factors, and to understand the significance of presentations skills amongst this group.

Teachers educate students on presentation techniques such as content delivery in English, body language, tone, style, and the use of AV aids, while students are expected to demonstrate these techniques. They are also expected to deliver a presentation in which they also offer logical reasoning, understand the content, and respond to questions in a coherent, logical manner.

The following section considers the course learning outcomes noting the alignment of learning objectives and course learning objectives (CLOs):

- **CLO-1:** Relates to presentation skills, in which confidence and fluency in delivery are essential. The contextual analysis investigates how much class time is dedicated to activities that foster fluency and confidence building, such as impromptu speaking, role-play, or giving presentations in a supportive environment. The results are given in the form of rubrics, containing points of evaluation, and offer feedback when students are demonstrating improved fluency and confidence.
- **CLO-2:** Important for written communication, this has less direct relevance to presentation skills. However, clear and concise language is crucial for effective presentations. The analysis explores whether assessment procedures evaluate the clarity and conciseness of language used during presentations, not just in written assignments.
- **CLO-3:** Relevant to presentation skills, which often involve interacting with the audience through Q&A sessions or discussions. The analysis examines whether case studies and other activities used to develop interpersonal skills are explicitly linked to presentation scenarios.
- **CLO-4:** Highly relevant, as presentation skills are crucial for success in the corporate world. The analysis investigates whether the curriculum incorporates activities that simulate real-world business presentations, such as pitching ideas, presenting reports, or leading meetings. It should also explore whether feedback mechanisms reflect corporate expectations for presentation style and content.
- **CLO-5:** Has less direct relevance to core presentation skills. The analysis still considers whether students are encouraged to connect their presentation topics to real-world examples or media to enhance engagement and relevance.
- **Course Objectives:** Objectives 1, 3, and 5 directly support presentation skills development. The analysis examines how these objectives are translated into specific teaching and learning activities and how their achievement is measured. Objectives 2, 4, and 6, while valuable, have less direct impact on presentation skills.

5.2.1.1 Key Concepts of the Contextual Analysis

The key concepts of the contextual analysis include teacher expectations and the course outlines which explicitly outline expectations for teachers to provide presentation skills instruction and feedback. Teachers should be provided with professional development and resources to support their teaching of presentation skills. Time is another significant aspect as class time specifically dedicated to presentation skills development includes direct instruction, practice, and feedback. The expected results refer to the specific presentation skills that are anticipated to be demonstrated by students, when the course ends and these skills are usually assessed by teachers (e.g., in the form of rubrics). The test results provide insights into student performances on presentation-related tasks, and whether they reveal areas of strength or weakness in specific presentation skills. After analysing the contextual data through the lens of the CLOs and objectives, it was easy to identify alignment, gaps, and opportunities for improvement in the provision for presentation skills development within the course. This analysis can then inform recommendations for curriculum and instructional enhancements.

University students face unique challenges in developing their presentation skills. Many young professionals entering the workforce lack the necessary public speaking skills. This highlights significance of integrating oral presentation skills in higher education. Providing students with opportunities to practice and receive feedback on their presentation skills can be a valuable way to address this gap and prepare them for future professional progression. To understand the context of this study, I conducted a comprehensive analysis of relevant documents and data, including:

- **Syllabus/curricula:** In the form of course outlines to teachers which are developed by the board of studies and involves some teachers from the relevant department. I examined course outlines across different engineering departments to determine
- **Evidence of presentation skills development:** I identified whether courses included dedicated learning outcomes, teaching activities, or assessment tasks specifically focused on presentation skills in English. I analysed the amount of class time allocated to teaching these skills, practicing presentation skills, and differentiating between the presentation techniques taught and those used by the learners. I also investigated how presentation skills instruction was incorporated within the teaching of core engineering concepts and technical communication.
- **Assessment Procedure Analysis:** I reviewed presentation assessment rubrics and marking criteria across different courses and departments to understand the key skills emphasised in evaluating student presentations, such as content clarity, organisation, language proficiency, delivery, and the use of visual aids. I also analysed the percentage or weight assigned to presentation performance in the overall course grade, and its

reflection of the perceived importance of this skill. Feedback mechanisms were also analysed examining the types of feedback provided to students on their presentations, including written comments, verbal feedback, and peer assessment.

- **Test Results Analysis:** I analysed data from participants' perceptions to establish their baseline proficiency and determined the average English language proficiency level of the target student population. I also identified areas of strength and weakness in oral communication and investigated whether a correlation exists between English proficiency scores and student performance on presentation tasks to consider the impact of language proficiency on presentation skills development.

Specific findings emerging from the data analysis included limited emphasis on presentation skills. The document review revealed that while most courses incorporate presentations, dedicated instruction and allocated time to develop presentation skills are limited. The presentation and communication skills courses offered by the departments studied are the only ones offering this support. Assessment procedures prioritise the quality of presentation delivery, particularly in terms of English language proficiency, over the depth of content. The findings also explore the gap between expectations and student preparedness, while the analysis of student presentations and test scores indicate a gap between the expected level of presentation proficiency and the actual skills possessed by non-native English-speaking students. This gap was reflected in lower presentation grades or difficulties in effectively communicating technical information during students' presentations. This contextual analysis provides valuable insights into the current state of presentation skills development for students studying these skills in this engineering university. These findings could inform the design and implementation of interventions and support mechanisms aimed at enhancing the presentation skills of engineering students, which would ultimately contribute to their academic and professional success, and that of the university. These contextual findings also point towards the importance of practice-oriented and socially situated learning, which is further explored and discussed in the next chapter.

5.3 Findings by Data Sources

5.3.1 Observational Findings

To gain a deeper understanding of how presentation skills are taught and practiced at this university, ethnographic observations were conducted in various classrooms. These observations focused on dedicated presentation skills lessons and instances where students delivered presentations as part of their coursework. I conducted ethnographic observations in classrooms where lectures on presentation skills were being delivered to students, which offered

firsthand insights into current teaching practices. This section provides a description of my observations, illuminating key factors and pedagogical approaches while also providing vignettes offering a nuanced understanding of the classroom environment and its dynamics. A general structure of the class and teaching approaches utilised is given, which was echoed across the observed lessons.

My observations revealed a diverse range of approaches to teaching presentation skills, influenced by factors such as the teaching style of teacher, course content, and students' proficiency. However, patterns emerged including teacher-centred instruction as many lessons followed a traditional lecture format, with the teacher explaining presentation techniques and demonstrating examples. While this approach provided students with foundational knowledge, it often limited opportunities for active participation and practice. The focus on structure and delivery was also significant as emphasis was placed on the structural components of presentation (introduction, body, conclusion) and delivery aspects like body language, eye contact, and voice projection. However, less attention was given to supporting students on clear and engaging content. There was limited use of authentic contexts as presentations often revolved around hypothetical scenarios or general topics which lacked the real-world context that students would encounter in future engineering careers. The findings from the observations also revealed that while teachers provided some comments on presentation content and delivery feedback primarily focused on language errors. Thus, staff often focused on correcting grammatical errors or pronunciation mistakes, which potentially overshadowed other aspects of effective communication.

The following provide summaries of two observed lessons, with highlights of their key features:

Lesson 1: Introduction to Effective Presentations

Summary: Teachers began by presenting a slideshow outlining main elements of effective presentation. After that, students formed groups and analysed a pre-recorded presentation, identifying strengths and weaknesses. This lesson mainly emphasised theoretical knowledge over practical application as the teacher showed the slides and talked about the main components of presentations. Student interaction was very limited, and active participation was missing. Feedback primarily focused on identifying errors in the pre-recorded presentation.

Lesson 2: Presenting Technical Information

Summary: Students delivered group presentations on a technical topic related to the subject specific course content. The teacher provided feedback on both sentence structure and the clarity of the presentation. This highlighted that students tend to integrate presentation skills with core engineering concepts, which provides an opportunity for students to

practice presenting technical information. The feedback addressed both content and delivery aspects.

Vignette 1:

Context: During a presentation skills lesson, a student from Baluchistan was hesitant to make eye contact with the audience and primarily focused on reading from his notes.

Transcript:

Teacher: *"Remember, eye contact is crucial for engaging your audience. Try to make eye contact with everyone in the room."*

Reflection: This vignette underlines the task of transferring knowledge regarding presentation skills into practice, particularly for students from cultures where direct eye contact might be perceived differently.

Vignette 2:

Context: A student presentation was observed, and it was noted he spoke very fast when delivering the content he had memorised but did not explain the content.

Transcript:

Student: *"...and the results showed a significant increase in the quantum efficiency of the perovskite solar cell."*

Classmate: *"What's quantum efficiency?"*

Reflection: This vignette emphasises the importance of understanding knowledge and considering the audience's knowledge base when presenting new technical information. It also highlights the need for students to develop the ability to explain complex concepts in clear and accessible language.

I observed presentation skills classes from three different engineering faculties chosen on merit (top, medium and low merit). I took field notes and video recordings of the classroom as 40 to 50 students were in each class and thus video recording made it easier to observe the full context and identify elements overlooked during the observation. I also observed the students' presentations to determine whether there were any differences between students' presentations from different faculties. I also considered whether the teaching methods varied between staff, and if students' performances varied based on factors such as academic background. I observed students presenting and most volunteered for the focus group discussions, thus I was able to identify their schooling and linguistic background amongst other factors.

5.3.1.1 Teachers' Presentation and Command of the English Language

5.3.1.2 Use of Language

Most teachers used both Urdu and English as a medium of instruction during their classes, Urdu was the dominant language, as teachers did not seem to be very fluent in English. This was one of the major factors to consistently emerge in my field notes and my research journal. Being part of the faculty, provided me with knowledge of the background of the teachers. Aside from two teachers, the remainder had studied in government schools, and the English language proficiency of such schools is compromised. Furthermore, teachers usually use lectures and slides and share the content from the slides. Thus, there is minimal interaction with students, which is significant as the teacher's language also has an impact on students' learning. One of the classes observed involved teacher-initiated group discussion and an interactive environment in the class was observed. The teacher was proficient in English and had attended a private grammar school.

5.3.1.3 Teaching Methods

During my observations, I discovered that most of the teachers used a conventional lecture method where the class sat listening to the steps they needed to follow in presentations, meaning there was less interaction between students and the teacher. In two classes that I observed teachers used a lecture method and had a group activity. I observed that these teachers were more interactive with students which was evident amongst the students who were more engaged than those in classes where the lecture method was used and where students tended to sit at the back did not engage. The introduction to the class typically involved a brief review of prior content where the teacher asked students to 'storm' the topic; some teachers used warm up activities to engage students and activate their prior knowledge. Teachers then presented new content when they incorporated new concepts regarding presentation skills such as the effective use of AV aids, organising content more coherently, or employing persuasive language. In guided practice, students were involved in practice activities, using the knowledge they had just acquired but in a controlled environment. This involved pair work or group discussion with the aim of developing features such as outlines, and or to practice delivery techniques such as providing peer feedback.

The main findings from the observations involved both structure and organisation, as teachers consistently stressed the significance of a clear structure and organisation in presentations, and of providing outlines to students so they could develop their content accordingly. In addition, technology was integrated into most lessons as teachers used PowerPoint and multimedia for their lectures. This also enhanced students' engagement, kept the lecture interesting, and aimed to make learning an enjoyable process.

Teachers emphasised audience awareness and stressed the significance of tailoring presentations to maintain perspective and meet the expectations of listeners. However, the observations revealed limited opportunities for extended practice. Students lacked the time given for practice so they could practice and further refine their presentations.

Vignette 1:

Transcript:

Teacher: *“So in the previous lecture we have already discussed the introduction and now we are going to move on to the next section, as you can see the example showing the main body of presentation, this would include the main key points and supporting evidence to make it more impactful.”*

Reflection: This vignette explains the teacher’s demonstration of the structure of a presentation, as she illustrates the format with an example and shows students an effective organisation approach and clear frameworks. The teacher is delivering the lecture and not taking any feedback or opinions from students.

Vignette 2:

Transcript:

Student 1: *“What role do you want out of the two for role play, ... I am hoping the topic would be giving them message,”*

Student 2: *“I have an idea, but it would require more people so don’t you think we should do it in a group instead of the pair?”*

Reflection: This vignette illustrates a situation in which students are working in pairs/groups and preparing for the role play activity in class. Students are engaged actively in discussion, which provides a chance to interact with each other. Indeed, peer interaction plays a vital role in building confidence as students get to learn from each other in a more comfortable environment enabling open discussion which some can avoid with teachers.

5.3.1.4 Student Involvement

Some students were observed sitting quietly during the lectures while others, sitting at the back, were chatting (whispering) and some were seen checking their mobile phones. Murmuring amongst students was also heard during the class. The students in classes where group discussions and activities took place appeared to be more involved and active during the class, as students responded promptly to the teacher whenever she asked for feedback. Students engaged in discussion were not only alert but also trying to contribute to the discussion; the teachers’ encouraging attitude had a positive impact on them. The classes where teachers did

not interact with students or where there was minimal interaction, provided few opportunities for students to offer their input. This is significant as students in higher education are expected to be creative and bring their work, thus it is helpful for teaching strategies to involve them in class. In terms of independent practice and feedback, students had opportunities for independent practice, often delivering short presentations to the class or recording themselves for self-evaluation. Teachers provided constructive feedback, focusing on both strengths and areas for improvement. Independent practice and feedback were also observed in which students had opportunities to work independently and think of a topic on their own. They also had leverage to choose their group and recording their presentation to later conduct a self-evaluation. Teachers provided feedback involving students' strengths and areas that require improvement.

5.3.1.5 Incentives

Teachers were witnessed giving verbal praise to students in the form of 'ok', 'alright', 'well done', and 'thank you' to students' responses. A teacher's attitude towards their students plays a vital role in students' performances. During my observations I witnessed the students to be more involved when the teacher had a kind and supportive attitude, whereas students seemed reserved in the classes where teachers seemed less interactive and encouraging. Students also mentioned this during the focus group discussions stating there some teachers had taunting attitudes towards them. Although I did not witness taunts or discouragements, my presence or the recording of the classes could explain this. Instead of aiding the development of presentation skills, such responses can shatter confidence. Thus, no material or physical incentives were given to the students.

5.3.1.6 Institutional Factors

5.3.1.7 Physical Facilities

Physical facilities are essential for an effective classroom scenario. The participants reported the lack of facilities. Observations also confirmed lack of multimedia in most of the classes. Furthermore, I saw a teacher asking the class representative (CR) if he had checked the availability of rooms with multimedia, but he replied "Mam, I did check but there is none available at the moment". I also observed the teacher sending the CR to ask the admin team if they could arrange something and then waited 10 to 15 minutes for a response. However, the CR returned with a negative reply, which meant the teacher gave the lecture using a white board and by reading slides from her laptop. One of the teachers took a class in the computer laboratory as multimedia was available and the space was vacant at that time.

Classrooms are big enough to accommodate 40 to 50 students and airy with fans but with no air conditioners in the summers when temperatures are high. In the summer, lectures frequently stop when there is an electricity shortage. Moreover, student have no electronic access for the

library, so if they need to read anything they need to personally go to library to retrieve the source. These factors were observed and noted during the focus group discussions. A lack of available printers and computers were also noted, which was also mentioned during the discussions with teachers and students.

5.3.1.8 Time

The time allocated for lectures was limited. During the students' presentations I observed that teachers were in a hurry during their lectures and in presentation sessions as they wanted as many students to present as possible during that period. In addition, students immediately rushed out at the end the session as they had to get to their next class. This was an issue repeatedly raised by teachers and students in the interviews and focus group discussions. Moreover, time was lost addressing a multimedia malfunction, and a significant amount of lot of time was wasted trying to fix it (which proved unsuccessful). Instead, the teacher verbally shared the next steps and closed the discussion.

5.3.1.9 Academic Background

The academic background of students and teachers was an important factor; during the observations I observed that students from government schools seemed less confident and used their English language skills less. The same was observed in teachers as those from government schools were more inclined more to use Urdu and used both languages during the class. These had normal to good language abilities, mostly due to their experience, as such schools do not provide adequate language skills. Although only a few students were from grammar and English schools, I also observed their presentations to compare. Besides the content and slides showed during their presentations, there was a marked difference in their confidence, language, command of, and fluency in English. They also did not make any grammatical mistakes unlike the students from government schools.

5.3.1.10 Student Presentations

In the observed student presentations, I noted whether they followed the teachers' instructions on the presentations given. Students were given timings by different teachers and gave their presentations accordingly. Of the common errors noted in their presentations, the most significant were grammatical and pronunciation orientated while several students seemed to have memorised the content on the slides or read from the slides. I observed that a few students were reluctant to present and asked their teacher if they could present a hard copy in assignment form instead. Teachers marked them on factors such as:

- Fluency, grammar, and pronunciation of English.
- Confidence and command of the language and content presented.
- Time management.

- Questions and answers at the end

Although the allocation of marks and total marks varied between teachers, the presentation was mandatory as all students had to give a presentation. Only one teacher took one small presentation and then this major presentation. Students are assigned only one to two presentations during a semester, and this was due to a lack of time. Although they agreed that more presentations could improve students' confidence and presentation skills teachers stated it was not possible to teach and listen to presentations from a large number of students in one semester. Students also emphasised that having more chances to present would enhance their confidence and reduce their anxiety in facing an audience and speaking in English, (some students responded in focus group discussions, that they would be more confident to respond in Urdu than in English).

5.3.2 Findings from Teacher Interviews

To develop an in-depth insight of the factors influencing the performance of students in presentation skills, I conducted semi-structured interviews with seven teachers involved in teaching presentation skills at the university. The interviews explored their perspectives on student strengths, weaknesses, and the challenges of teaching presentation skills to non-native English speakers. This section provides insights into the teachers' perspectives which offers an understanding of the pedagogical approaches employed in the development of presentation skills. Teachers' perspectives and experiences are crucial; thus, these interviews provide an opportunity to engage with their views.

5.3.2.1 Teaching Approaches in Practice

Thematic analysis provides details of the recurring codes and themes in the transcripts after the interviews were analysed. This explains teachers' perceptions of the strategies employed and the level of effectiveness. Teachers shared their own style and strategies, such as the scaffolding they encourage students to use to break down the presentation into more manageable steps, and the provision of templates and guidelines to structure their work. Some of the teachers stressed the significance of active learning in which students are involved in activities like role play or group discussion. Teachers also stressed the use of technology and recognised the significance of online platforms and multimedia to facilitate learning and enhanced engagement. Some teachers expressed concern at scaffolding, particularly the over reliance on these templates which could affect students' creativity and critical independent thinking.

All teachers agreed that active learning was an effective way to fully involve students and promote collaborative learning. They also agreed that it provided opportunities to apply real world skills but highlighted the need for student creativity and authenticity and to promote student-

centred aspect of learning. Nevertheless, they also noted the benefits of technology but stated that it needs to be monitored to avoid over reliance.

For example, on scaffolding, Teacher 3 explained, *“if I provide my students with templates and outlines, they tend to structure their ideas in a more coherent manner”*, whilst Teacher 2 advised *“Instead of relying on these templates and other software, I encourage them to bring their creativity, which also brings confidence in them.”* Moreover, Teacher 3 stated that for active learning, *“I prefer group work or pair activities as it promotes collaborative learning and provides them the chance to communicate with one another in the classroom environment”*, and Teacher 7 acknowledged that *“role play is the activity that provides them the chance to bring the real-world scenarios into the picture and facilitate in confidence building.”* In addition, on the integration of technology, Teacher 1 explained that *“students generally give PowerPoint presentations, but its effective use can be mandatory in order to facilitate the process”*, while Teacher 6 explained, *“I am usually encouraging the students to explore new innovative tools such as online resources and multimedia to make their presentations more interesting and engaging”*, also stating that, *“I encourage students to explore different online resources and multimedia tools to enhance their presentations and make them more engaging.”*

Students’ views regarding teaching methodologies used in the teaching of presentation skills have been discussed. It is useful to develop an understanding of the teaching methodologies used to identify the extent to which current teaching processes are successful. The methods discussed includes lectures, group discussion, and interaction with teachers and other students in the class. Project-based learning or documentary making are also incorporated by some teachers in which students are assigned to make a documentary and then share it with the class. Moreover, role play activities require students to act and improvise in scenarios in which the dialogues again is in English. Teachers generally mark students in these activities. Findings from the interviews considered insights into pedagogical approaches and their effectiveness in developing presentation skills. The teaching and learning process could be more effective by understanding the strategies teachers employ including their current effectiveness and the rationale behind them.

5.3.2.2 Insights on Student Presentations

A thematic analysis of the interview transcripts revealed several recurring themes regarding the factors contributing to student strengths and weaknesses in presentation skills. Student strengths including technical proficiency; teachers consistently highlighted students' strong grasp of the technical concepts and their ability to present complex information in their respective engineering disciplines. Visual aids and presentation software were areas in which students were generally adept, reflecting their familiarity with technology. As engineering students, this was an area that they could be expected to excel as they did not have to use language or face an

audience (two major issues noted). The findings also indicated students' work ethics and preparation; most teachers acknowledged the dedication and effort students invested in preparing their presentations, often attributing this to their strong work ethic.

Weaker areas for students included language proficiency which teachers indicated was one of the biggest barriers to students' performances in their presentations. Indeed, teachers identified limited English language proficiency as a significant impediment to effective presentation delivery, particularly regarding fluency, pronunciation, and grammatical accuracy. Confidence and anxiety were the other major obstacles. Many students, especially those from cultures with different communication norms, struggled with presentation anxiety and lacked confidence in their speaking abilities. Audience engagement and intercultural communication were also raised by the teachers who observed that students often struggled to adapt their presentations to engage diverse audiences and navigate intercultural communication nuances.

While teachers generally agreed on students' areas of strengths and weaknesses, their perspectives on the underlying reasons and relative importance of each factor differed. For example, regarding language proficiency, T1 stated: *"The language barrier is definitely the biggest challenge. They understand the technical content, but they struggle to express it clearly in English"* while T5 indicated *"Yes, language is important, but I also see a lack of confidence, even among students with comparatively better schooling."* In addition, regarding confidence and anxiety, the common perception was demonstrated by T4: *"Many of them are afraid to make mistakes in English, so they become hesitant and monotone during presentations."* However, T3 stated that, *"some students feel nervous...other than language anxiety, it might be due to the fear to face audience or maybe they are introverts"*. Finally, in terms of engaging their audience, T6 explained, *"sometimes they keep talking and talking. Not considering the audience presence"* while T1 confirmed that, *"Most of them are from villages and rural areas of Pakistan, thus have a fear from the students from the city."*

5.3.2.3 Teacher Perspectives on Enhancing Presentation Skills

This section highlights the insights and recommendations to create a more supportive and motivating learning environment. Teachers' perspectives were explained on enhancements to the current provision of presentation skills, and ways to realise continuous improvement. After analysing the interview transcripts, several recurring themes emerged. Teachers expressed a desire for more allocated time for these courses or an increased number of sessions to allow for smaller classes and more in-depth instruction. They indicated this would allow for the incorporation of activities and more feedback which is not possible in classes of 40 to 50 students.

Thus, teachers' perspectives revealed the need for resources and support from the university administration. They require a wider range of resources including updated equipment, presentation material, and access to professional development. The teachers also explained that the real-world application of these skills is emphasised so that students can practice in more authentic contexts, such as debates, TED talks and seminars. While they generally agreed on the allocation of more time and resources, their individual suggestions were based on Personalised experiences and thoughts.

In terms of time allocation, T4 stated that *“three contact hours per week is not enough; if we offer them in all or at least once every year, it would be beneficial”* while T2 explained, *“If we give more time to give feedback and in class practice sessions within the present scenario, instead of rushing towards finishing the course in time, it would certainly help them with their presentations.”* Furthermore, for resources and support, T3 noted that *“the provision of digital tools and multimedia resources by the administration would impact the engagement and will result in more creative presentation”* and T4 recognised that, *“teachers must be provided opportunities such as teacher training and professional development programs.”* Moreover, for real-world application T5 stated that, *“supporting the societies in the university, ... provides students the platform where they can perform in front of the wider audience.”*

This addresses the provision of resources to staff and students for presentation skills, which includes Digital tools, multimedia, functional equipment and an increase time allocation for these courses. The integration of presentations in other subject specific courses was also recommended. This university is a government - or public - university, thus budgets are allocated by the Punjabi government. Sometimes, there are ample budgets which is significant in a third world country where there is a limited focus on education. However, these budgets are small compared to with international standards, and such institutions struggle to compete with global hi-tech technologies. In our country, very few people have access to the facilities which reflect global standards as these can be costly. A key points barrier to such development is the corruption, which has had a substantial impact on the growth of the country. Incapable individuals inhabiting posts often consume most of the funds, which has impacted the country's education system. The system needs overhauling to thoroughly review primary, middle, secondary and higher education. The standards of these sectors have been derailed in last 30 years or so and caused these problems. The institution works in a similar way, and allocated budgets are not distributed to the department through fair means.

This shows teachers' responses to the university's support for departments' presentation skills courses. Teachers had reservations about the availability of resources and the time allocated for such courses is considered limited. This means it is challenging to fully prepare the students with required skills limited time allocated for these courses. There is no mechanism to access

teaching other than through student feedback which is taken anonymously at the end of the semester. These findings illustrate the desire amongst teachers for increased resources including time and technology to enable the development of such important, real-world skills.

5.3.3 Focus Groups Findings: Student Perspectives

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing presentation skills development, I conducted focus groups with students currently enrolled in presentation skills courses at the university. These focus groups offered a platform where students could share their experiences, challenges, and perspectives on effective presentation practices.

5.3.3.1 Exploring Teaching Practices: Student Focus Groups Lens

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of various teaching strategies, focus group discussions were conducted with students studying presentation skills. This section provides an account of their perspectives of teaching strategies and their effectiveness and impact on learning.

The focus group discussions revealed several recurring themes involving the effectiveness of teaching strategies. Students emphasised the provision of opportunities to present and receive feedback which would not only allow them to improve their skills but also give them confidence to further refine their skills in a real-world context. Furthermore, all the students favoured constructive feedback and stressed the need to receive timely feedback which highlights areas to improve. They also suggested effective techniques for this. Students favoured interactive activities such as group discussion and role play which made the process more interesting and enjoyable. Some students responded positively to the templates and their structure, while others considered them restrictive and presented barriers to the freedom and creativity needed to foster their own personal style.

Students were inclined towards active and collaborative learning and unanimously agreed that group or pair activities boosted their confidence and helped them learn from each other, considering such approaches to be highly effective. Students also acknowledged the significance of technology in developing visually appealing and engaging presentations which did not overshadow the main content. However, several students made text heavy slides which were considered ineffective and less engaging. Thus, although students agreed on the value of active learning, group work and interactive environment and practical application, individual and personal preferences shaped their views on specific strategies.

On scaffolding, F1 explained, *"I found the templates really helpful in organising my thoughts and making sure I covered all the important points."* Moreover, F6 stated that *"I think the templates are confined and if we do it with freedom, we can experiment with more styles and be more creative"*. On feedback, F8 noted that *"the feedback I received from my peers was really valuable,*

also helped me view my presentation from a different lens” while F4 indicated that, *“my teacher’s suggestion on how to improve the element of delivery in my presentation was really valuable.”* Moreover, on technology, F5 explained, *“I use power point presentation and make it visually appealing which also keeps the audience engaged”*, and F6 recognised, *“the focus must be on content rather than slides, thus one must use technology in moderation.”*

As the native language of students was Urdu or Punjabi, teachers were also asked that to what extent students play a role in developing their language skills. All the teachers interviewed considered it vital that students were proactive in their learning as, after the completion of their degree, they would be required to present themselves in the employment market. They also emphasised the need to support each other instead of creating an uncomfortable environment by making fun of each other during presentations. Motivating each other and relying on sources other than courses taught at the university were understood to be very important.

5.3.3.2 Students’ Perspectives on their Strengths and Weaknesses

Thematic analysis of the focus group discussions revealed several recurring themes regarding the factors contributing to student strengths and weaknesses in presentation skills. Students stated that the strengths included collaborative learning, opportunities for peer learning and feedback, and group activities and practice presentations with classmates. Students expressed a preference for hands-on activities and real-world simulations which allow them to apply presentation techniques in authentic contexts. Constructive feedback was another emerging positive point; receiving specific, actionable feedback from instructors and peers was identified as crucial in identifying areas for improvement and building confidence. Collaborative tasks and mutual assistance between peers correspond with Wenger’s (1998) notion of legitimate peripheral participation as students were engaged in a community learning from each other.

The weaknesses involved language anxiety and fluency, which echoed findings from the interviews with teachers. Students consistently cited language anxiety as a major obstacle which impacted their fluency, pronunciation, and overall confidence in presentations. Some students, particularly those from cultures with different communication norms, expressed a need for greater awareness and sensitivity towards intercultural communication differences in presentation settings. Students also noted limited exposure to diverse presentation styles; they desired greater exposure to a wider range of presentation styles and delivery techniques beyond traditional lecture-style presentations. Although most of the students agreed on the general broad categories of their strengths and weaknesses, their individual experiences and perceptions of each factor varied.

Language anxiety was noted by F1 who stated, *“presenting in English makes me extremely nervous do not want to make grammar mistakes and leave a bad impression.”* Furthermore, F16

explained, “my English language is alright, but I still get anxiety before going in front of the class.” In comparison, cultural differences were identified by F13 (female), “we are not used to have the direct eye contact with males or even elders in our family and town”, while F15 stated, “It is very important to realise the culture students belong to and respect their situations.” F15 found the style of presentation challenging, “... students memorise and speak constantly and deliver that memorised content without sharing some interesting facts and details about the topic” which was echoed by F14, “students feel scared to try different styles, and the reason might be the fear to lose marks”. The group discussion with students after the class exemplifies shared community practice (Wenger, 1998) and reflective observation phase of learning (Kolb, 1984).

5.3.3.3 Student Opinions of their Presentation Skills Performances

This addresses students’ perspectives of their presentation performances. They mostly discussed the language barriers they face, explaining that their linguistic and cultural backgrounds hinder their communication in English. In addition, peer pressure, and presenting in front of classmates were recognised added pressures, while presentation anxiety, and a lack of confidence were similarly cited as barriers. A large number of students come from rural areas and villages, and their background plays a vital role in learning and communicating; for example, students from rural schools and colleges are not used to presenting or communicating in English. Instead, most communicate in their regional language such as Punjabi, Siraki, Pushto, or Balochi. They also stated that peer pressure makes them nervous, while the feedback mechanism affects their performance as they only receive marks at the end of the semester after they have conducted the presentation. The teachers remark during or after their presentations which students indicate usually comprises sarcastic or taunting remarks.

During the focus group discussions, students’ views on their performances were taken including whether they felt they were improving. Students offered a mix of responses. A few students said they felt they were gradually improving but some indicated that they had not witnessed any significant progress in their presentations. English language and presentation practice along with a fear of facing an audience were among the key challenges which affect their presentations.

5.3.3.4 Focus Groups Insights: Improving presentation skills

This section provides an account of students’ perspectives and recommendations for the creation of more conducive, supportive and effective learning environments. Students discussed areas for improvement highlighting the need for more practice opportunities in low stake environments so they can receive feedback before engaging with high stake environments.

Furthermore, students highlighted the significance of individualised feedback tailored to their personalised strengths and weaknesses and referred to face-to-face meetings with teachers. Students also acknowledged that presentation anxiety is a major hurdle to effective presentation and suggested that techniques to manage anxiety should be incorporated into the curriculum. Finally, students agreed on broader concepts such as more time for practice, which are indicated as follows:

On practice opportunities, F10 explained *“if I get to practice in class, even if it’s for few minutes, it would reduce the fear to speak Infront of the audience”* while F9 suggested, *“if we are given the opportunity to have practice presentations, and record them to later identify areas for improvement.”* Personalised feedback was recommended by F3: *“one on one feedback would be useful, will also provide an opportunity to interact and discuss with teacher”*. Additionally, F14 noted that, *“our teacher states our flaws in front of the class, due to which I wish they give us feedback in a personalised environment.”* Students also recommended a focus on anxiety reduction; F5 advised, *“Incorporating some relaxation techniques or breathing exercises into the curriculum would be helpful in managing presentation anxiety”* and F16 suggested *“having individual feedback sessions with teachers would be helpful.”*

Students were asked about the teaching practices and methodologies used for presentation skills, including the resources (such as handouts and other materials) given to aid their learning and the instructions given. Overall, students felt that teachers need to acknowledge the need for incentives to encourage students and foster a conducive and supportive learning environment. This section describes students’ perceptions of teaching practices which confirms their inclination for group discussions. Most considered it important to be given more time for these courses, as they recognised it was insufficient, and most considered interactive methods and activity-based classes to be more useful.

Students offered key recommendations on ways to improve the teaching and learning process. They suggested that an adequate teaching method could facilitate their learning and confidence by involving them in classroom activities and discussions. More interactive class, greater resource availability, and greater time allocation for these courses to enable more practice sessions were suggested. They felt these courses should be offered across all semesters and that adequate resources should be provided. Furthermore, they indicated that courses need to be designed according to students’ needs.

This discusses students’ suggestions. All the students who participated in the discussions considered group discussions and activity-based learning to be more significant than a direct instruction lecture method. The findings illustrate students’ desire for practice opportunities, individual feedback and anxiety reduction strategies. Addressing these recommendations would

provide a more supportive and effective learning environment while empowering student to develop presentation skills with confidence.

5.4 Thematic Findings

This section outlines the themes that emerged from the data sets. The preliminary sub themes were discussed in the previous chapter, and they were condensed into five main themes which are discussed in subsequent sections.

5.4.1 Final Themes

This section discusses the main themes that emerged because of data analysis. The perceptions of the teachers and students where they shared their experiences and opinions were gathered, and the observations revealed an account of the classroom practices and environment. A list of 171 pre-codes is given in Appendix O. These pre-codes were gathered based on the similar patterns emerging in all the data sets. Firstly, I did manual coding and organised the pre-codes, then I grouped them under 67 codes (Appendix P). My observations and reflections also provide an account of the classroom environment, and the teaching strategies preferred amongst the students.

This study aimed to understand the methods employed to teach presentation skills courses and the results observed in the students' presentations by doing an in-depth analysis of findings. It also identified the weaknesses and barriers in this process and improvements to enhance these skills.

5.4.2 RQ2: Students' Strengths and Weaknesses

Themes 1, 3 and 4 correspond to the strengths and weaknesses of students in giving their presentations. Theme 1 focuses on presentation skills and delivery, which directly address students' strengths and weaknesses in core presentation skills (e.g., clear organisation, engaging delivery, confident presence). Theme 3 centres on the curriculum and learning environment and investigate how this can foster or hinder the development of strong presentation skills. Theme 4 describes student motivation and support, and focuses on exploring factors such as intrinsic motivation, external rewards, and personalised feedback including how they contribute to their strengths and weaknesses.

The data for research question 2 (according to staff and students, what factors contribute to students' strengths and weaknesses concerning English presentational skills) offer insights into how teachers perceive students' performances and their perception of the strength and weaknesses. Teachers considered language an important issue and believed that students faced difficulty in conducting presentations in English. The teachers' perceptions also emphasised the

impact of students' backgrounds as almost all came from schools where they only used Urdu and had never given presentations. Thus, they found it difficult to present to an audience and in English. They considered the students hardworking but at the same time considered that was hard to help them achieve good presentations in the limited time allocated for these courses.

5.4.2.1 Theme-1: Presentation Skills and Delivery

The teachers involved in delivering the presentation skills courses and their students shared their views regarding the strengths and weakness of students in this skill. In response RQ2, theme 1 describes the aspects of presentation and delivery, including how students draft and deliver their presentations. These aspects were also observed during the classroom observations when students were giving their presentations. The teachers' responses showed that most students were nervous and lacked confidence specially in the first semester at university when these courses were first experienced.

T4 explained, *"as it's their first time facing the audience, it seems very difficult to convince them to even face the class"*. I observed that students seemed reluctant to respond when the teacher asked them to *"raise hands who would want to present first"*, and there were no volunteers; instead, the teacher then assigned them roll numbers. The communication skills courses are generally practical, and laboratory courses mainly focus on speaking and presentations skills (for details on these courses see Appendix F-I). T2 similarly indicated *"I have also experienced that on many occasions, some students avoid showing up in the class in order to avoid speaking in front of the class and one of the reasons is a lack of prior experience and the language barrier as they are expected to interact in English"*.

Students come from various academic and linguistic backgrounds, where they are used to either Urdu or the regional language spoken in the area they have grown up in. As an ethnographer in this study, I witnessed students' reluctance in presentations while the same students did not feel conscious while writing or being given written assignments and quizzes. This shows their lack of confidence in this skill which may stem from anxiety and importantly their lack of confidence in the language; this is a view suggested by teachers and some of the students. During the focus group discussions, students also discussed this issue; when asked which part of presenting they find most difficult, one of the students said, *"it would be easier if I could give presentations in Urdu"*. Another student highlighted that he had never presented in school or college and found it difficult to speak in front of the class in English, *"the writing part and making slides is not tough from me but the presentation and facing the audience is what I am always stressed about, be it role plays or presentations."*

Nervousness and a lack of confidence was noted during the classroom observations when students conducted their presentations. In one of the classes observed students were given an

option to choose a topic and then to present it. Amongst the students giving presentations, their body language indicated nervousness, while two avoided eye contact with the audience. This restlessness and nervousness are significant for their delivery and engagement with the presentation. Anxiety can therefore manifest as fidgeting, poor eye contact, or a monotone voice, which impact the audience's connection and was evident in the observations. According to the students and teachers, the contributing factors are: A lack of experience, fear of public speaking, low self-esteem, peer pressure and language anxiety when presenting in English as an additional language.

During one of the observations, students were seen to not only avoid eye contact but turn their backs to the audience and read from the slides which further hindered their delivery. The contributing factors in these situations were nervousness, shyness, a lack of practice, and the student's cultural and linguistic background. Students' anxiety before conducting presentations was evident and can be well understood by McCroskey's (1977) CA framework. They clearly showed reluctance that corresponds with the 'avoidance behaviour' as mentioned by McCroskey (1977). According to many teachers, students are creative and can bring fresh perspectives and innovative approaches to their presentations; they achieve this when given the freedom to develop slides and written assignments and reports all of which are considered strengths. For example, T6 said, *"one of my students recently put in enormous effort in working on a project and making slides I assigned him, but when it came to present that in front of the class, he performed miserably ... He is one of the high scorers of the class in other courses as well"*.

Moreover, limited engagement with the audience was prominent amongst all observations which was noted during discussions with participants. Therefore, the presentations felt one-sided and lacked any effort to involve the audience or adapt to their responses. T4 explained, *"I do encourage them to have a Q&A session at the end of their presentations, but they are always nervous to handle these questions in English ... students need more practice, and this way they can overcome this fear"*. Thus, the factors contributing to minimal or no audience engagement includes a lack of audience awareness and their needs, insufficient practice, a fear of facing the audience directly, and nervousness about handling questions in English.

The use of audio-visual aids is an essential component of presentations. Being engineering students they are technologically proficient which is a strength. Many students are comfortable using presentation software and incorporating multimedia elements, which enhances their presentations. At the same time poor visual aids affect their presentations. In my observation at D2, students gave presentation on global warming and its impact on third world countries; however, the slides were cluttered and text heavy. Similarly, in another observation, I observed that a student was presenting on the emancipation of women but provided information on the

corruption in current political agendas which was irrelevant and distracting rather than supportive and informative. Almost all the teachers agreed with this issue, which they indicated was due to the limited time available for presentation preparation and practice.

The other factors influencing their presentations were an over-reliance on slides as a crutch as students read through them instead of understanding and demonstrating a confident command of the topic. Poor design skills, a misunderstanding of effective visual communication, and time pressure leading to hastily prepared slides contributed to these issues. This leads to a monotonous delivery, flat tone of voice and lack of vocal variation making some presentations boring, even with interesting content. This typically stemmed from students reading directly from their notes/slides either to avoid eye contact or because of a fear of forgetting something or making mistakes. This could also be attributed to the rote learning/memorisation of content. As T3 explained, *“my students memorise the assigned topic and then giving presentation, as they are used to this pattern of memorisation (Ratta in Urdu).”* This is usually due to a lack of awareness of vocal delivery, or issues with reading directly from notes/slides, and anxiety about pronunciation or grammar as English is not the first language.

Moreover, other issues arise from a poor understanding of the assignment, inadequate research, difficulty in narrowing down a topic, time pressures leading to rushed preparation, presentations lacking a clear central message, and wandering between unrelated points. This results in a lack of focus in the content and organisation of presentations. Weak or poorly structured presentations where information is presented in a disorganised or illogical manner, makes it hard for an audience to follow. T7 said *“... a lack of proper planning due to limited time to prepare is one of the major constraints behind poorly structured presentation”*. T2 similarly explained, *“As students need to work on major subjects, they usually get less time for these courses”*. Thus, while some teachers consider students to demonstrate enthusiasm and genuine interest in topics, they lack evidence of planning, outlining skills, practice, and time for the revision and refinement of presentations.

I observed that student presentations lack depth, and they tend to rely on general statements without sufficient supporting evidence or examples. This usually happens when students are working to tight deadlines, managing busy schedules, and giving more time and energy to their major subjects. Inadequate research, poor information synthesis, a focus on quantity over quality and rushing to meet deadlines without adequate time for in-depth exploration plays vital role.

Language and style also play an important role alongside poor language skills, or an over-familiarity with the audience; this sometimes results in the use of informal language, slang, or jargon which are unsuitable for academic presentations. Another important and common issue is weak grammar and vocabulary; grammatical errors and limited vocabulary undermine a

presentation's credibility and clarity, and the contributing factors are usually language proficiency issues, little to no proofreading, and time constraints. F3 acknowledged, *"I do realise that I tend to make grammatical mistakes, but I hardly get time to work on these skills as I need to work on other assignments ... we have limited classes per week, and it's really tough to practice in this limited time."* The teachers also had the similar views, as T2 highlighted, *"these courses are not offered in every semester, thus in one semester, it becomes hard to work on presentation skills, language and grammar at the same time."* My reflections echoed these views, that insufficient time is allocated for students' development of these skills particularly as they are presenting for the first time. Moreover, language barriers alongside the demand for correct grammar and sentence structure, adequate research, an appropriate structure and organisation, and open body language need to be achieved within a limited time. These courses therefore become challenging for both students and teachers. Table 5.2 provides the insights into these categories and their relationship with RQ2.

Table 5.2: Theme 1 and RQ2

Research Question 2	Theme 1	Relevant Categories	Category Explained
According to staff and students, what factors contribute to students' strengths and weaknesses concerning English presentational skills?	Presentation Skills and Delivery: This theme directly addresses strengths and weaknesses in core presentation skills (e.g., clear organisation, engaging delivery, confident presence).	1. Student Presentation Elements	1. The elements involved in students' presentation such content and delivery.
		2. Challenges students face	2. The hindrance in their presentations such language barrier, stage fear etc.
		3. Success Factors	3. The factors such as practice, proper feedback, usage of AV aids.
		4. Use of Technology and Visual Aids	4. Engaging and interesting AV aids, availability or resources.
		5. Technology and Resource	5. Use of online platforms, technological equipment

This theme directly addresses RQ2 regarding students' strengths and weaknesses. By providing insights into these common strengths and weaknesses, as well as the contributing factors, educators can better tailor their instruction and support to help students develop into confident

and effective presenters. An exploration of concepts within the presentation skills and delivery theme includes the command of content, clarity, and organisation, engagement and delivery, confidence, and presence. By incorporating data in the form of student's excerpts, this section links with RQ 2 offering insights into students' strengths and weaknesses and views of the participants involved and I also provided my own reflections in this regard. The results are arranged in categories providing the information on this aspect and linking these aspects with research question 2.

5.4.2.2 Theme 3: Curriculum and Learning Environment

Theme 3 explains how the curriculum and learning environment fosters or hinders the development of presentation skills. It involves curriculum design and delivery, the learning environment, the support provided, and the relevance of the course to real-world application. This theme relates to RQ2 in several ways. In terms of the strengths, early and frequent presentation opportunities for students when the curriculum is embedded with presentations from the early stages of a program and across different courses, students gain more experience and build confidence over time. In the university, communication skills courses start from semester 1 and are usually offered in semester 3. Although it starts from the first semester the time allocated is limited to cover all the student presentations. Similarly, the presentations assigned to students are given in a variety of formats, and exposure to diverse presentation formats (e.g., individual, group, persuasive, informative, research-based) allows students to develop a wider range of skills and adapt to different contexts. As T1 shared, *"I assign them group presentations in the start instead of individual presentations that they get some support from their group."*

Presentation skills are integrated into other courses, in which students also need to present. When presentation skills are explicitly taught and practiced within subject-specific courses, students see the relevance and directly apply their learning. These presentation skills courses offered from the early stages of a program prove to be a strength for other classes in which students are also required to give presentations. Moreover, students tend to work better if given proper and timely constructive feedback. Regular, specific, and actionable feedback from teachers and peers helps students identify areas for improvement and refine their skills.

Many teachers disagreed with this and considered that they give sufficient feedback to students; however, students seem reluctant instead of being excited to give presentations. T4 emphasised, *"I have been reinforcing students to practice at homes or hostel, in order to overcome their fear"*. Teachers attempt to create supportive and Inclusive learning environments with a classroom culture that values respectful communication, encourages risk-taking, and provides a safe space for practice to boost student confidence and motivation.

However, several departments at the university lack resources. Access to resources and technology is essential to provide a well-equipped learning environment with appropriate technology, presentation software, and resources (e.g., sample presentations, design guides); moreover, these resources can support students to develop professional-quality presentations. Indeed, having been part of the university for several years and having conducted observations for this study, I noted that when the syllabus or curriculum values the development of presentation skills as an ongoing process, students are more likely to view mistakes as learning opportunities and focus on continuous improvement.

The weaknesses of the students in relation to theme three involves the provision of limited presentation opportunities, as these courses are only offered in two semesters. Although they need to present in their subject specific courses, the presentation skills classes only consider one way of presenting, structuring and organising content, which ultimately means students deliver in a more limited manner without room for creativity. The infrequent or delayed introduction of presentations leads to anxiety and under preparedness when students must present.

Furthermore, a lack of explicit instruction regarding presentations affects students' performances, including poor delivery and ineffective communication. Several participants in focus group discussions raised this point. F6 highlighted, *"I have relied on my own imagination while preparing for presentations as I did not find the instructions to be enough."* F11 added, *"teachers just share slides and that's it, the rest is our own job to do. They need to be more elaborative and interactive instead of just giving an idea of the presentations."* Insufficient or ineffective feedback is one of the main indicators resulting in weak presentations. Also, vague, infrequent, or overly critical feedback are discouraging and fail to provide students with the guidance they need to improve. One of the students in a focus group revealed, *"it was my first presentation and my teacher at that time used very harsh comments in front of the class. It was extremely infuriating and hurtful, and I avoided giving presentations for quite a time after that, even at the cost of losing marks. But then, there's another teacher who was very interactive and also gave us very comprehensive feedback in a very decent manner."* This theme emphasises the need for a supportive learning environment in class to support student presentations. A classroom culture that is overly competitive, critical, or dismissive of student efforts can undermine confidence and create a fear of public speaking.

In addition, unequal access to resources and technology was frequently observed in this university. Limited access to computers, presentation software, and reliable internet connectivity creating significant barriers for some students and exacerbated existing inequalities. Moreover, students tended to overemphasise content over delivery and to focus solely on the information presented without addressing the importance of clear and engaging

delivery. This results in presentations that are difficult to follow and fail to captivate the audience.

By investigating staff and student perspectives on how the curriculum and learning environment foster or hinder presentation skills, I have gained valuable insights into the areas of strength, identifying existing practices that effectively support student development and can be replicated or expanded. Areas for improvement include pinpointing specific aspects of the curriculum or learning environment that require attention and a redesign to better address student needs. Indeed, understanding how perceptions of strengths and weaknesses align or differ between these groups can highlight potential ‘blind spots’ and inform more effective interventions. Ultimately, a thoughtfully designed curriculum and supportive learning environment are crucial for nurturing confident and capable presenters. Table 5.3 offers the description of these categories, identifying their link with RQ2.

Table 5.3: Theme 3 and RQ2

Research Question 2	Theme 3	Relevant Categories	Categories Described
According to staff and students, what factors contribute to students’ strengths and weaknesses concerning English presentational skills?	Curriculum and Learning Environment: Investigate how the curriculum and learning environment might foster or hinder the development of strong presentation skills.	Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes	This includes content development and delivery, the AV aids used
		Resources and Materials	The equipment, access to the resources such as software, an elibrary, and multimedia.
		Course Design and Pedagogy	Teaching methodologies and its effectiveness, students’ preferences and dealing with their anxiety.
		Use of Technology and Visual Aids	The development of engaging slides, using online software, multimedia, etc
		Impact of Presentation Skills Development	This involves academic performance and career readiness for future.
		Assessment and feedback	Constructive feedback to be given to students, properly structured feedback enhances their performance in future.

Theme 3 highlights the curriculum and teaching learning environment, addressed the structural and contextual factors influencing the development of presentation skills. The factors that are considered to add to student's strength and weaknesses emerged from the three data sets used to gather information. By examining the curriculum and learning environment related concepts, this section addresses RQ2 by offering a deeper understanding of students' strengths and weaknesses in presentation skills, and teachers' and students' perception of the impact of the environment and curriculum on student learning. This theme encompasses categories such as curriculum design and delivery, learning environment and support, relevance and real-world application. Teachers provided insights into the involvement of students to maximise their output.

5.4.2.3 Theme-4: Student Motivation and Support

This theme centres on factors that drive student engagement and success. It mainly includes intrinsic motivations such as personal growth and fulfilment, and extrinsic motivations such as external rewards and recognition and personalised feedback and support. This sub-section considers the relationship between student motivation and support, and staff and student perceptions of the factors contributing to students' strengths and weaknesses concerning English presentational skills. This theme considers student motivation and support a contributor to both student strengths and weaknesses.

Intrinsic motivation as a strength involves personal growth and fulfilment; when students see presentations as opportunities for personal growth, knowledge sharing, and making a meaningful contribution, they are more likely to invest effort and strive for excellence. Thus, if students have a keen interest in the topic, and a passion for the subject, it naturally translates into more engaging and enthusiastic presentations. Some of the teachers assign the pre-existing topics for the presentations whereas some of them leave it to students to do the 'storming' and think of the topic they want present. Students have a sense of ownership and autonomy in their presentation topics, when they have a choice; this encourages a greater sense of ownership and can lead to increased motivation and creativity. However, T7 noted, "*I hardly see a student who is interested in presentations because of his personal interest and grooming.*"

Extrinsic motivation refers to external rewards and recognition and, while not ideal as a primary motivator, recognition for well-prepared presentations (e.g., positive feedback, awards, showcasing exemplary work) can provide encouragement and boost confidence. Such incentives also boost students' confidence and strengthen their performances in presentations. Thus, transparency in how presentations are assessed helps students understand what constitutes success and effectively directs their efforts. Similarly, personalised feedback and support is an important indicator of a student's strength, as it involves targeted feedback which is specific and

based on individual performance and needs. Actionable feedback addresses both strengths and areas for improvement and helps students refine their skills and build confidence.

Most students believe they need to be given opportunities for revision to allow them time to revise and resubmit presentations based on feedback. This could foster a growth mindset and encourage continuous improvement. However, this practice is not evident at the university, as one of the focus group participants noted, “we just present once and then get marked on that, no opportunity to resubmit us provided by our teacher”. Teachers have office hours but due to busy schedules and students’ busy timetables, they hardly get to meet students to give individualised feedback. Although individualised support strengthens students’ presentations and recognises that students have different learning styles and needs, providing tailored support (e.g., one-on-one coaching, peer mentoring, access to resources) is difficult to achieve due to teacher and student constraints on time.

A lack of intrinsic motivation means that student motivation and support is considered a contributor to weaknesses. If students do not see the value of presentation skills for their future goals or find the assigned topics uninteresting, they can disengage or invest minimal effort. Furthermore, a fear of failure can mean students may lack confidence whilst a fixed mindset can lead students to avoid challenges and view presentations as high-risk situations, hindering their willingness to take risks to improve. According to teachers, getting good grades and a fear of failure are the ultimate foci amongst many students. As one of the teachers highlighted, *“throughout my years of teaching, I have experienced that students only think.”* Generally, extrinsic motivation is over emphasised as students tend to focus on grades over learning. When the primary focus is on achieving a good grade rather than developing skills, students can prioritise shortcuts or superficial approaches over deep learning and genuine engagement. This leads to unhealthy competition, and an overly competitive classroom environment that can create anxiety and undermine collaboration, hindering students’ willingness to support each other’s growth. Indeed, T3 noted that, *“most of the students memorise and then present, instead of understanding the topic and get a good grip on content”*

Insufficient or ineffective feedback and support results in weaknesses in students’ presentations, for example, generic or delayed feedback affects their performance. Vague, non-specific, or untimely feedback provides little guidance and can be demotivating for students. Indeed, students become demotivated if not given timely feedback in an effective proper manner. Students raised the point that most teachers were strict and did not give sufficient time or the feedback they needed. A student from a focus group explained, *“me and my group mates have experienced derogatory remarks from the teachers on several occasions”* while another shared these views, *“I do not get the concept, my teacher is sharing in the class, and because of the fear to get insulted in front of the class, I do not ask anything.”*

Students also believe they lack opportunities for practice and revision. Without sufficient opportunities to practice, receive feedback, and refine their skills, students feel unprepared and anxious when presenting. Teachers agreed with this point, recognising they have a heavy workload and students need to undertake a lot of work and effort in this course, thus the time constraints are crucial. A one-size-fits-all approach is often implemented which fails to recognise and address individual student needs which leaves some feeling unsupported and ill-equipped to succeed. I observed that teachers do not work with students according to their individual needs. One of the teachers explained, *“we have around 40-50 students in each class and in one- or two-hour weekly lectures, it becomes impossible to deal with them individually”*.

By exploring staff and student perspectives on the role of motivation and support in developing English presentation skills, I gained insights into students’ motivational factors by understanding what pushes them to excel in presentations (or what hinders their motivation); these can inform the design of more engaging and relevant learning experiences. Effective support mechanisms, and identifying specific types of feedback, support structures, and resources that students find most helpful guide the development of targeted interventions. Perceptions of the learning environment examine how staff and students perceive their current level of support, and the overall learning environment can reveal areas where adjustments are needed to foster a more motivating and conducive learning experience.

Theme 4 incorporates students’ motivation and support which directly aligns with research question 2, namely students’ strengths and weaknesses and the contributing indicators. By examining specific concepts within this theme, the section offered insights to RQ2 by providing an understanding of students’ strengths and weakness in relation to their motivation and the support provided. The analysis revealed insights into their intrinsic and extrinsic motivations and the perceptions of teachers and students in this regard. Students’ inclinations towards grades instead of learning is considered a weakness, while the lack of individual feedback from teachers is another factor that leading to poor performance in presentations. Table 5.4 details the links between RQ2 and theme 4.

Table 5.4: Theme 4 and RQ2

Research Question 2	Theme 4	Relevant Categories	Category Described
According to staff and students, what factors contribute to students' strengths and weaknesses concerning English presentational skills?	Student Motivation and Support: Explore factors like intrinsic motivation, external rewards, and personalised feedback as potential contributors to both strengths and weaknesses.	Success factors	Preparation & rehearsal, clarity & confidence in presentations & using feedback from teachers & peers in productive manner.
		Student Considerations	Teacher support to students in developing presentation skills & strategies used to address language barriers or cultural differences in presentation styles.
		Assessment & Feedback	Methods of assessment e.g., rubrics & opinions on the assessment. Includes feedback quality & type, if specific, constructive and/or productive.
		Student strengths & weaknesses	What areas students are good at & where they lack. What factors strengthen or weaken their work.

5.4.3 RQ3: Current Teaching Strategies and their Effectiveness

Themes 2 and 5 are associated with teaching and learning strategies which are central to RQ3. Theme 2 focuses on the specific strategies employed (e.g., pedagogical approaches, assessment methods) and their perceived effectiveness. It explores the variety of teaching methodologies employed by the teachers and the evaluation criteria used to grade them. To what extent they are considered effective by the participants. Theme 5 includes the impact and outcomes, examining how different teaching strategies are perceived to impact skill development and student experiences. It delves into the impact and outcomes of these strategies, how they are perceived to impact the development of presentations skills, the aspects considered to be productive and hinderance to desirable outcomes. The subsequent sections examine aspects of the themes and include examples from all three data sets.

5.4.3.1 Theme-2: Teaching and Learning Strategies

This theme focuses on the pedagogical approaches and rationale used by teachers, and includes their teaching strategies, effectiveness, assessment and feedback, the challenges and solutions to these challenges. Teacher- and student-centred approaches are among the practices used to develop presentation skills. It was observed that teachers use different methods and have

different teaching styles, as the observations were conducted in multiple departments. Mostly, they use teacher-centred direct instruction, where they deliver a lecture, show slides if needed, and students listen to the session. In one of the classes observed the teacher was interactive and involved students by taking their views on the concepts discussed. Students in the focus group discussion held after that observation showed their inclination towards these student-centred methods where teachers involve them in the discussion. F12 explained, *“ummm I was scared of presenting ... but our teacher has always encouraged me to discuss...be it in Urdu or English...that gave me some confidence to speak in front of the class”*. F14 also stated, *“The teacher promoting discussion gives you an edge and you feel less anxious in giving presentation to your teacher.”*

Technologies like presentation software, online platforms, and multimedia tools were incorporated into the instruction by teachers but apart from a few departments, most lacked resources. Either the equipment was outdated or malfunctioned, and it remained unused despite reminders. In one of the observations the multimedia stopped working whilst the teacher was giving the lecture. As it could not be repaired in session, the teacher continued without meaning that time was wasted (see the example observation field notes in (Appendix L).

This theme also explains the choice of pedagogical approach by teachers as it incorporated teachers' beliefs and experiences. T2 explained, *“see...I have been taught through conventional teacher centred approach...and I feel for this number of students, this is the suitable one”*. Therefore, this theme also illustrates the impacts on teaching methods, including time constraints, class size, or access to technology.

Curriculum alignment with teaching practices explains the teaching strategies used and their alignment with the course/program learning outcomes, and assessment methods. Participants agreed that courses are completed over time according to their course outlines, but gaps emerge in the full completion of the tasks, as F10 explained, *“we get one lecture on how to make presentations...and that's it...”*. Teachers also stated that they have three contact hours per week and workloads for various departments who require them to complete each course on time. Thus, they are unable to give more time to train students on presentations. The theme documents the range of teaching strategies employed, such as explicit instruction that involves directly teaching presentation techniques (e.g., structuring content, using visual aids, delivering with confidence), modelling and demonstration, providing exemplars of effective presentations, and demonstrating key skills.

Several teachers also emphasised peer learning and collaboration, while some use classroom activities such as group discussions, group presentations, or collaborative presentation design. One of the teachers stated, *“I give them group presentations, instead of individual...they get support from each other as well as its more time efficient”*. Another teacher confirmed, *“group*

presentations save time, and I can manage large number of students in limited time". Many students also favoured group presentation, as F6 stated, *"I feel less anxious in [a] group presentation....as I don't have to face the audience alone."* Thus, staff and student perceptions regarding effective teaching strategies were assessed through in-depth insights into their experiences, challenges, and suggestions for improvement.

By analysing classroom observations and recordings to assess how strategies are implemented and how students respond, I noticed that in direct instruction lecture methods students were seen sitting looking at the teacher, while some sat at the back were using mobiles and a few were chatting (whispering) with each other. In contrast, in the classroom where the teacher conducted a group discussion, students sat in circles in groups and had discussions with each other and the teacher. These interactive sessions involved all the class.

The theme explained the assessment methods, addressing how presentation skills are assessed, the use of formative and summative assessment, and whether there is a focus on ongoing feedback for improvement (formative) or on the final evaluations of performances (summative). Teachers normally ask students to start their presentation, and they sit at the back of the class with a pen and their folder marking them. At the end, some give verbal feedback but most do not; instead, they give their marks at the end of the semester, as one of the students mentioned, *"I kept asking my teacher for my marks in mid-term....so that if any improvement is required. I can work on that for final presentations...but I received my result at the end along with final"*.

The evaluation or assessment criteria was also addressed including how specific aspects of presentation skills are assessed (e.g., content, delivery, visual aids, audience engagement). The teacher typically uses rubrics and/or takes notes of the student's performance to evaluate and provide structured feedback and ensure consistency across all student assessments.

Feedback practices were also discussed with participants including the feedback information delivered and received, and whether it was provided in a timely manner and with sufficient frequency for students to make improvements. The feedback is specific, constructive, and actionable, providing clear guidance for improvement. Teachers suggested that students are actively involved in the feedback process, through self-reflection, peer feedback, or meetings with teachers; for example, one teacher explained, *"I am at my office during office hours.... they can come."* The theme also identified challenges faced by teachers and students in the development and delivery of effective presentations, including student anxiety, a lack of confidence, issues with public speaking, and a fear of failure.

Furthermore, language proficiency was the main issue raised by almost all participants. Teachers explained they support students with varying levels of English language proficiency to develop and deliver presentations by encouraging them to read and watch English

documentaries in their free time. However, one teacher stated there is often a fear of speaking in English, *“They cannot even complete a sentence in English....and that is the main reason of their anxiety and fear”*. Students’ backgrounds are influential in this regard as most are from rural areas and in government schools where they were used to either Urdu or their regional language such as Punjabi. I also observed this when immersed in this environment, noting that even those with good maths and physics knowledge tended to lose their confidence when asked to present in English.

Another equally important factor was time constraints, which was a crucial factor for all participants; they stated that finding sufficient time for instruction, practice, and feedback within a busy curriculum is difficult, which supports Teig et al., (2019) findings. I also saw the schedules for the teachers and having been part of this group; I am aware that time is also a crucial factor for professionals. More time needs to be provided to teachers with a smaller number of students, so they can effectively support them on an individual basis.

Resource limitations are prevalent, which requires staff and students to overcome challenges associated with access to technology, or presentation software, amongst other resources. The theme addresses strategies and solutions that teachers and institutions are implementing to address these challenges. Teachers creating a supportive learning environment need to foster a classroom culture that encourages risk-taking, values diverse perspectives, and provides constructive feedback which enables more effective teaching.

Providing targeted support according to individual needs and offering individualised support to students based on their specific needs and challenges also requires teachers’ attention. The cultural and linguistic backgrounds of students alongside other factors such as shyness, anxiousness and language barriers need teachers’ individual attention; however, teachers require ample time for this support.

Teacher training and professional development is a significant aspect of this theme which can also impact teaching strategies. Providing teachers with ongoing professional development opportunities can enhance their presentation skill teaching practices so that they can introduce innovative approaches to integrating presentation skills development across the curriculum.

Theme two reveals the teaching practices and their effectiveness through related concepts in detail. This section aligns with RQ 3 by offering the insights into the teaching strategies used, what teachers think of their effectiveness, students’ perceptions, and findings from the observations. Table 5.5 provides a summary of the links between the RQ3 and theme 2.

Table 5.5: Theme 2 and RQ3

Research Question	Theme 2	Relevant Categories	Category Described
Which teaching strategies are currently used by English language teachers and to what extent are they perceived to be effective by staff and students?	Teaching and Learning Strategies: This theme is central to the research question, focusing on the specific strategies employed (e.g., pedagogical approaches, assessment methods) and their perceived effectiveness.	Teacher background and beliefs	Teaching experience with students. Beliefs about presentation skills involving elements of effective presentations, challenges students face, the most effective teaching learning strategy.
		Course Design and Pedagogy	Course outlines and materials including the development of the curriculum, content development, delivery, visual aids, teaching materials and resources used, teaching methods employed.
		Use of Technology and Visual Aids	The role of technology in the teaching of presentation skills preparing students to use technology effectively in their presentations, guidance provided on creating and using visual aids, addressing common issues like text-heavy slides or ineffective visuals
		Challenges and Adaptations	Challenges faced in teaching presentation skills at the university level. Adapting teaching to cater varied learner needs and skill levels.

Theme 2 involved concepts such as language barriers, time constraints, the curriculum and its alignment with teaching practices, and resources availability. Insights into the effective strategies were also noted.

5.4.3.2 Theme-5: Impact and outcomes

Theme 5 incorporates both teaching methods and students' experiences, including the development of skills and the workplace expectations. Staff and students' perception were addressed to understand the impact and outcomes of different teaching strategies on presentation skill development. Theme 5 aligned with research question 3 concerning the teaching strategies currently used by English language teachers and the extent to which they are they perceived to be effective by staff and students. This means exploring the range of strategies employed by teachers, such as direct instruction, explicit instruction, modelling, practice opportunities, and feedback mechanisms. The theme then delves into staff and student perceptions of the effectiveness of these strategies. Participants indicated that existing methods produce no

significant results as students still lack sufficient presentation skills, however students consider that some teaching methods (for example, where the teacher is more interactive) better contribute to noticeable skills improvements. Having been part of the university and an ethnographer for this study, I had insights into the different teaching strategies including their impacts on the development of presentations skills and the overall learning experience. Of the classes observed, one included a teacher whose method was interactive; within the given time, she had a group discussion in the class and discussed the role play activity in an upcoming class. Furthermore, the teacher asked for students' opinions throughout the session.

Theme 5 explains the categorisation of specific teaching strategies employed by teachers for presentation skill development. This includes direct instruction, (the teacher gives a lecture on teaching presentation techniques, such as structuring content, using visual aids, body language); modelling and demonstration (providing exemplars of effective presentations and demonstrating key skills); and practice and feedback where the teacher creates structured opportunities for students to practice presenting and receive constructive feedback. Students' perceptions revealed they prefer more interactive methods; F13 (from the discussion class) explained that *"lecture methods are so plain and boring, the only thing we get to see are slides ... Our teacher involves us in the class, and it has given me some courage ... to speak in front of the class"*. Peer learning is typically employed by utilising peer review, group presentations, or collaborative presentation design. Group presentations are usually given to students for two reasons; firstly, students work together and feel less anxious when presenting, and secondly teachers consider it more time efficient. Technology can be integrated and students are expected to use multimedia, presentation software and online platforms; indeed, in the observations students presented using multimedia.

This theme incorporates teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the strategies they employ, their impact on skill development, and the challenges they face in implementing certain strategies. The correlation between specific strategies and student outcomes is also included in this theme. The observations noted greater student involvement in the interactive classroom than the lecture when most of them were involved in other activities (chatting or looking at their phones). The lectures also seemed less engaging, and the slides shown represented the steps to be followed in a presentation. One of the teachers said, *"the methods...e.g., project-based and discussion-based ones... do bring students on board and enhances their confidence"*.

Student perceptions were considered on the teaching approaches they find most helpful in improving their presentation skills, including engaging and conducive learning strategies; they were also consulted on those they find ineffective or unhelpful. For example, one student asked, *"Maam Ayesha let me communicate in class in Urdu ... and if I am given a chance to present in Urdu, it will be much easier"*. Furthermore, F15 stated that, *"videos etc...and more examples*

shown to us ... will make it easy for us to understand the mechanism of presentation.” This data indicates correlations between specific teaching strategies, and student confidence and self-efficacy in presenting. Rubric-based assessments on presentations are followed by teachers, who use these to advise students on points of evaluation, namely fluency, confidence, knowledge, and delivery. Student satisfaction with the learning experience is crucial and helps to gauge further curriculum and strategies for teaching. Students’ perceptions need to be heard and considered so that the most beneficial teaching strategies are applied. Thus, this theme provides insights from the observations, interviews and focus groups to understand the teaching strategies which resonated with students or teachers. It also included unexpected positive and negative outcomes. Table 5.6 lists the connections between RQ and theme 5.

Table 5.6: Theme 5 and RQ3

Research Question	Theme 5	Relevant Categories	Category Described
Which teaching strategies are currently used by English language teachers and to what extent are they perceived to be effective by staff and students?	Impact and Outcomes: Examine how different teaching strategies are perceived to impact skill development and student experiences.	Teaching Strategies	That involves various methods such as lecture/direct instruction on specific presentation skills, demonstration and modeling effective presentation techniques, interactive activities, feedback sessions, peer review.
		Course Design and Pedagogy	This includes course outlines and materials, curriculum, content development, delivery, visual aids, teaching materials and resources used.
		Teaching Methods	Teaching methods employed, creation of a supportive and constructive learning environment for presentations, student anxiety and building confidence
		Assessment	Assessment of presentation skills in the course, the criteria are used to evaluate student presentations, feedback mechanisms
		Use of Technology and Visual Aids	Integration: role of technology in the teaching of presentation skills, preparing students to use technology effectively in their presentations, use of visual aids and the guidance provided on creating and using visual aids.
		Suggestions for Improvement	Changes recommended to the course content or structure, preferred teaching methods, additional resources or support for their help to improve presentation skills,

Theme 5 highlights different teaching styles and their impacts on student learning. This theme aligns with Research Question 3 by giving insights into the teaching strategies, students' perceptions and the effect of these methods on student presentations. Participants' opinions provide detailed findings alongside findings from the observations.

5.4.4 RQ 4: Proposed Improvements by Staff and Students

All themes are relevant to RQ4, as all insights are used suggest improvements. For example, presentation skills and delivery address the areas in which students need more support, while teaching and learning strategies identify the desired changes in teaching approaches or strategies. Moreover, the enhancement of curriculum and learning environment better supports skill development, and student motivation and support aim to further motivate and assist students. Finally, impact and outcomes describe the desired outcomes, for example better alignment with workplace expectations, that are not currently met.

5.4.4.1 Theme 1: Presentation skills and delivery

Research question 4 directly aligns with the first theme, 'presentation skills and delivery' and explains the specific skills in which students need more support, thus focusing on gaps in their instruction. Teachers' and students' perceptions indicate gaps confirming students need additional assistance alongside their teaching. Several students indicated particular areas in which they need support, for example, with language, connecting the structure, or with more than one area. One of the students from a rural area of Pakistan shared that, *"I find it very, very hard to speak in English ... and I get no assistance from my teacher or even the classmates from hostel"*.

The theme considers the shortcomings of existing presentation skills training from the perspectives of both staff and students and identifies specific skill areas where current provision is lacking. T3 confirmed, *"students lack in various areas when it comes to presentation...but the language proficiency is the key factor all of them lack."* The theme also identifies specific skills that are particularly challenging or inadequately addressed, including content structuring (i.e. organising information logically and coherently for a presentation), creating effective and engaging visual aids, delivery techniques (such as eye contact), body language, vocal projection, and pacing. T6 states, *"today...during the class...a student was constantly moving from one point to the other with pockets in his hands."* T1 added, *"students avoid eye contact as a sign of nervousness..."*. A focus group student explained they could manage the structuring of information and work hard on their content but facing an audience and presenting in English felt extremely difficult. F2, from a province with a different dialect. explained that, *"peer pressure is there...I don't feel comfortable presenting in English Infront of my friends and classmates as they would make fun of my accent"*. Also, T7 confirmed that, *"students do put an effort in*

organising their slides, making content more engaging by using effective AV aids, but shows reluctance to present”.

In addition, students feel nervous handling questions, and struggle to confidently and effectively respond to audience challenges, as they must answer in English and have a good understanding of content; however, most memorise the content when they present. It is crucial to help students manage this anxiety by developing strategies to cope with nervousness or anxiety related to public speaking.

This theme also considers staff insights which are crucial for understanding if they perceive certain skill areas particularly difficult to teach or lack the resources and support to effectively address those skills. For example, T1 explained that *“teaching them the proper sentence structure, and grammar from scratch is time consuming, one semester isn’t enough when you also have to teach them presentation skills.”* Therefore, findings informing this theme illustrates targeted improvements to the existing presentation skills provision. This involves curriculum adjustments and incorporating more focused instruction or practice opportunities for specific skills that students and staff identify need attention. Several teachers explained that when developing the curriculum, the board of studies consider the level of students and that they are going to be engineers working at certain level. However, participants suggest that their current level is ignored and there are key areas that need improvement, such as their command of spoken English.

The theme reveals that existing resources are limited, therefore it is important to create or acquire additional support (e.g., workshops, online modules, peer mentoring programs) to address students’ skill gaps. All participants suggested that the university needs to provide more resources to staff generally and teachers specifically. For example, basic multimedia is not present in several departments, and in departments which have this technology it is only available in one classroom. Moreover, basic air conditioning is missing from almost all of the departments which is significant in Pakistan where the climate is extreme, and classrooms get extremely hot. Nevertheless, this is a government university and relies on limited budget, hence such support is overlooked.

The theme reveals limited professional development opportunities for staff to enhance their ability to teach challenging presentation skills effectively. Instead, staff have to pursue such training themselves. Nonetheless, teachers on these courses require robust training and professional development to not only enhance the quality of higher education but also to meet global academic and professional demands. Teachers need training workshops or certification in instructional design that is specifically tailored for their students’ needs. Thus, pedagogical approaches that include student centred approaches, experiential learning and involving technology in classrooms need to be addressed in their training, alongside training in a cross-

cultural environment to offer insights into diverse, global mindsets. To model effective communication, teachers need to have strong understanding of the content, possess an enriched vocabulary and have a command on pronunciation and idiomatic expressions. These training courses must also adhere subject specific strategies such as non-verbal cues, body language and the effective usage of AV aids. Teachers' professional development should also train them to use digital tools such as video conferencing platforms and presentation software so they can create an engaging and interesting learning environment for students. As such, attending seminars and conferences would offer opportunities to reflect on their practice and research their area. Teachers also need to be taught nuanced approaches which account for subjective and objective criteria, so that they can use rubrics and formative evaluation techniques to support students. By aligning RQ4 with specific skill needs, theme 5 leads to actionable insights and practical solutions to enhance presentation skills and directly address the areas in which students require the most support. Table 5.7 lists the key findings between theme 1 and RQ4.

Table 5.7: Theme 1 and RQ4

Research Question 4	Theme 1	Relevant Categories	Category Described
What kinds of improvements to current provision for developing presentation skills are sought by staff and students?	Presentation Skills and Delivery: Providing specific skills where students need more support.	Beliefs about Presentation Skills	The perceptions regarding the elements of effective presentations, the challenges students face, their beliefs regarding how presentation skills are best taught and learned.
		Challenges and Adaptations	Challenges faced in teaching presentation skills at the university level and adapting teaching to address the diverse needs and skill levels of students.
		Student Considerations	Describes teachers' support to students in developing presentation skills and the strategies used to address language barriers or cultural differences, also involves student strengths and weaknesses

Theme 1 involves suggestions for improvements in various aspects of presentation skills, including the organisation of presentations, managing anxiety, dealing with question-and-

answer sessions, using resources, and gauging students' needs. Thus, if teachers and policy makers or curriculum developers focus on targeted areas that require improvements, this would help staff and students. Thus, teacher training is another important aspect of this theme which is not very commonly considered.

5.4.4.2 Theme-2: Teaching & learning strategies for presentation skills

Research question 4 directly intersects with theme 2, 'teaching and learning strategies for presentation skills' which identifies the desired teaching approaches and strategies amongst staff. The theme is based on feedback concerning teaching and learning preferences amongst staff noting those they indicate are most effective but are perhaps not currently supported or utilised, innovative approaches they would like to implement, and resources or training that would better equip them to teach presentation skills. When asked about project-based learning or discussion methods, teachers mentioned the time constraint they face. For example, *"I want to bring innovation in my teaching.... but with 50 students in one class. It's not very practical"*.

This theme also considers students' perspective regarding the learning experiences that have been the most beneficial for their presentation skill development in the past and the teaching styles or activities they find most engaging and conducive to learning. Students are most inclined towards approaches where their views and needs are considered. They gauge the temperament of teachers at an initial stage and if they don't find them encouraging, they prefer to stay quiet and work out issues independently instead of asking questions. In addition, some just come to class to register their attendance.

The theme identifies a preference for more active learning amongst participants, and a shift away from traditional lecture-based instruction towards more interactive and hands-on activities, such as simulation, role-playing, or case study analysis. Increased real-world application was also discussed including more opportunities to practice presentation skills in authentic contexts, such as conferences, presentations to external audiences, or project-based learning that culminates in presentations. However, one teacher noted, *"Students hardly get time for activities, but I encourage them to take part in societies"*. Several societies present in the university which provides platforms for student to practice their skills.

In addition, personalised feedback mechanisms enable more individualised comments on presentations, which could incorporate peer review, self-assessment, or technology-aided feedback tools. However, student classes need to be smaller to achieve this. Blended learning approaches could be considered by integrating online resources, multimedia tools, or adaptive learning platforms to supplement in-class instruction and provide more flexible learning pathways. Therefore, by aligning RQ4 with theme 1 (desired teaching and learning strategies),

the investigation provides valuable insights into ways to create a more effective and engaging learning environment for presentation skills development.

This theme highlights the favoured methods of teaching and learning of presentation skills that emerged during the interviews and discussions with the participants. The theme includes real-world applications where presentations could be conducted in live scenarios to enhance students' skills and motivation. The need of individualised feedback was also mentioned and the integration of other resources to enrich the process. Table 5.8 provides a breakdown of theme 2 and RQ4.

Table 5.8: Theme 2 and RQ4

Research Question 4	Theme 2	Relevant Categories	Category Described
What kinds of improvements to current provision for developing presentation skills are sought by staff and students?	Teaching and Learning Strategies: What changes in teaching approaches or strategies are desired?	Use of Technology and Visual Aids	This describes the role of technology in the teaching of presentation skills
		Resources and Support	This category emphasises the availability of resources (e.g., library, writing center support)
		Suggestions for Improvement	This category explains the recommended changes to the course content or structure and the teaching methods and the additional resources or support to improve presentation skills

5.4.4.3 Theme-3: Curriculum and Learning Environment

RQ4 and Theme-3 (curriculum and learning environment) are strongly connected and identify specific areas where the current provision needs development. Staff and student perspectives on the curriculum structure and content identify improvements, such as the integration of presentation skills within other relevant subjects or as a standalone course. The theme illustrates the concept of skill progression which means providing a logical sequence of skill development within the curriculum, starting with foundational skills and progressing to more advanced techniques. In the interviews with teachers, this aspect featured prominently. *“If the courses are offered throughout their semesters would provide us a chance to structure the courses in more appropriate manner...going from basic to advance”* (T6).

The theme also considers teachers' perceptions of the current assessment methods and whether they accurately measure and provide feedback on the desired presentation skills. Both teachers

and students highlighted areas for improvement in the learning environment, for example in the provision of classrooms or presentation practice areas conducive to effective learning and practice, and technology and equipment (e.g., projectors, microphones). The findings for this theme also includes the allocation of time for practice sessions. Several students considered it important to be given time to practice their presentations in front of the class, and they receive feedback from the teachers to improve future presentations.

The findings for this theme indicate that students desire a learning environment that is supportive and encouraging, allowing them to take risks and learn from mistakes without fear of judgment. The theme also reveals that students want sufficient opportunities for low-stakes practice, and feedback before high-stakes presentations. F11 explained, *“if we can practice more...I think we can perform better in final presentation...but it requires feedback from teacher.”* Students also expressed a need for more opportunities to practice handling Q&A sessions in the presence of the teacher, who could immediately provide feedback. Incorporating dedicated workshops or practice sessions on Q&A techniques would also be beneficial.

Additionally, teachers’ perceptions indicate they feel limited in the support they offer due to a lack of technology in classrooms for multimedia so that classes have appropriate, functioning technology for staff and student use. Students agreed that they could benefit from enhancements to the learning environment and suggested classroom upgrades which include better technology or dedicated presentation practice spaces with the necessary equipment. By aligning the research question with the theme of curriculum and learning environment enhancements, the investigation led to practical recommendations to create a more supportive and effective learning experience for presentation skills development.

Curriculum and learning environment along with other aspects which require improvement, such as assessment and feedback, the provision of an encouraging environment in the classroom and equipping students to manage Q&A sessions more effectively and confidently are the aspects this theme highlights. Table 5.9 provides a comprehensive breakdown of the categories, identifying their relationship with RQ4.

The theme also provided information on improved resources to benefit the presentation process. These concepts were evident from interviewing teaching staff and having discussion with students. Highlighting the specific aspects of the theme, RQ 4 is discussed this section providing and in-depth knowledge of the improvements sought by staff and students in terms of presentation skills.

Table 5.9: Theme 3 and RQ4

Research Question 4	Theme 3	Relevant Categories	Category Described
What kinds of improvements to current provision for developing presentation skills are sought by staff and students?	Curriculum & Learning Environment describes ways which can enhance the curriculum or learning environment to better support skill development	Assessment and Feedback	Explains the assessment of presentation skills, participants' opinion on assessment & types of feedback (if specific, constructive, & helpful for improvement)
		Technology and Resources	Integration of technology into presentation skills classes & adequate support in using technology
		Resources and Support	Availability of resources & support in developing presentation skills
		Suggestions for Improvement	Recommended changes to course content or structure & the teaching methods preferred by teachers & students.
		Resources and Support	Additional resources or support to improve presentation skills

5.4.4.4 Theme-4: Student motivation and support

The theme focuses teachers' and students' perceptions of the motivational barriers and their desired improvements. It identifies factors hindering student motivation in the current provision of presentation skills development. Participants emphasised that incentives provide encouragement, for example one student stated that, "*Teachers...whenever [they] use encouraging words ... gives me confidence unlike some teacher who has a strict aura*". The teachers who have very limited interaction with students and do not involve them in the teaching are considered demotivating, while those who make negative comments in a sarcastic or demeaning manner also impact students' confidence to speak in front of an audience. Focus group discussions also revealed areas where students feel unsupported, which also negatively impacts their confidence or engagement in developing presentation skills. Additionally, students expressed anxiety about presenting in front of peers and lacked confidence in their abilities. Some expressed a fear of presenting in front of their peers because they felt they would be ridiculed.

The theme suggests that motivation and enhanced support is extremely significant; teachers must implement strategies to reduce presentation anxiety, such as opportunities for low-stakes practice in smaller groups or with trusted peers, incorporating relaxation techniques or mindfulness exercises before presentations, and offering individualised feedback and encouragement to build confidence.

This would help to address students' views that existing presentation assignments are uninteresting or irrelevant to their future goals. Having the opportunity to be creative and bring their own ideas and concepts instead of being given topics would also help increase motivation. Thus, teachers could prompt this by giving students ideas for innovative and interesting content and presentation. Furthermore, teachers could redesign assignments to be more engaging and relevant allowing students to choose presentation topics that align with their interests or career aspirations, incorporate real-world scenarios or case studies that simulate professional contexts and provide opportunities for students to present their own research or creative projects.

Teachers indicated that they feel ill-equipped to provide individualised feedback or support to students with diverse learning needs. This is mainly due to the large number of students in one class, which means that teachers cannot give much one-to-one time as they are burdened by a heavy workload. As such, teachers could be offered professional development opportunities on differentiated instruction techniques for presentation skills, use the strategies to support students with presentation anxiety or other learning challenges, and utilise technology or adaptive learning tools to personalise feedback and support. By aligning RQ4 with theme 4 (student motivation and support), the investigation provides valuable insights into more encouraging and empowering learning experiences that could motivate students in their presentation skills development.

This theme considers the motivation factors and the steps which could be taken to motivate students to enhance their presentation skills. Strategies should be used to reduce students' anxiety by using peer groups and developing interesting assignments. Participants' perceptions provided greater detail about potential motivations while professional development also encourages and motivates teachers to better support students. Table 5.10 details the relationship between RQ4 and theme 4.

Table 5.10: Theme 4 and Link with RQ4

Research Question 4	Theme 4	Relevant Categories	Category Described
What kinds of improvements to the current provision for developing presentation skills are sought by staff and students?	Student Motivation and Support: Steps that can be taken to further motivate students and provide effective support	Teaching Methods	Desired teaching methods to be employed, the creation of a supportive and constructive learning environment.
		Assessment	Assessment needs, structure and incentives and constructive feedback to be given.
		Student Considerations	Teachers to address all cultural and linguistic differences in teaching keeping in mind both individual needs and student strengths and weaknesses.

5.4.4.5 Theme-5: Impact and Outcomes

This theme examines longer-term changes and the alignment of presentation skills development. The themes discussed concepts such as skills development over time, the impact of teaching methods and the curriculum, student perceptions and experiences, and alignment with workplace expectations. The following section discussed the alignment of theme five with RQ4. This theme illustrates concepts such as staff and student perceptions of how presentation skills are currently developed over a student's academic journey. This includes progression and continuity as there are clear learning outcomes and progression for presentation skills across different courses and levels.

Skill retention is important for students and pertains to whether they retain and build upon the presentation skills learned in the mid-term to benefit from it in their final presentations. Students believed that compared to their first presentation, the classes give them some confidence for their final presentation. F8 explained, *“I would say.... I felt less fear in my second presentation...due to role play and presentation I gave in mid-term.”*

This theme addresses staff and student perceptions and beliefs regarding the long-term development of presentation skills. Thus, teachers suggested that presentation skills are incorporated to equip students for their future endeavours. T2 stated that, *“they need to appear for interviews and go into the global market. They need excellent communication skills for that”*. T5 added, *“They must know how to present themselves and speak fluently.”* Teachers also suggested that presentation skills should be introduced and practiced more consistently from earlier stages of education. Their schools and college education needs to incorporate presentations and the enhancement of their English language skills. Also, during university these courses should be offered over more semesters, so students have more time to practice and improve their skills. T1 suggested, *“These courses must be incorporated in all semesters.... that way we can deal with large number of students...and ...they get more time to practice their skills.”* Students also agreed with this point: *“one to two semesters are not enough”*. The syllabus and curriculum are designed for cumulative skill building to better support the gradual and cumulative development of advanced presentation skills, but insufficient time and resources mean students cannot do this.

Almost all focus group participants agreed that the interactive classes were better as they were more student centred; the others who also favoured a lecture method suggested more lectures on presentation skills as one participant said, *“it would be helpful if we are shown the videos or a demonstration of presentation...instead of the lecture give points on how to give presentation.”*

The concept of relevance and engagement was also addressed in this theme describing staff and students' perceptions on current approaches and whether they are engaging, relevant, and

aligned with real-world presentation contexts. As mentioned, interactive and more practical approaches where students are involved are considered more effective amongst participants. Diverse methods should be employed to consider individual needs; indeed, a wider use of different teaching methods would benefit the process of teaching and learning.

The desired enhancements and specific improvements sought in teaching methods and curriculum design require more practical application. This could include opportunities for students to apply presentation skills in authentic contexts beyond traditional classroom presentations such as students participating in various seminars, Ted talks or other platforms which are also run by societies in the university. T1 suggested, *“I always encourage them to join the societies...and be more proactive.... this will help them become more confident in facing people and also public speaking”*. These courses could be integrated with other subjects as students are also required to give presentations in other subjects but to a more limited number. More effective integration into other subject areas would further enhance learning and skill transfer by giving more opportunities to practice.

Directly soliciting student feedback on their experiences with presentation skills development including the aspects they find most valuable or challenging provides an opportunity for staff to design a syllabus and classroom practices that consider these preferences. It is also helpful to know the types of support that would be most beneficial for students according to their needs and bearing in mind a need to prepare them for real-world presentations. On several occasions, students suggested that they are not given enough instruction although teachers categorically mentioned that they offered sufficient guidance but could not offer more due to the large number of students and limited time.

This theme provides analysis of student feedback to identify gaps between current provision, student needs and expectations, and the alignment with workplace expectations. Gathering industry insights mean speaking to employers and professionals in fields relevant to the student population on the specific presentation skills most highly valued in their respective industries and how well prepared they perceive recent graduates to be in terms of presentation skills. Students going into their professions must acquire skills to prove themselves in their field, and several seminars were conducted on where people from their relevant field work. Job fairs are also held (final year students benefitted most from them), which provide an overview of the requirements of engineers' employers will hire.

Students are expected to give presentations of their work in their field and on courses, but they are not considered to be at an appropriate standard. Findings within this theme indicate that if the curriculum and assessments incorporate more realistic workplace presentation scenarios, this would help to bridge the gap between education and profession and align the current provision with workplace expectations. By incorporating real-world scenarios, students could develop

industry-specific skills if provided opportunities to develop specialised presentation skills relevant to their chosen fields.

Theme 5 considers the impacts and outcomes addressing different teaching styles and their effect on student learning. This theme addresses RQ4 by providing insights into current practice and the extent to which they align with the real-world scenarios that students are going to face in their future. The theme also considers desired improvements and how the curriculum and syllabi could benefit the presentation skills of students. Participant accounts highlight students' inclination towards certain practices and teachers' opinions on the practical implications and hurdles they face. Table 5.11 list the developments between theme 5 and RQ4.

Table 5.11: Theme 5 and RQ4

Research Question 4	Theme 5	Relevant Categories	Description of Category
What kinds of improvements to current provision for developing presentation skills are sought by staff and students?	Impact and Outcomes: The desired outcomes explaining better alignment with workplace expectations.	Career Readiness	Students are prepared to present themselves effectively in job interviews or other professional settings.
		Academic Performance	Students' overall performance - which includes their GPA and grades - are impacted.

5.5 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter presented the findings derived from classroom observations, teacher interviews, and student focus group discussions providing a comprehensive overview of the ongoing teaching practices in a Pakistani engineering university. The findings highlighted both strengths and weaknesses in students' presentation skills. While students demonstrated strong technical knowledge and familiarity with visual aids, they faced significant challenges when it came to English language proficiency, confidence, and presentation anxiety.

Predominance of lecture-based approaches emerged after, examining current teaching practices, with lack of opportunities for interactive and practice-oriented learning. While some teachers integrated group activities and discussion-based approaches, these were not consistently applied. Participants repetitively highlighted the importance of increased practice opportunities, personalised feedback, and a more conducive and engaging learning environment. Additionally, contextual factors such as limited time allocation, large class sizes, and limited to no access to resources were identified as key hurdles affecting the effectiveness of presentation skills

development. Together, these findings revealed the need for a more integrated, student-centred, and practice-focused approach to teach presentation skills.

The following chapter draw on these findings by interpreting them in relation to existing literature and theoretical frameworks, in order to provide an in-depth understanding and offer recommendations to bring pedagogical improvement.

6 Discussion

6.1 Overview

This chapter interprets the findings presented in Chapter 5, connecting them to the research questions of the study, existing literature and the integrated theoretical framework. The chapter includes analysis of key themes reflecting Communities of Practice, Experiential Learning Theory, Communication Apprehension, and the Interaction Hypothesis. The chapter also underlines the contributions of this study to the research gap and recognizes potential research directions in the future. Attention is given to tensions and contradictions emerging from the findings and their implications for teaching of presentation skills in a multilingual higher education environment.

6.2 Interpretation of Key Findings

This section builds on the findings that are presented in Chapter 5 in relation to Research Questions 2–4, connecting them with existing literature and the integrated theoretical framework. The discussion highlights several factors such as the linguistic, psychological, pedagogical, and contextual factors influencing development of engineering students' presentation skills within a multilingual higher education context.

6.2.1 Presentation Challenges

Linguistic Barriers: Findings suggest that students often struggle with language proficiency, confidence, vocabulary and delivery when conducting presentations. These outcomes align with Halali et al. (2022) who explained that language proficiency and self-confidence plays a crucial role in the communication skills of non-native speakers. They argue that students' lack of confidence stems from their recognition of English-speaking challenges. Hussain et al. (2021) also note the cause of students' speaking anxiety and consider their lack of confidence, peer pressure, teachers' attitude and vocabulary crucial in this regard. This study argues that students' attitudes and prior knowledge also influence their reluctance to conduct presentations.

From a theoretical lens, these findings can be explained through Communication Apprehension, where linguistic limitations interact with psychological factors to reduce students' desire to participate. Horwitz et al.'s (1986) Foreign Language Anxiety Theory also provides a lens for understanding the challenges students face when delivering presentations in English.

Participants from the focus group discussions and interviews revealed that students often struggle while conducting presentations in English, especially with pronunciation, grammar, and confidence in facing an audience. This fits with Horwitz et al.'s argument that students'

performance in speaking tasks is affected by language anxiety, which reduces their interest in participating in such tasks. Some students described their anxiety, notably shaking hands and increased heart rate. These findings also support McCroskey's construct of Communication Apprehension, emphasizing the idea that anxiety in communication is both a psychological and contextually shaped experience in multilingual classrooms.

Findings from the observations also highlight students' anxiety, particularly amongst those who were not experienced in public speaking, which confirms that being unfamiliar with such communication tasks can exacerbate anxiety. Teachers also recognised that some students had a strong understanding of content but failed to present well because their use of English in such contexts often overshadows their capability to present ideas in an effective manner.

One of the primary challenges that emerged from the data is linguistic hurdles. The findings revealed that students often struggle to proficiently use vocabulary, and with pronunciation which affects their articulation. Although Singh (2019) similarly found that students' performances were affected by their lack of their proficiency in English, this research extends such findings by identifying the contributing contextual factors to presentation challenges (a lack of prior experience and students' academic and linguistic backgrounds).

Moreover, Jalleh et al. (2021) highlighted the level of oral communication apprehension among Japanese EFL international students and suggested that their cultural and educational backgrounds and lack of experience in speaking in English are significant contributors. This study builds on this argument by showing that students' socio-cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and lack of prior experience significantly affect their performance in communication and presentation skills in the classroom.

Rote learning vs conceptual understanding: Students often use rote learning technique and instead of understanding the content they need to present; they tend to memorise it. This is because they want to present in properly structured sentences, and to avoid grammatical errors and unnatural phrasing. This observation supports Nguyen & Javorsky's (2025) argument, that to avoid errors in their communication in English, the Vietnamese students in their study relied on memorisation, which impedes the fostering of proficient language skills. The authors also emphasised that while memorisation may help in the short term, it hinders long-term understanding and effective communication. Kolb's Experiential Learning theory views this dependence on rote memorisation as a disruption in the learning cycle, where students are unable to successfully advance from abstract understanding to active experimentation and reflective practice. This study noted a lack of logical flow in the presentations of students who memorised their content instead of understanding the underpinning concepts. On the contrary, effective presenters used clear transitions and well-structured arguments exhibiting strong discourse competence. The same finding was noted in the Question-and-Answer sessions in

which students with less strategic competence either struggled to answer the spontaneous questions or relied on memorised answers. In comparison, students with improved competence and paraphrasing could maintain fluency and confidence. Therefore, this study highlights the need for targeted training for some students in discourse development and strategic competence. This would help them to move beyond grammar accuracy to develop clarity, coherence and audience engagement when conducting presentations.

Moreover, Kho & Ting (2023) highlighted that linguistic barriers tend to exacerbate students' anxiety in giving presentations as a fear of making language errors creates nervousness in conducting effective presentations. This study builds upon this argument by showing that linguistic insecurity was particularly pronounced among the engineering students involved, which affected their academic and professional trajectories. The participants from this study reported a fear of being ridiculed and judged by both teachers and their peers on their English language abilities. Zainuddin (2021) also recognised a fear of oral presentations among students in a public university, which aligned with findings from Grieve et al. (2021) who identified factors behind this anxiety. They noted a fear of being judged as one of the main factors, also highlighting the need for additional comprehensive support for students afraid of public speaking or oral presentations.

This study also revealed that students are often reluctant to engage in spontaneous discussions (including question and answer sessions at the end of their presentations) because they become self-conscious in their use of grammar and pronunciation. This echoes Tauchid et al.'s (2023) claim that students who are non-native English speakers are more apprehensive in communication when expected to participate in spontaneous and unscripted speaking tasks. The literature review noted the impact of general challenges with communication in English among international students (Aizawa et al., 2020); although this study examines the difficulties faced by engineering students in communicating and conducting presentations in English, in a specific Pakistani context.

Participants of this study noted that socio-cultural factors represent a key linguistic barrier; they noted that prior academic experiences have focused on rote learning rather than the development of expression, which has led to their poor performance in communication and presentations skills at university. This finding aligns with Luo and Zhang's (2021) assertion that students with no prior experience of presentations or where oral communication is not prioritised often struggle to adapt to Western-style academic discourse. However, while Luo and Zhang's (2021) research focused on international students' cross-cultural adaptation, this study highlights the challenges faced by Pakistani students in their local context.

The link between linguistic hurdles and presentation challenges is further compounded by the lack of properly structured training that considers the diverse needs among students. Prior

studies (e.g. Chen et al., 2021) have focused on the significance of structured interventions and targeted training amongst STEM students, and the findings of this study also demonstrate participants' preference for targeted training that focuses on individual needs. Moreover, this study also notes that without ongoing support, many students revert to reading directly from slides rather than engaging with their audience. This observation expands on the findings of Moreno et al. (2021), who noted that where short-term interventions can bring improvement in the delivery of presentation, continuous adequate feedback yields long-term results.

Backgrounds of students: Findings also indicate that students' social and educational backgrounds impact their attitudes towards presentations and public speaking, primarily due to cultural norms or a lack of experience in openly expressing their opinions. Recent studies have explored how these factors contribute to public speaking anxiety, particularly among non-native English speakers; thus, a fear of negative evaluation significantly contributes to anxiety in speaking English (Takkaç Tulgar, 2018).

Moreover, recent research in West Java involving non-English students highlighted the impact of several socio-cultural factors on speaking anxiety, including communicative apprehension, and social and formal classroom environments. These collectively exacerbate students' anxiety highlighting the impact of cultural and academic backgrounds on the speaking attitudes of students (Vanalestari & Setyarini, 2025).

Imron and Hantari (2019) explored the attitudes of EFL students towards public speaking and identified that anxiety was a common problem. Their study highlighted that cultural and academic backgrounds add to student reluctance in public speaking. Therefore, teachers need to recognise that students' backgrounds might affect their confidence in conducting presentations. Understanding these cultural nuances allow for the creation of more inclusive and supportive learning environments that respect the diverse communication preferences of students.

Stage fright & anxiety: Students often encounter stage fright, which is characterised by overwhelming anxiety and often manifests as shaking, sweating, extra movements amongst other physical symptoms. This anxiety needs to be recognised by teachers so they can adopt methods to help students reduce this (Meinawati et al., 2023). Stage fright and anxiety can stem from linguistic barriers, a fear of being judged or negatively evaluated, and a lack of prior experience. It is important to establish an in-depth understanding of the root cause of this fear to enable the development of effective strategies to encounter this issue. (Meinawati et al., 2023). McCroskey's (1977) theory of communication apprehension also plays a vital role in understanding the challenges students face in public speaking. McCroskey (1977) found that individuals with high communication apprehension experience anxiety when speaking in front of others, which can affect their ability to communicate effectively. This research supports this finding as many students experienced communication apprehension, which significantly

impacted their willingness to participate in presentations. This highlights how Communication Apprehension functions alongside linguistic and cultural factors, emphasizing the need for supportive and conducive learning environments. The findings also noted the need for strategies to reduce anxiety, such as supportive attitudes amongst teachers, highlighting areas for improvement, and guided practice sessions to help students overcome their apprehension.

Motivation: Findings from focus group discussions with students and teacher interviews propose that students who feel a sense of autonomy in choosing their presentation topics or in structuring their delivery demonstrate higher engagement and confidence. When students are given opportunities to take ownership of their learning, they are more likely to invest effort in improving their presentation skills. This supports Deci and Ryan's (1985) argument that autonomy fosters intrinsic motivation, leading to more meaningful learning experiences. This also supports notions of Experiential Learning Theory, where active engagement and ownership of learning improve skill development. The need for competence is evident in how students respond to constructive feedback and repeated practice. Many students indicated they were more motivated if appreciated in class and given properly structured feedback to help them improve their skills. Teachers also highlighted the significance of incremental challenges and mastery experiences to develop competence.

Relatedness or connection plays a vital role in group activities, such as group presentations/discussions, and role play. Participants reported that they felt less apprehensive and were more engaged when working in a supportive environment where they could openly communicate and exchange their ideas. This reflects Communities of Practice construct, where learning is reinforced via social interaction, collaboration, and shared participation. It aligns with findings from Zhang's (2024) study that motivation increases through social contribution and creates a sense of support and belonging. Therefore, this study emphasises that motivation is not just a byproduct of presentations skill development but a crucial element that impacts students' willingness to improve. By including factors that satisfy competence, autonomy and connection teachers can develop effective and engaging presentation skills ensuring that students become proficient and confident in their communication and presentation skills.

Use of AV aids: In addition to the aforementioned issues, findings indicate that students often struggle with the effective use of AV aids. Although these are used to enhance the retention and understanding of the audience, their structure and integration within presentations can also ensure an effective delivery. The observations indicate that text heavy slides, which rely on text rather than visuals, and reading from slides is commonly witnessed during classroom presentations. The excessive use of text instead of incorporating engaging visuals can negatively impact audience engagement and interest (Ng et al., 2023). It is suggested that students need to develop an in-depth understanding of content to avoid just reading from slides, and to use clear,

high-quality visuals which complement the content. To maximise the impact of visual aids, clear, high-quality visuals are required to complement the spoken content and engage the audience. From an experiential viewpoint, the ineffective use of visual aids restricts opportunities for guided practice and feedback, which are crucial for refining presentation strategies.

A multifaceted approach is required to address these challenges. Meinawati et al. (2023) suggested that the gradual and constant exposure of students to situations that require public speaking, positive reinforcement and relaxation techniques can help to combat stage fright. By giving explicit instructions and a framework to execute their presentations students can significantly improve their presentations (Ng et al., 2023). Enhancing the use of visual aids means training students in design principles and encouraging the use of visuals that directly support and clarify their verbal message. By focusing on these areas, educators can help students develop greater confidence and proficiency in public speaking.

By linking these findings to existing literature, this study highlights the importance of addressing presentation challenges with students through targeted feedback and training. From a theoretical perspective, these findings determine that development of presentation skills is shaped by the interaction of social participation (Communities of Practice), experiential learning processes (Experiential Learning Theory), affective factors (Communication Apprehension), and interactive engagement (Interaction Hypothesis). While prior studies recognise that language proficiency affects educational communication, this study offers new insights into how these challenges are uniquely experienced by Pakistani students with no prior knowledge and experience of these skills.

6.2.2 Role of Teachers

Teaching practices: Findings from this study identify effective teaching methodologies and consider interactive way of teaching to be more impactful than conventional lecture-based approaches. Classroom observations and focus group discussions with students showed that group discussions, role-play activities, and real-world simulations, increased the confidence, engagement and retention of skills among students. These results align with prior studies that highlight the significance of student-centred pedagogy in communication and presentation skill development.

According to Railean (2024), interactive learning guarantees better learning outcomes, promotes advanced cognitive engagement, and enables a better retention of knowledge than passive lecture methods. Similarly, Dignath and Veenman (2021) argued that if students are directly involved in learning tasks, they are able to apply concepts more practically in real world scenarios, which is vital for mastering oral communication. On the other hand, a conventional

lecture-based approach was perceived to be less effective due to its limitations in providing opportunities to practice and participate. Interviews with teachers confirmed that while lectures provide essential theoretical knowledge, they do not actively develop students' communicative competence (Whyte, 2019). The findings of the study support the argument that presentation skills cannot be effectively taught through passive learning alone, which reinforces the need for practice-oriented teaching methods (Richards, 2015).

Findings indicate that group discussions and peer interaction enhances confidence and helps to build communication skills; indeed, engaging in such conversations creates a supportive learning environment where language skills can be practiced which can lead to vocabulary enhancement and reductions to presentation anxiety (Ha & Nguyen, 2024). This study suggests that collaborative learning not only enhances students' speaking proficiency but also fosters a sense of cooperation and community in students. This aligns with the findings of Nguyen and Nguyen (2023) who advocates peer collaboration due to its impact on students' results and their overall competence in speaking. In addition, the efficacy of these interactive methods can be explained by Wenger's (1998) Communities of Practice (CoP) framework that supports the notion that learning improves when students engage in authentic communicative environments.

Students in focus group discussions shared that if they are provided time and opportunities to practice among their peers before their final formal presentation, they would feel more confident. Wenger (1998) highlighted the social dimension of language learning in stating that learning take place when the students actively participate in a community. This view aligns with the study's findings which shows that students who are more engaged in a community like q learning environment, where they were they can practice and receive feedback from teachers and peers, showed greater confidence in speaking. This study supports the concept that students become more proficient in public speaking when exposed to an active supportive learning community. This fits with Wenger's (1998) view that learning is a social process, and social interactions play a crucial role in developing competence.

Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (1984) offers a solid foundation for understanding the role of active participation and reflection in the development of presentation skills among students. This outlines the significance of student engagement in real world practice and that they benefit most when they reflect on their performance, conceptualise improvements, and apply these refinements to subsequent presentations. The significance of experiential learning was evident during the focus group discussions with students and interviews with teachers, who highlighted the value of practice-based activities, such as group presentations, feedback sessions, and iterative performance improvement. Students who actively participated in hands-on activities shared the positive impact noting their increased confidence and competence. This supports

Kolb's (1984) argument that learning is most effective when individuals are directly involved in the process.

Moreover, teachers also emphasised the role of structured reflection, either through self-assessment or guided feedback, as a crucial element in the skill development of students. The application of Kolb's (1984) theory also aligns with findings that students often struggle when relying on theoretical lectures with no experiential engagement. This emphasises the need for instructional design that incorporates experiential cycles and ensures that students are not only given theoretical knowledge about presentations but also structured spaces to apply and improve their skills. By framing the discussion through Kolb's (1984) lens, the study underlines the importance of experience-driven learning in the development of professional communication, supporting the argument that students' presentation skills are refined through interactive and iterative teaching rather than passive learning approaches.

Feedback: Personalised feedback was also found to enhance students' presentations, as it plays a pivotal role in refining students' presentations although its effect can vary according to the context and delivery, e.g. constructive feedback provides insights into students' performances highlighting their strengths and weaknesses. For example, to enhance the learning of presentation skills, interactive peer observation and feedback is crucial as it also fosters students' resilience and self-reflection (Choy et al., 2021). This also aligns with the findings of Er et al. (2020) who developed a theoretical framework for collaborative peer feedback. Furthermore, Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis highlights the importance of interaction in second language acquisition, arguing that language learning is aided through meaningful communication and the negotiation of meaning. This concept is particularly applicable to presentation skills teaching, where interactive learning methods (e.g. peer feedback and group discussions) play a vital role in the development of the skill.

Classroom observations and focus group discussions revealed the positive impact of providing opportunities to students to speak in front of their peers and receive real time feedback. Many students shared that the use of interactive sessions prior to and after their presentations enhanced their argumentative skills, brought clarity and enhanced their fluency, which supports Long's (1996) argument that language development is promoted by interaction. Teachers also confirmed that properly structured peer feedback results in greater engagement and self-awareness amongst students. Those students who participated in feedback sessions were more receptive in making changes to their delivery, structure and use of language. This supports Long's (1996) claim that comprehensible input and output adjustments, assisted by interaction, contribute to learning.

In addition, participants in the study noted that students who were provided with opportunities to practice in interactive sessions displayed more confidence in their presentations over time.

The process of discussing meaning, answering audience questions, and modifying their speech based on audience feedback allowed them to adopt effective communication strategies. By applying Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis, this study emphasises the value of integrating interactive elements into presentation skills teaching. Moreover, encouraging peer feedback, using question and answer sessions, and providing discussion-based learning activities can establish a more active learning environment, which enables students to simultaneously develop their language proficiency and presentation skills.

6.3 Points of Tension in Presentation Skills Development

There are various critical tensions identified in findings regarding presentation skill development among engineering students. These tensions reflect the complex interaction between linguistic realities, institutional expectations and teaching practices in a multilingual context. One of the major tensions existed between the institutional expectations and the linguistic confidence of students, as it was required from students to conduct their presentations in English. Also, it is essential for the professional success and growth of these students. Whereas the data indicated that students lack in English language proficiency which caused anxiety while presenting, which led to the gap between students perceived competence and their institutional expectations.

Although students acknowledged the significance of English presentation skills, their active participation was usually limited due to linguistic anxiety and fear of making errors/judged. This supports communication apprehension theory, which reflects how anxiety can negatively affect communication performance.

Another critical tension existed between the teaching approaches, such as conventional teaching methods and the need to incorporate interactive and student-centered strategies. The data from classroom observations revealed that the teaching methods used were often lecture based restricting student engagement. Whereas students expressed their desire for practice sessions, personalized feedback and interactive activities. This shows a broader shift in global higher education that stresses upon active participation and experiential learning. The findings revealed that where institutional structures favor development of technical knowledge, limited attention has been given to communication skills.

Another tension emerged between students' desire and acknowledgment of presentation skills development and lack of opportunities to develop them. Participants recognized the crucial importance of presentation skill development but due to structural constraints such as large classroom sizes, limited time allocated and curriculum priorities reduced opportunities for meaningful practice and structured feedback.

These tensions reflect broader challenges faced in multilingual higher education contexts, particularly in countries such as Pakistan, where English is not the first language of most students but is the medium of instruction. Similar issues have also been identified in global research, where students in multilingual contexts often experience anxiety, limited participation, and unequal access to communication skill development opportunities. Understanding these tensions is essential for pedagogical strategies development that support both linguistic development and communication performance.

6.4 Aligning Findings with Existing Literature

Findings from this study echo those from prior research that favours student centred approaches; for example, Ji (2018) highlighted that task-based learning allows students to engage in real world context which enhances their communicative competence, also emphasising on the barriers and challenges in its proper implementation in Asian context. Brown and Lee (2015) also noted that interactive tasks increase engagement and minimise speaking anxiety among non-native speakers. This study has considered the experience and views of non-native English-speaking students in an engineering university in Pakistan, which differs from other general research conducted on public speaking and in English as a Second Language context. This demographic is often underrepresented in studies on presentation skills, making this study particularly valuable for understanding the unique challenges faced by diverse groups of students in Pakistan.

While several existing studies on public speaking skills in ESL contexts rely on quantitative methods (e.g., surveys, test scores, or experimental interventions), this study employs a qualitative ethnographic methodology that includes observations, interviews, and focus groups. This enables in-depth and valuable insights into students' lived experiences, capturing the attitudes, perceptions, and contextual challenges that quantitative studies might overlook. Existing studies examine linguistic challenges but do not sufficiently address the impact of social and academic backgrounds on students' attitudes toward public speaking. This study

highlights the association with one's own language, fear of authority, and the influence of conventional rote memorisation techniques, thereby providing a more nuanced understanding of how cultural and institutional factors influence presentation skills. Although previous studies frequently discuss language hurdles in an ESL context, this study explores the lack of logical flow, ineffective visual aids, and difficulty in simplifying complex ideas for an audience which is a gap in existing literature.

Research on feedback and peer learning in public speaking is growing, but few studies focus on how feedback varies in effectiveness. This study adds a valuable contribution by discussing how group discussions, practice sessions, and individual feedback impact students' confidence and performance, providing actionable insights for teachers. Although existing studies have described issues in ESL students' public speaking skills, this study suggests pedagogical interventions tailored for Pakistani students. These findings could inform curriculum designers and teachers on how to incorporate individual feedback, guided practice, and culturally responsive teaching strategies to improve students' presentation competence. Furthermore, the literature review highlighted a lack of research on engineering students in non-Western educational settings; this study fills that gap by focusing on Pakistani universities and offering practical recommendations for integrating communication and presentation skills into engineering specific curricula. By incorporating ethnographic methods, a country specific focus, and socio-cultural considerations, this study fills a critical gap in understanding and improving presentation skills among non-native English-speaking engineering students. It provides a holistic perspective that extends beyond linguistic challenges, highlighting the socio cultural, educational, and pedagogical factors, which are often neglected in existing literature.

6.5 Enhancing English Presentation Skills for Engineering Students

This study investigated current presentation skills courses for engineering students at a Pakistani engineering university, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses including areas that require improvement. Findings from the data sets offer valuable insights into how to better equip students for academic success and future professional endeavours. This discussion addresses research question 1: *How can the teaching of presentational skills in English be improved to meet the academic and professional needs of engineering students in a Pakistani university?*

6.5.1 Bridging the Gap Between Technical Proficiency & Communication Skills

One of the major findings of this study concerns the disparity between students' command of technical knowledge and weak communication skills in English presentations. In meta ethnography synthesizing studies on non-native English speakers, Li (2024) asserted that students with a non-English speaking background face considerable difficulty on their courses.

Similarly, although students in this study are equipped with a solid understanding of engineering concepts, they are hampered by a language barrier and presentation anxiety which ultimately leads to ineffective presentations. This gap also supports Experiential Learning Theory, which discusses that lack of practice and reflection opportunities disrupts the development of communication competence despite strong conceptual understanding. This calls for a more integrated approach where presentations are embedded in every course throughout each semester rather than delivered as a separate subject. Students would have more opportunities to present which would help them improve their skills. Clement and Murugavel (2015) explained the significance of English for future career prospects and professional employability. Better employability, more opportunities and incentives for students, and greater alignment with industry needs would better prepare students for their future profession.

6.5.2 Moving Beyond Traditional Pedagogy

The study addressed teachers' reliance on conventional methods which are mostly lecture based, in which students are given direct instructions and provided foundational knowledge. Inadequate instructions to students when assigning presentations is evident from students' poor performances. This gap could be bridged by incorporating more student-centred approaches which could lead to more discussion and interactive methods. Brooks and Wilson (2014) described the impact of oral presentations on improving learners' L2 skills and noticed that properly directed presentations could improve the speaking skills of students. Additionally, incorporating activities like role-play, group presentations, and simulations of real-world scenarios can provide students with opportunities to actively practice and refine their skills. This aligns with findings by Kamran et al. (2023) who highlighted the significance of incorporating interactive methods. Moreover, Stapa et al. (2014) emphasised the importance of considering stakeholder perspectives when designing technical oral presentation training, suggesting that incorporating industry-relevant scenarios can enhance student engagement and motivation. This reflects principles of experiential and interaction-based models of learning, where active engagement plays a crucial role in skill development.

Students could also stay connected to the technical element of their studies and build presentation skills. Although students generally invest substantial energy and effort in their engineering subjects, their presentation skills also require attention and effort. If students are assigned technical topics, they potentially put more effort into their presentations. In their study on improving the spoken skills of engineering students, Sambath and Sethuraman (2017) asserted that introducing 'oral communicative tasks' have positive impacts on students' spoken proficiencies.

6.5.3 Creating a Supportive and Empowering Learning Environment

Both staff and students expressed the need for a more supportive and practice-oriented learning environment. These findings are supported by Capstick's (2016) work, which, although focused on migration, illuminated the role of peer and community support in language development. In this study, students also reported improvement in their presentation skills when they engaged in group tasks and peer feedback sessions. Capstick's argument that language learning is shaped by social interaction, identity, and real-life contexts rather than formal teaching alone aligns with the observed importance of informal, collaborative learning spaces in the classroom. This supports the perspective of Communities of Practice, which reinforces that supportive peer interaction and shared learning environments improve both confidence and communicative competence.

Addressing presentation anxiety is also crucial and techniques such as mindfulness exercises, breathing techniques, and constructive feedback can help students manage their nerves and build confidence. Handa et al. (2023) suggested that teachers should adopt a growth mindset and a facilitative role, be encouraging towards students, and address their errors in a positive manner to boost their confidence. Pervaiz (2022) also described the importance of the teacher's attitude as uncomfortable student-teacher relations lead to performance failures. He asserted that students cannot control their anxiety with peer pressure and derogatory feedback from teachers. Several researchers highlighted the prevalence of speaking anxiety among teachers, suggesting the need for faculty development in this area. Furthermore, providing increased opportunities for practice, including dedicated practice sessions and the use of technology for recording and self-assessment, can empower students to take ownership of their learning and track their progress adapting pedagogy to make learning more enjoyable and less anxiety-inducing.

6.5.4 Tailoring Instructions to Meet Diverse Needs

This research highlights the importance of personalised feedback and the need to address individual learning needs. Thus, similar kinds of feedback to all students are unlikely to be effective. Providing students with tailored feedback on their strengths and weaknesses, along with targeted support to address their specific challenges can significantly enhance their learning and development. The research data has been organised according to the research questions and incorporated within the discussion on RQ1.

RQ2: According to staff and students, what factors contribute to students' strengths and weaknesses concerning English presentational skills?

Students demonstrated relative strengths in technical knowledge content and the ability to effectively use visual aids. Some students also demonstrated confidence in delivering prepared

speeches. Qualitative data from the interviews suggested that prior experience with presentations in other courses or extracurricular activities contributed positively to these strengths. However, the major weaknesses included limited to no fluency in English, pronunciation difficulties, and a lack of confidence in handling spontaneous questions. Students also noted challenges in logically structuring presentations and effectively engaging the audience. Staff interviews corroborated these findings, highlighting students' anxiety in speaking English in public and a lack of awareness of effective presentation techniques. Indeed, observations revealed that several students relied on reading from notes or slides, and their confidence fell because of a lack of proficiency in the language they were asked to use. Bradlow et al. (2017) explained the challenges faced by non-native speakers emphasising that their speech rate slows down when talking in English.

RQ3: Which teaching strategies are currently used by English language teachers and to what extent are they perceived to be effective by staff and students?

Current teaching strategies primarily involve lectures on presentation techniques, no opportunities for in-class practice, and feedback generally provided at the final presentation. Student perceptions of these strategies were mixed; while some appreciated the theoretical instruction, many expressed a need for more practical application and individualised feedback. Staff acknowledged the limitations of current practice, citing constraints such as large class sizes and limited time for presentation skills development. They also expressed a desire for more effective pedagogical approaches and resources, as current practices rely on a lecture method where they give direct instructions, and do not introduce activities that involve discussion or make the learning environment more interactive and supportive. Dang (2017) suggested numerous pedagogical strategies to enable improvements, for example developing an understanding of diverse cohorts and learning needs.

RQ4: What kinds of improvements to the current provision for developing presentation skills are sought by staff and students?

Both staff and students expressed a need for more time for these courses and students shared concerns about the lack of opportunity for in-class practice, including smaller group activities and simulated presentation scenarios. Students desired more personalised feedback that focused on language and delivery, while staff suggested incorporating peer feedback mechanisms and utilising technology for recording and self-assessment. There was also a call for more resources, such as online modules and workshops to supplement classroom instruction. Some students suggested incorporating real-world presentation scenarios, such as presenting to industry professionals to enhance the relevance and impact of training. The provision of adequate resources was also suggested by both groups of participants, and students considered one on one feedback from teachers important.

6.5.5 Recommendations for Improvement

By implementing these recommendations, universities can better equip engineering students with the crucial communication skills they need to thrive in both academic and professional settings. This will not only enhance their employability but also empower them to become confident and effective communicators in a globalised world.

From these findings, several recommendations emerged to strengthen the presentation skills teaching in English, such as integrating presentation skills development across the engineering curriculum. This recommendation is grounded in the findings that demonstrate that development of presentation skills was not regularly integrated across multiple engineering courses. Classroom observations and focus group discussions indicated that students had limited structured opportunities to practice presentations. This finding supports experiential learning theory (Kolb), which emphasizes that skills develop through repeated practice, reflection, and active engagement. Incorporating presentation tasks across multiple courses would therefore provide students with frequent opportunities to develop and boost their communication skills.

Other subject specific courses could also include tasks in which students are required to present their projects/assignments. Teachers should adopt interactive and engaging teaching methods that prioritise active learning and practice. This would increase students' engagement and alertness in the classroom and provide opportunities to share their opinions on the topic. Creating a supportive and encouraging learning environment would also help to address students' presentation anxiety, meaning their confidence could be boosted and their fear reduced. This recommendation is directly supported by the findings presented in chapter 5 which shows students lack confidence and presentation anxiety when it comes to presenting in English. Students also reported the fear of being judged/negative evaluation, making errors while presenting reduced their desire to present. This finding aligned with communication apprehension theory (McCroskey) highlighting the ways anxiety negatively influences communication ability. Provision of supportive environment in classroom can limit anxiety and increase students' confidence and participation.

Due to the large number of students involved and limited time available, students receive insufficient feedback, so providing personalised feedback and support tailored to their individual needs would prove beneficial for their presentation skills. This recommendation exhibits findings from both staff interviews and student's focus group discussions, which revealed that student's ability to enhance their presentations was restricted due to limited feedback. Feedback holds a significant position in experiential learning, allowing students to

reflect on their performance and recognise areas for improvement. Provision of structured and individual detailed feedback would therefore support students' skill development and boost their confidence. Furthermore, utilising technology could enhance practice and feedback opportunities as it would not only aid the process but also be time efficient. Moreover, if teachers incorporate authentic presentation experiences that reflect real-world professional contexts, this will offer insights to more practical applications of presentations.

Providing teachers with professional development on presentation skills pedagogy would enrich them with innovative methods which they could apply to their classrooms to ensure they remain up to date with global contexts. The findings support this recommendation that the current teaching strategies focus more on the content delivery rather than development of presentation skill. Paying attention to teachers' professional development would enable them to incorporate varied strategies and effectively support students' communication development.

Teachers' workloads should also be reduced so their teaching is not affected. Additionally, teachers could bring innovative activities and exercises to promote students' confidence and support their language acquisition. Other factors include providing students with incentives such as encouraging comments.

RQ1: How can the teaching of presentational skills in English be improved to meet the academic and professional needs of engineering students in a Pakistani university?

Based on the findings presented, several recommendations can be made to enhance the teaching of presentation skills.

Increased Practical Application: The findings from RQ2 and RQ3 highlight the need for a shift from predominantly lecture-based instruction to a more practice-oriented approach. Incorporating more in-class practice sessions, as suggested by staff and students in RQ4, would allow students to apply theoretical knowledge and develop their confidence in a supportive environment. Smaller group activities and simulated presentation scenarios could further enhance their learning experience. Such group discussions would not only enhance their confidence but provide an opportunity to practice their presentations and learn about areas of improvement.

Enhanced Feedback Mechanisms: The desire for more personalised and frequent feedback (RQ3 and RQ4) suggests the need for innovative feedback strategies particularly given teachers' constraints. Peer feedback and self-assessment through recording and self-evaluating practice sessions could enable students to identify important areas of improvement crucial for their success.

Integration of Technology and Resources: Classroom instruction could be supplemented by the integration of resources such as online software, workshops, and interactive platforms.

These would provide students with opportunities to access best practice and model presentations. Current classrooms are not in a good condition across most departments. In summer, they become too hot meaning that students and teachers are uncomfortable which makes learning and teaching more challenging.

Real-World Application: Incorporating real world presentation situations, e.g at seminars or to industry professional, offers a valuable opportunity for students to prepare for future professional demands. Students could be encouraged to join groups or societies that aid such activities, for example Ted Talks provide platforms where students have an opportunity to speak in an environment where they are not judged or given marks. Students could be encouraged to help and support each other instead of exert peer pressure.

Addressing Language Barriers: Language barriers pose one of the major concerns within presentation skills teachings. Teachers could collaborate to provide language support relevant to their field of study. Incorporating vocabulary development and practicing pronunciation and grammar instruction would be beneficial. Teachers could encourage students to read English books in their leisure time, and recommend they watch English-speaking documentaries or movies with subtitles. These steps would also benefit their language skills. The university could develop a more comprehensive and effective approach to the development of presentations in English, enhancing students' communication skills so they could excel in both their academic and professional endeavours.

This research offers a valuable addition to existing work in this field by describing effective pedagogical approaches to develop presentation skills in higher education. This study could be valuable to students in this engineering university and to those at other universities of a similar cadre. This research could also recognise the long-term impact of these proposals on students' performances and future professional achievement.

6.6 Implications for Practice and Future Research

This study suggests that higher education in Pakistan should incorporate structured, culturally relevant communication skills within the curriculum. Nguyen and Patel (2023) stated that integrating presentation workshops and peer-assisted learning strategies can enhance students' confidence and effectiveness in communication. Universities need to provide professional development teacher training on how to teach effective communication and should enable collaborative learning environments so that students can practice their communication and presentations in low-stress settings.

This study highlights a critical gap in higher education by investigating the challenges and development of presentation skills among non-native English-speaking students in a Pakistani

engineering university. By incorporating ethnographic insights from structured teaching interventions, this study not only expands on existing literature but also provides practical recommendations for teachers and policymakers. Future researchers could build upon this work by further refining pedagogical strategies according to diverse cultural and social needs, ensuring that engineering students are equipped with the communication skills necessary for academic and professional success.

6.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided a detailed description and analysis of the results, incorporating existing literature and demonstrating the unique value of these findings. The study has adopted an ethnographic approach that has employed qualitative methods to collect three main data sets. Supportive documents were also reviewed to provide a contextual understanding of the study, and the chapter considered preliminary themes to emerge from the data analysis, as discussed in chapter 4. These preliminary themes were then reviewed and condensed into five main themes. The chapter outlined the themes and their alignment with the research questions. Research questions two, three and four were discussed followed by research question one which focused on suggestions identified from answers to the other three research questions.

Key findings from the data sets included the limited time allocated for presentation skills courses which was noted by both group of participants and can be seen within the observational data. Additionally, data indicated the impact of current practice and the need for an effective teaching strategy. A lack of resources is another key finding, whilst a lack of English language proficiency was a major obstacle that featured in all data sets. Furthermore, presentation anxiety and a lack of confidence also featured in the data, which affect student presentations, result in low grades, and suggest sub-optimal preparation for future careers. Further conclusions and recommendations, including details on the implementation of the suggestions described, will be discussed in the next chapter.

7 Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the conclusions based on the previous findings and discussion. The conclusions provide information on appropriate and effective pedagogical approaches; the obstacles which hinder students' learning and the aspects that aid them; and the pedagogical dilemmas of teachers and the impact on their performances. This chapter also provides pragmatic recommendations for students, teachers and policy makers and offers for future research. Finally, it describes my journey of learning and self-reflection throughout this study.

The findings from the previous chapter are linked to the objectives of the study and provide insights into the teaching strategies which promote the engagement and effective learning of students. In particular, they highlight student-centred approaches which align with the themes of this study under 'teaching and learning strategies' and 'impact and outcomes'. Evidence also demonstrates elements of successful presentations like structured content, a confident presence, and engaging delivery, which connect with 'presentation skills and delivery' as the first theme. These alignments establish how the findings build upon and enhance the themes, providing a cohesive foundation for the conclusions and recommendations. Finally, as one main research question aligns with three sub research questions. This chapter will start with the conclusion of the sub research questions and lead to the main overarching research question.

7.2 Summary of Findings in Relation to Research Questions

This study focused to identify the ways through which presentation skills teaching can be enhanced to meet the academic and professional needs of engineering university students in multilingual higher education Pakistani context. The findings of the study offer clear solutions and answers to the research questions.

Research Question 1: How can the teaching of presentational skills in English be improved to meet the academic and professional needs of engineering students in Pakistani university?

The findings of the study reveal that presentation and communication skills pedagogy can be enhanced by incorporating presentations across multiple disciplines in engineering rather than restricting them to only communication/presentation skills courses offered in couple of semesters.

All the participants highlighted the need for more practice opportunities, structured and individual feedback and interactive teaching strategies. They also emphasized the provision of conducive classroom environment to reduce language anxiety and encourage students to participate. Moreover, it's essential to incorporate engineering related presentation tasks to equip students for professional communication requirements and expectations.

Research Question 2: According to staff and students, what factors contribute to students' strengths and weaknesses concerning English presentational skills?

The findings indicated that mainly students' strengths were linked to their technical knowledge and preparation of content. However, talking of weaknesses, they were related to their linguistic limitations, lack of confidence, communication anxiety and restricted practice opportunities. Students' presentations were greatly impacted by the multilingual context as a lot of students faced challenges in presenting complex ideas in fluent English. Both teachers and students recognized that such factors significantly affected their presentation delivery.

Research Question 3: Which teaching strategies are currently used by English language teachers and to what extent are they perceived to be effective by staff & students?

The findings revealed conventional lecture-based approach was prominently used by teachers in the classrooms, interactive strategies such as classroom discussions etc. were used to very limited extent. These strategies did provide foundational support but were perceived to be insufficient to develop students' presentation skills fully and in an effective manner. Individual more structured feedback, and sustained presentation practice was limited due to constraints like large classroom size, limited time allocation and workload of teachers.

Research Question 4: What improvements to the current provision of presentation skills development are sought by staff and students?

The participants recommended various improvements that includes more practice opportunities, incorporating presentations among multiple disciplines, integration of student centered and interactive methods and structured and personalized feedback. Training and professional development of teachers was also identified as crucial to enhance presentation skills pedagogy. In addition to that, provision of conducive learning environment that

recognizes students' multilingual realities was also considered essential to enhance their presentations and communication.

Overall, the findings illustrate that development of presentation skills is shaped by pedagogical practices, linguistic factors, psychological influences, and classroom participation opportunities. Addressing these interconnected elements is critical to bring improvement in presentation skills teaching and ensuring that engineering students are equipped with academic and professional communication skills in multilingual contexts.

7.3 RQ2: Teachers' Perceptions of Students' Strengths and Weaknesses

The study investigated the factors influencing university students' strengths and weaknesses in English presentation skills, incorporating perspectives from both students and educators. By analysing qualitative data from observations, interviews, and focus groups, three themes were developed from the five main themes which directly address this research question. These were: presentation skills and delivery, curriculum and learning environment, and student motivation and support. The findings reveal a complex interplay of factors contributing to student strengths and weaknesses. While students generally possess a relatively strong command of content knowledge, they often struggle with language, anxiety and confidence issues, and a lack of engaging delivery techniques in presentations. This aligns with existing research highlighting the prevalence of presentation anxiety among university.

Existing research highlights that students usually avoid speaking in the target language due to anxiety and several difficulties that affects their learning process (Normawati et al., 2023). This also affects students' performances and reduces their motivation, especially when they are anxious of giving presentations to their peers and/or teachers (Maulida et al., 2024). There are several factors behind their anxiety and lack of confidence in speaking, which include a lack of proficiency and vocabulary, weak pronunciation and feeling self-conscious (Li et al., 2022). This aligns with the findings from my study in which students describe challenges associated with language anxiety, stage fright, a lack of confidence, and disengaging delivery techniques. McCroskey's (1977) theory of communication apprehension proved valuable for this study as it reveals that students share their experiences and level of anxiety in conducting presentations.

Dincer and Yesilyurt (2017) advocated that developing an environment in the class that is conducive and anxiety free is significant in fostering students' confidence and performance; this would enable them to rehearse their language skills without the fear of being judged. Huriyah et al. (2019) emphasise that student interaction and collaborative learning boost confidence and facilitate students to overcome their communication barriers. The significance of shared learning and peer collaboration that was evident from this study reflects Wenger's (1998) CoP. Nargis et al. (2016) identified the key components contributing to the anxiety of students from a Pakistani university in a foreign language classroom (Chapter 2), while Pervaiz et al. (2022) explained that students in Pakistan lack proficiency in English even after studying the language for twelve years. Thus, these findings and existing research indicate the need for more student centred and interactive approaches, underlining that student's interaction and participation are significant for improving their language and academic growth.

A review of the curriculum highlighted the crucial role teachers play in shaping student's presentation skills and connects with the theme 'curriculum and learning environment'. Evidence from this study demonstrated that participants emphasised the need for active learning strategies, real-world application opportunities, and constructive feedback mechanisms to create a supportive and conducive learning environment. These findings link with those of Freeman et al. (2014) who notes that active learning strategies such as role play, peer collaboration and problem-based activities improve the presentation skills of students. Such approaches not only increase engagement but also focus on practical applications to real world contexts and minimise the gap between academic and professional requirements.

Furthermore, the theme of student motivation and support revealed the significance of intrinsic motivation and personalised feedback in fostering student engagement and skill development. Research suggests that an emphasis on grades over genuine learning can hinder students' willingness to take risks and improve their presentation skills. This study offers valuable insights for educators seeking to enhance their pedagogical approaches to presentation skill development. By addressing the identified strengths and weaknesses, incorporating active learning strategies, and fostering an encouraging and motivating learning environment, teachers can help learners to become confident and effective presenters. Pervaiz et al. (2022) explained that the need to speak English proficiently is increasing in a highly globalised world. This research aimed to uncover the factors shaping English presentation skills among students, examining their strengths, weaknesses, and the

perspectives of both students and teachers. English language skills are difficult to acquire by non-native speakers, although these are becoming compulsory (Ganatra, 2024). The findings highlight a complex interplay of individual skills, pedagogical approaches, and institutional support mechanisms that collectively influence student outcomes.

This research was conducted in one of the major engineering universities in Pakistan. Students demonstrated notable strengths in their command of content, reflecting a strong foundation in subject matter knowledge. Their enthusiasm and willingness to engage with their topic was evident in the slides they prepared for their presentations. However, students tended to memorise the content to deliver it, mostly because they were used to this method for exams and applied the same method to their presentations. They demonstrated efforts in collecting, compiling, and memorising the information to deliver in their presentations. Nevertheless, these strengths provide a solid base upon which to build further presentation skills. As students tended to achieve high scores to secure admission to this engineering university (considering it to be one of the leading engineering universities in Pakistan) they were arguably used to hard work and learning by heart, which they consistently employed.

Findings from this study indicated that while content knowledge was a strength, students often struggled with clarity and organisation in their presentations. Nerves and a lack of confidence hindered delivery and impacted their ability to effectively convey their ideas. As evidence demonstrated, students found facing the audience difficult and presenting in English was quite challenging and unnerving. Spencer and Wagner (2017) highlighted that speaking in a foreign language is not only difficult for learners but also for readers. Such challenges require interventions to target the specific areas needing attention, such as improvements to their English language skills, logically structuring presentations, practice in delivery techniques and confidence-building. As the students have no prior experience of conducting presentations, they become extremely fearful when facing an audience and apprehensive regarding their English language. Rahmadani et al. (2024) explained that psychological, social, linguistic and pedagogic factors create hurdles for students speaking skills, while Rahmadani and Etfita (2022) highlighted that speaking anxiety is the main reason for a lack of proficiency which is why students are often hesitant to speak in English.

Both groups of participants revealed that one of the key drivers of success in presentation skill development is student motivation. The motivation and personality traits of students are considered dominant factors in language acquisition and educational achievements (Liang & Kelsen 2018). As most of the students are inclined towards extrinsic motivators such as acquiring good grades, it is also crucial to foster intrinsic motivation by creating a link

between learning and students' personal interest and goals; this could be achieved by providing personal feedback that caters to students' individual needs and provides consistent support that further motivates students to maximise their potential in this regard.

Incentives in the form of appreciation such as praising their efforts, highlighting their progress and announcing their achievements in front of their peers can be a source of motivation for students. However, the findings suggest that teachers often fail to give appreciative comments to students during classes. Instead, a strict classroom environment prevails, while some students have experienced sarcastic expressions and derogatory remarks from teachers. A supportive leaning environment encourages students motivating them to take interest and put effort in to learn a key skill. Students learning showed improvement as a result of repeated practice, reflective thinking and structured feedback which fits well with Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory.

Gardener's (2007) motivation model, which investigated the cultural and educational context of resources, teachers' education, curriculum and personality traits and perceptions, also involved the classroom environment, which can affect students' performances and motivate them to learn English for presentations. This model highlights the impact of being motivated, noting that it makes students more goal-oriented, increases their attention span, and makes them more enthusiastic and conscientious. If this type of model is adopted in the university, it would help students address their language anxiety and encourage positivity towards the acquisition of presentation skills in English. McCroskey's (1977) theory of communication apprehension considered significant in fostering communicative competence and reducing language anxiety. As students are from various backgrounds and used to their own regional languages, they could be further supported in the development of their self confidence in linguistics.

There is need for a multifaceted approach that considers the broader learning ecosystem but also caters for individualised students' needs. Teachers can empower students to become confident communicators and give effective presentations by acknowledging their existing potential and strengths. They can also provide specific support and guidance in areas where they lack, including fostering a learning environment that would promote confidence and engagement in presentations. The collaborative effort of both teachers and students is pivotal in developing student potential, equipping them with important skills to thrive in their academic career and in professional settings in the future.

7.4 RQ3: Existing Teaching Strategies

This study investigated the teaching of presentation skills, focusing specifically on the strategies employed by teachers. It discussed the pedagogical approaches that resonated with both teachers and students, analysing two prominent themes, ‘teaching and learning strategies’ and ‘impact and outcomes. Those currently employed and those favoured by teachers and students were identified. Findings indicate that several teachers employed their own style, and strategies played a pivotal role in imparting knowledge within this field. Most used direct instruction method which is the conventional way of teaching in Pakistani education institutes. Furthermore, this investigation revealed a diverse landscape of methods, including group discussion, role play activity, project-based learning, and interactive learning where the student’s involvement in ensured. Views on the value of these strategies differed. The methods where students were given a voice and were more actively involved, such as group discussions, projects, role-play, and group activities were generally viewed more positively by both groups of participants. The observations also revealed that methods involving students were more interactive and fostered a positive and engaging classroom environment. Participants mentioned that these strategies encourage the engagement of the whole of the class which they argue leads to confidence building and ultimately valuable opportunities for the practical application of knowledge.

Additionally, the evidence also indicated that strategies such as conventional direct instruction lecture methods were considered to have less impact, because students were limited to the role of a listener and given limited to no opportunities to practice. This investigation thus revealed the significance of moving beyond passive learning models to incorporate interactive student-centred approaches to foster engagement, provide opportunities to practice, offer detailed individual feedback, and apply knowledge in a real-world context. Indeed, existing studies suggest that a student-centred approach and active learning strategies are more effective and promote engagement as well as an in-depth understanding and retention of the knowledge conveyed. A study conducted at Harvard University compared conventional lectures with active learning and found that although students felt like they were learning more during structured lectures, their actual performance showed significant improvement during active learning sessions. This emphasises the cognitive benefits of student’s active engagement with material (DesLauriers et al., 2019).

The findings therefore suggested that teachers can empower students to become more confident and articulate communicators if they adopt greater interactive approaches in the class and prioritise collaborative learning in which students have an opportunity to learn

from peers and teachers include constructive feedback. Future research could examine these approaches in greater depth to consider their long-term impacts on students' presentation skills including their transferability to professional contexts. Students' interaction with each other and teacher student interaction was pivotal in the development of effective presentation skills that aligns with Long's (1996) interaction hypothesis.

This research illuminates the current landscape of presentation skills teaching by investigating the teachers' and students' perceived impact of the teaching strategies employed on students' performances. The analysis provides a critical link between the pedagogical approaches, assessment methods and the overall impact of these aspects on students' learning outcomes. Observations showed that students were less engaged in the teaching methods where they were not involved, such as traditional lecture method, whereas the group discussions and interactive sessions provided an opportunity to practice and work in a team, thereby learning from peers. Teachers need to introduce these strategies to overcome gaps in teaching and learning.

The teachers observed using methods other than direct instruction employed role play activities, although due to high number of students in one class, this would be done provided once in a semester; nevertheless, students felt they benefitted from being given a chance to practice in a collaborative environment. A recurring theme was the need to bridge the gap between theory and its practical application in real world contexts, where students have multiple opportunities to practice in variety of ways and to bring these presentations into diverse academic contexts. In addition, integrating these activities into such contexts through interdisciplinary projects, peer led seminars and subject-specific case studies can add to their learning experiences by providing enabling activities that better reflect professional settings. However, the findings indicate that feedback from teachers is significant in maximising the effectiveness of these activities.

Constructive criticism helps students identify their strengths and weaknesses and encourages continuous learning. The data also revealed that teachers could identify innovative strategies such as dividing the large number of students into smaller groups, group discussions, and role play. By incorporating these strategies into the curriculum, the university can ensure that students are prepared to transition from academic to professional life where communication and presentation skills are essential. Such approaches not only benefit at an individual level but also foster teamwork, problem solving techniques and adaptability skills that are crucial in a collaborative work environment. Integrating these activities into teaching aligns with pedagogical approaches that accentuate active and experiential learning. These methods

enable students to take ownership of the learning process instead of passively absorbing information. Activities such as role play and simulated presentations also enhances their critical thinking, adaptability and decision making. Incorporating interdisciplinary projects is therefore an important consideration, as students can develop skills tailored to various professional domains by collaborating across fields.

The study revealed that the role of feedback is crucial; students' perceptions highlighted that structured feedback sessions in which they are provided with specific actionable input can enhance their skill development. However, it was observed that providing individual feedback in large class sizes was challenging, so it is important to break classes into smaller number so that students can receive an appropriate level of attention, and teachers can provide feedback based on individual differences and requirements. The strategies that involve peer feedback sessions, teacher's critiques, and self-reflection were considered highly effective and impactful, and this iterative process provides opportunities to students to identify the areas in which they need improvement and to refine their delivery and building confidence over time. Thus, timely, constructive feedback is important although the negative or derogatory remarks by teachers leads to a loss of confidence and potential avoidance in the future.

Methods of evaluation play a pivotal role in reinforcing the learning outcomes. The conventional approaches to assess students' performances, such as grading on a single major presentation, may not fully capture the student's development. New assessment strategies instead can assign students small presentations before they proceed to the final assessment so they can receive feedback before a major presentation. Additionally, involving students in deciding the topic, style of presentation and format provides choice and ownership of their presentation which further enhances their interest and confidence. This is one of the core conclusions of this study, to practice an approach which involves students which helps to build confidence, encouraging interactions and learning from peers.

Ribeiro-Silva et al. (2022) studied student-centred approaches to learning and found that collaborative learning environments involving constructs such as autonomy extensively enhanced students' engagement and motivation enabling them to confidently communicate with peers and offering them opportunities to learn from each other. This aligns with the findings of Kerimbayev et al. (2020) who also advocated a student-centred approach highlighting the significance of online platforms which provide interactive spaces for students to promote collaborative learning. However, this research highlighted a lack of resources for practice in which students could collaborate and refine their skills. Moreover,

Wang (2023) emphasised that intellectual capacity and intrinsic drive (both motivators for this study) determine academic success and can be enhanced by applying a student-centred approach to learning. However, the I observed that students listened to a lecture and left the class with slides on ‘how to conduct presentation’ which meant that other views were hardly considered. According to Pevec-Zimmer et al. (2023), it is helpful for teachers to understand diversity and to use continuous self-reflection to explore any unconscious assumptions and promote acceptance and tolerance.

Furthermore, providing culturally responsive teaching by considering concepts in the curriculum which challenge particular cultural groups offers a foundation to multicultural education (Shih, 2024). Similarly, Lee et al. (2023) suggested that culturally responsive teaching considers the backgrounds and expectations of students and benefits their individual goals and needs, which is significant for this study as the university is a major engineering university in Pakistan that attracts students from all provinces and regions. Therefore, students come from diverse backgrounds including rural areas, villages and small towns where they are strongly connected with their cultural and linguistic roots. Sensitivity and understanding of these backgrounds can inform teaching practice and provide an enabling environment for all students.

Analysis of the data indicates a need to employ the approaches that involve students. Various studies have also highlighted the need for student-centred teaching methods which respect linguistic and cultural difference, over the traditional lecture method employed in the university of this study (Liang, 2024; Pan, 2024). Moreover, Farooqi et al. (2023) suggested that a non-biased teaching approach tailored according to students’ needs can positively impact their achievement. Therefore, as the data reveals, students come to the university from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds with diverse needs, and as such multicultural approaches to teaching can lead to improved student engagement and performance (Abacıoğlu et al., 2023).

However, there is a need for continuous reflection and adaptation in presentation skills teaching, which can be informed by actively gathering student feedback, analysing their assessments and staying up to date with developments in pedagogical approaches. In this way, teachers can continue to refine their teaching strategies and meet the evolving requirements of their students. However, presentation skills cannot be fully developed in one semester, and it is not practically possible to improve students’ language skills and focus on their presentations in this limited time.

7.5 RQ4: Improvements Recommended by Participants

Perceived strengths and weaknesses of the current presentation skill teaching were sought from students for this study. Five key themes emerged which were: presentation skills and delivery; teaching and learning strategies; curriculum and learning environment; students' motivation and support; and impact and outcomes. Students also highlighted the importance of a supportive learning environment in the classroom, which goes beyond specific teaching strategies to foster student confidence and encourage creativity, engagement and risk-taking. Low-stake, small presentations which foster peer feedback and integrating these skills into the subject specific wide range of courses are useful. A recurring theme that emerged throughout this research involved the desire for the greater alignment between the development of presentation skills at university and the expectations of professional settings. In addition, a need was expressed for more comprehensive guidance on tailoring the presentations to specific audiences and purposes and navigating the nuances of communication in a professional setting.

This section highlighted a shared vision for the enhancement of presentation skill development by advocating a more holistic and student-centred approach. Universities can empower students and encourage greater confidence in communicating by aligning teaching strategies with practical needs, by creating a supportive and encouraging learning environment, bridging the gap between academic and professional contexts, and by fostering student motivation.

7.6 RQ1: Improvements to Presentation Skills Teaching to Meet the Needs of Pakistani Engineering Students

This study investigated the ways in which teaching could be enhanced to better equip engineering students to excel in their academic and professional fields. It highlighted key avenues for improvement by examining the contextual factors, students' needs and current pedagogical approaches. Indeed, Esma and Roknuzzaman (2024) asserted that various non-linguistic factors such as cultural and academic backgrounds, financial status, time for study, motivation, attitude, age, and gender impact students' performance.

The teaching approaches observed and acknowledged the importance of presentation skills, but there was a need to integrate conceptual understanding with real world application. Students expressed a desire for opportunities to engage in real world simulations to enable

better preparation for their professional field. They also asked for individual feedback to enable them to target areas requiring improvement and to be taught in ways that accommodate diverse backgrounds and needs. Additionally, students need to adapt their presentation communication styles to cater for diverse audiences and purposes, which requires sufficient time and opportunities to progressively develop their skills, overcome their stage fright and address their language anxieties. If provided with a supportive learning environment where they are allowed to take risks, their confidence in communicating in English could be boosted particularly if given time to practice in low stake presentations, using peer feedback and individual support to foster development. As students stepped out of the class they switched to their regional language, and even during the classes they used Urdu when they had to speak or interact; thus, communicative competence can only increase with practice.

Staff and student perceptions were gathered on preparation for the demands of the global market and future professional settings. It is pivotal to align the teaching of presentation skills with the expectations of professional engineering contexts. This involves the provision of guidance on technical presentations, persuasive communication and intercultural communication within globalised engineering workplaces. Although the curriculum is based on the basic concepts of presentations, the professional context is missing. In addition, the findings indicate that leveraging technology and innovative pedagogical strategies can enhance the effectiveness of the teaching of presentation skills.

According to Lee et al. (2023), giving students tasks which help to build links between academic and socio-cultural realities further develop their skills and knowledge. Therefore, it is useful to acknowledge the heritage of the diverse ethnic groups to keep them motivated and interested in their own cultural variations. In the university, the classroom was controlled by the teacher and most used a conventional, teacher-centred lecture method in which they provided direct instruction. The students were given course outlines at the start of the semester, and the teacher divided their lectures accordingly. As such, teachers come to class, give their lecture then leave, and from this basis students are expected to give presentations by the end of the semester on which they are graded.

There is the need for a paradigm shift in how English presentation skills are taught to Pakistani engineering students. By adopting a more student-centred, contextually relevant, and practically oriented approach, educators can empower students to become confident and effective communicators in both academic and professional spheres. existing studies advocate this by highlighting these skills in the curriculum to enable students facing

academic and professional challenges. For example, Barak and Levenberg (2016) emphasised the incorporation of communication skills in STEM subjects highlighting the need for students centred approaches to enable better outcomes. Moreover, Freeman et al. (2018) advocated a student-centred approach that engaged with active learning principles, stating that this resonated in several other pedagogical studies. Limited resources and large student cohorts pose challenges which have been documented globally, while this research echoes these findings and recommends that feedback and greater resource allocation to help mitigate these issues. This mirrors the work of Bashir et al. (2016) who stipulated that, to be useful, feedback needs to be specific and regular.

Several studies worldwide address the need for soft skills in the engineering field, but very little local research focuses on language anxiety and the cultural diversity of students. As such, this study offers a novel contribution by highlighting the linguistic and cultural challenges specific to a Pakistani context. This study recommends incorporates teaching that reflects global standards while tailoring courses to students' specific educational needs and aligning methods with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This aligns with the foundational work of Zulkifli et al. (2025) who highlighted the need for cultural sensitivity and integrating cultural elements in the educational sector. They emphasised the consideration of cultural sensitivities when developing language policy, and awareness of the promotion of a specific culture, ideology and nationalistic sentiment within textbooks. Pakistan is a country where people from different sects are extremely sensitive about their own culture, identity and norms, which means such recommendations are important in building inclusion and avoiding conflict.

7.7 Recommendations

This research has shown that giving presentations in English causes anxiety amongst engineering students from diverse ethnic, cultural, linguistic and educational backgrounds, which is influenced by their exposure to the English language. The university also experienced pedagogical dilemmas due to time limitations and large student numbers in classes. Different teachers used different methods and instead of practicing a student-centred approach, they utilised their own (mostly teacher-centred) strategies. However, employing more interactive, student-centred approaches yield productive results in terms of engagement and participation. Hence, the findings clearly identify hurdles within the teaching and development of presentation skills in English. This study offers some practical

recommendations to address the issues encountered. The recommendations cover all aspects such as language anxiety, stage fright, peer pressure and support, the provision of feedback and choosing an appropriate teaching method.

The suggestions also involve steps to be taken by policy makers to improve the presentation skills process such as teacher education, the provision of resources, and the incorporation of presentations all disciplines. To effectively enhance presentation skills among university students, collaborative effort is required from students, teachers, university administration, and policymakers. Here the specific recommendations are based on the contextual analysis and the recognised need for enhanced presentation skills among university students, tailored to each stakeholder group:

7.8 Recommendations for Students

Students need to understand these skills as capabilities that improve over time with perseverance and learning from experience. Therefore, students should take mistakes and setbacks as a fundamental component of the learning process, providing insights into the areas that require improvement. Similarly, more frequent rehearsals and practices are required if the student is facing difficulty in articulation and pacing. Students should aim to learn from mistakes by taking them as opportunities for growth and build resilience to develop their skills more effectively.

A process of preparation, performance and reflection is involved in improving presentation skills and taking on feedback is an integral component of this process; Thus, student learning should develop dedication and experience; by adopting the approach of continuous improvement students can emerge as effective communicators. To improve their communication skills and gain confidence, students should adopt a proactive approach in seeking opportunities to give presentations. Therefore, students should be volunteering and taking initiatives to present rather than delay or avoid them due to fear or anxiety. For example, students should become involved in co-curricular activities such as university clubs and societies, public speaking platforms (e.g., Ted Talks) or debating societies etc as this provides a platform to rehearse and enhance presentation skills in a supportive environment.

Students should avail the opportunities offered at institutional or national level presentation or debating competitions as it would broaden their horizons and challenge their language capabilities. These events often simulate real world contexts where the participants are required to share their ideas on complex topics; the challenging and competitive nature of

such events push students out of their comfort zones and helps students become resilient enabling them to handle pressure more effectively. Such experiences foster transferable skills; by presenting in diverse environments students can develop teamwork and leadership qualities enabling them to persuasively articulate ideas. By seeking more opportunities to present, students can steadily overcome their fear of facing the audience and build a solid base for effective communication to deal with future challenges.

Students should also use various techniques to engage the audience such as effective use of AV aids and storytelling. Additionally, rehearsing in front of the peers and family is important; their feedback often highlights nuances that can be missed in while self-evaluations, for instance repetitive gestures, vague transitions or nervous body language. Students should try to practice in similar environments, such as in a room with an audience using the same technology (e.g., projectors, multimedia) which will enable them to become more comfortable with equipment and address any technical concerns.

Regular practice minimises anxiety by increasing students' familiarity with material and tools and the process of presentation. This enables the students to be more composed, confident and fluent in their delivery. Students could experiment by applying various approaches to their delivery such as gestures, expressions, adjusting their tone and pacing etc. Students should incorporate these practices to build a strong base for their presentations leading to greater confidence, professionalism and fluency. Students also should ask themselves questions such as: Were the AV aids useful and supported the content in an effective manner? If the presentation was engaging and clear? Was the transition from one section to other smooth? They should use the feedback in constructive manner and benefit from it by embedding targeted practice, addressing weaknesses and building on strengths. Students should observe expert presenters including the way they organise their content, engage their audience and convey their message. This would provide insights to enhance their own techniques. They could also watch the videos of popular speakers and attend live presentations to immerse them in real world examples of effective communication.

Students must develop a proactive approach in improving their English. Regularly reading English newspapers, journals and articles is a remarkable way to foster vocabulary and improve comprehension. By engaging in diverse content, students are exposed to various sentence structures, styles of writing and terminologies which they can use in their presentations and communication. This would not only linguistically benefit them but also enhance their contextual understanding enabling them to apply them in real world scenarios. Another aspect students should incorporate within their learning is watching videos or

documentaries with subtitles in English as this would help to enhance pronunciation along with listening skills. They should take notes of unfamiliar words and try to copy pronunciations and summarise or rephrase.

7.9 Recommendations for Teachers

Teachers should consider including presentations on a variety of subject specific courses so that students have frequent opportunities to practice and enhance their skills. Instead of confining presentations to one course, incorporating them across the curriculum could provide students with opportunities to practice their skills in different subjects. Teachers could assign interdisciplinary projects and presentations as this would provide students with exposure to different perspectives and areas of study. This collaborative approach also parallels real world contexts, where teamwork is likely to be fostered, and the team members are expected to present their findings in an effective manner.

Teachers should involve students in presentations on a frequent basis during their academic journey. Repetition and incorporation in various contexts enable students to develop confidence and fluency over time. Additionally, this process explains that students not only gain theoretical knowledge but practice articulation and defend their ideas, enabling them for academic and professional encounters. Teachers could arrange training for students that aim to equip them with the basic skills that are prerequisites for effective presentations. These training programs could include guidance on organisation of content ensuring the smooth flow of the ideas, making it easy for the audience.

Teachers should also focus on delivery techniques as they hold great significance in a presentation, and should guide students on components, like pitch, pace, vocal variation and modulating tone, to keep the audience interest intact. Teachers should also provide guidance on non-verbal communication such as body language, gestures, movements and appropriate posture so that the students appear confident and engaging during presentations. Moreover, eye contact is crucial in maintaining connection with audience during presentations, and students should be guided to apply relaxation techniques so that they can feel comfortable and maintain eye contact without feeling anxious.

Teachers should ensure provision of resources such as templates that students can use to create slides enhancing the visual appeal and clarity, such resources enable students to work independently. Teachers should encourage students to incorporate technology in their presentations and practice their delivery with these modern tools to enhance their

presentations. Students should be familiar with software such as PowerPoint and online platforms which will aid presentations.

Teachers need to guide students on how to include elements such as images, videos, animations, graphs etc to make their presentations more informative and interesting. Students should be guided to use it to supplement their presentation rather than a substitute for verbal communication. Teachers should provide students with timely feedback to help them build their confidence and refine their presentation skills. Students should be provided with low stake environments, for instance, small group presentations or practice zones where students can comfortably practice their presentations, as such places allow them to rehearse without the pressure of being assessed or formally evaluated enabling them to concentrate on their delivery, engagement and structure.

Teachers should also encourage peer feedback as getting feedback from the classmates provides diverse perspectives on the strengths and areas of improvement. Such feedback also fosters a collaborative learning environment, helping students gain each other's opinions and learn from the experiences while building a sense of mutual support. Teachers should provide a supportive learning environment in class to help students overcome their anxiety in presenting. Teachers play a pivotal role in the classroom setting where students are encouraged to experiment with their skills and learn from their mistakes without the fear of harsh and derogatory remarks from their teachers. Fostering an environment of support and encouragement where students can perform beyond the fear of getting humiliated is imperative.

Teachers should provide feedback in a way where the students' strengths are highlighted before addressing the areas of improvement. This will impact students in a positive manner instead of them feeling insulted, ridiculed or humiliated. Teachers should avoid derogatory and harsh remarks, as any feedback that demean or belittle students can affect their confidence, increase their anxiety and make them avoid presentations. Rather teachers should be empathetic and understand students' level of their skill development. Furthermore, the teachers should highlight the root causes of language anxiety among students and offer them techniques and tools to build their confidence in their English. Material like pronunciation guides, lists of vocabulary and real-life examples can enable students to feel comfortable in expressing their ideas.

Finally, developing a feel of mutual support in the class helps the students feel supported by their classmates. The teachers should encourage teamwork, collaborative tasks and peer

support so that students aim at growing collectively when developing and delivering presentations.

7.10 Recommendations for Administration/Policy Makers

Continuous professional development is crucial in keeping the teachers informed on the pedagogical advancements and new technological developments for teaching presentation skills. Teachers should therefore be given opportunities for professional development to ensure they are equipped with the necessary teaching strategies and evaluation methods to teach and assess presentations in an effective manner. The findings of this study suggest that the teachers are not provided with trainings on new advanced technologies or software. Training on these areas could familiarise teachers with the latest technology which could inform their teaching practice and prepare students for their future professional lives.

Training sessions could offer teachers opportunities to learn from one another by sharing experiences, strategies used, and challenges encountered in their teaching. Teachers from different areas of Pakistan could share their encounters and the methods they use to teach diverse groups of students. The provision of resources and infrastructure is crucial to enhance students' productivity and presentation skills. The allocation of funds and their transparent use is mandatory; language labs and practice zones could be provided for students where they can practice and work towards refining their presentation skills. Such facilities should be equipped with required technology e.g. multimedia, microphones, projectors etc where students can also simulate real world environment and practice in that.

Along with physical areas for students, providing them with access to relevant software such as PowerPoint is crucial for their development. Providing them with resources like printers, guides and templates to appropriately structure their presentations and take printed resources can help them arrange their content in a clear manner. Students should be provided with free access to online platforms that provide tutorials or workshops where they can learn outside the classroom where they can learn at their own pace. Universities should provide such tools and spaces for students to ensure they are facilitated to tackle their presentations at all local or global forums.

Students should be offered language proficiency courses to equip them with necessary English language skills required for their academic and professional growth, specifically for presentations. Currently these courses are offered to foreign students on a limited scale, thus their provision for local Pakistani students should also be incorporated which include all

receptive and productive skills. Such courses need to be tailored according to the diverse cultural and linguistic needs of students.

As the students come from various backgrounds, their exposure to English should be recognised and courses should provide a supportive environment that is flexible in nature and help them overcome language barriers. These courses should include the interactive and discussion sessions, role-play, and debates to ensure that they gain confidence to use English in different real-world contexts. This would result in students feeling more confident when they need to present in their academic environments. Including English language proficiency courses throughout the year would provide them a chance and flexibility they can utilise according to their availability.

As universities in Pakistan accommodate students from all cultural, financial and linguistic backgrounds, it is crucial to promote cultural sensitivity to create an equitable and conducive learning environment. The key aspect of this approach is recognising the linguistic diversity of students. Students should be given a flexible environment to use their own accents, and the focus should only be on producing the correct sentence structure without grammatical errors instead of enforcing a standardized style of speaking. Thus, it is important that students speak English in a grammatically correct and contextually appropriate manner.

Respecting their cultural identity would make them feel at ease and confident while using the English language. Development of syllabus and curriculum that align with both Pakistani needs and global standards is crucial to promote inclusivity. Policy makers should take cultural diversity into account and recognise the importance of maintaining cultural identities alongside preparing them to meet global standards of communication. Policy makers should value diversity where all students are given same opportunities and treatment and have the confidence to succeed regardless of their background. In doing so, they would also be prepared for these variations which are a norm in the global context.

Moreover, recognising the aspects of cultural sensitivity and inclusivity in language policies, curriculum designing and teaching practices ensures that the students are given respect and support, regardless of their backgrounds, facilitating them to navigate the challenges of presenting in a multilingual and multicultural world. Policy makers must therefore take teachers' views and experiences on board. They should involve teachers in the process of curriculum design regarding presentation skills and language courses, as they have firsthand experience of students' needs and the classroom environment. If the teachers are taken on board, it would ensure that policies would be more practical and realistic.

In addition, university administration should revise the workload distribution and hire additional faculty or teaching assistants to support teachers so that they can provide more attention to the development of students. Policies should include reasonable class sizes so that teacher can provide individual feedback and guidance to students. Due to the time constraints, teachers need to be provided with tools for evaluation so that they can assess student presentations more efficiently, such as technological platforms that help to track students' progress, peer reviews and generate reports. This would give students time to focus on innovative and impactful teaching methods.

Policy makers should allocate more time to these courses in the curriculum, and these courses should not be treated as supplementary but rather an integral part of students' academic and professional settings. Extended sessions for practice and feedback should be introduced so they can receive the detailed guidance they require. Teachers' efforts should be recognised, and the university should also give incentives to keep them motivated despite challenges. Policy makers and university administration can therefore ensure a supportive environment for both students and teachers by holistically addressing these challenges.

7.11 Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations that needs to be recognized is shaping the interpretation of the findings and wider applicability of these conclusions. Beginning with the consideration of the contextual limitations, as this study took place in a single university allowing the comprehensive ethnographic research of teaching pedagogy, challenges and experiences of both teachers and students, the findings might not be completely generalizable when it comes to other universities based on the difference in their infrastructure, pedagogical practices and language contexts. Then the limitations related to the disciplines is very prominent here. The study involved engineering students from a single university with different institutional expectations, academic priorities and teaching practices from other disciplines such as medical, humanities etc, which results in the findings that might not completely reflect the teaching and learning of presentation skills across a broader academic spectrum.

Another important aspect that could pose both as strength as well as a limitation was the researchers insiders' positionality. As discussed in Section 3.4.1 on positionality and reflexivity, while the researchers position provided aid in the access, rapport building and in-depth contextual insights, it may also have influenced participants responses or led to assumptions based on shared understanding. However, this was addressed by making efforts

to maintain transparency, practice reflexivity and by applying triangulation across multiple data sets throughout the research process.

The other limitations that need to be taken into account involves gathering and analysing multilingual data. Thorough transcription and translation procedures were required due to the multiple language use such as Urdu and English in interviews and focus group discussions. While these processes were carefully carried out in order to preserve intended meanings of participants responses, it is recognized that there are still chances of slight interpretive shift that could occur when working across multiple language. There are certain linguistic nuances based on cultural and societal norms that might not have direct equivalents in English. Thus, it might have influenced the representation of meanings during the process of translation.

Finally, there are several time-based limitations such as the study involves teaching pedagogy and university's environment from a certain point in time, whereas changes in policy, curriculum and teaching practices etc may influence the applicability of the study's findings in future context. Therefore, all of these limitations should be considered while interpretation specially once it comes to their transferability to other institutes, disciplines and multilingual environments.

7.12 Recommendations for Future Research

The findings from this study highlighted opportunities for future research in this area. This could involve the impact of different teaching methods on students' performances. Although I have discussed participant perceptions, future researchers could examine students' results over a longer period to gain a longer-term perspective on the value of appropriate teaching strategies. Future research could also incorporate the language policies, their impact on the university classroom and how they could be more effective. For example, researchers could explore the impact of specific pedagogical interventions on student confidence, anxiety levels, and overall presentation efficacy.

Student motivation would be a significant research area for the future as this has a substantial impact on students' performances. Cultural diversity and its effect on the development of students' skills would be useful to understand with a view to introducing the concept of curriculum pluralism and enabling greater inclusiveness in education. The coordination of policy makers and teachers suggest further study as it would also have a huge impact on students' performance and the pedagogical practices of teachers. Similarly, gender inequality and the hurdles faced by females' students in a male dominating environment would also be

important to investigate in future research. In addition, the impact of national and regional languages on learning English would also offer invaluable insights to inform the development of inclusive skills development.

This research was conducted in one university thus the data collection methods reduce the generalisability of the findings. Considering teachers and students from other universities could provide broader insights into the pedagogical practices of presentation skills and the difference between the students' performances between different institutions.

Future could also investigate and track students' performances over the years and as they enter their professional fields. This would offer insights into students' and teachers' learning and teaching over a longer period. This research could provide findings that would provide a better understanding of how presentation skills are developed over time, which could be compared across universities in Pakistan. This would provide opportunities for self-reflection amongst participating teachers and students. In addition, the language and presentation skills required for professional settings could form another area of research. As the environment of the university revolves around Urdu and other regional languages, this impacts students' lack of performance in presentation skills in the university in this study. This could be explored further by considering policy makers and senior managers in the university whose responsibilities include the allocating of timing and staffing to courses. A study into time allocation and spreading skills courses over a four-year period would also yield interesting results in longer term perspectives on learning skills. These directions for future research are positioned within the wider literature involving higher education in Pakistan, whereas there are limited studies on presentation skill development in multilingual environments, also restricted work done by international researchers on communication pedagogy in multilingual contexts. This study therefore promotes a context-specific viewpoint that can be extended and judged across different educational and linguistic settings.

7.13 Theoretical Contributions

This study offers several important theoretical contributions to the understanding of presentation skills development within multilingual higher education contexts. First and foremost, it extends Wenger's (1998) Communities of Practice (CoP) by revealing how peer interactions, group discussions, and collaborative feedback sessions function as authentic learning communities in the engineering classroom. The findings reveals that students who actively participate in such peer-supported environments demonstrate higher levels of

confidence, engagement, and fluency in English presentations. While this supports Wenger's assertion that learning is fundamentally social, the study further contributes by situating CoP within a Pakistani engineering context, where traditional hierarchical classroom structures often limit opportunities for peer collaboration.

The other theory this study reinforces is Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) which demonstrated how repeated cycles of practice, reflection, and iterative improvement enhances students' presentation abilities. The data from classroom observations and focus group discussions reveals that students who engage in hands-on activities, such as role-plays and structured feedback sessions, develop stronger discourse and strategic competence. In doing so, the study not only supports Kolb's model but also highlights the importance of culturally and linguistically responsive experiential opportunities in contexts where English is not the primary language of instruction.

The findings also contribute to McCroskey's (1977) Communication Apprehension by providing empirical evidence of how stage fright, anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation significantly hinder students' performance in their presentations. This study prominently highlights that communication apprehension does not work in isolation but is closely intertwined with linguistic insecurity and socio-cultural norms. This suggests that existing theoretical understandings of communication anxiety must be expanded to account for the combined influence of psychological, linguistic, and contextual factors in multilingual classrooms.

Lastly, the study supports Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis by illustrating that peer feedback, question/answer sessions, and interactive classroom activities aid the negotiation of meaning, comprehension checks, and language adjustment. Such interactional activities were found to be critical in the development of English presentation skills among engineering students, thereby reinforcing the relevance of interaction-driven learning in non-Western, multilingual academic environments.

Along with these contributions the study also identifies various key tensions that refine existing theoretical perspectives. A prominent tension exists between students' linguistic anxiety and university expectations, where fear of being judged/negative evaluation conflicts with high academic and professional demands. Likewise, a gap emerges between students' technical proficiency and their ability to communicate effectively in English, showing a disconnect between content mastery and communicative competence. Furthermore, institutional constraints such as limited time and large classroom sizes limit opportunities for

experiential learning, despite students' strong motivation to engage in such practices. Such tensions imply that existing theories of second language acquisition and experiential learning must be adapted to better account for the realities of multilingual higher education contexts.

7.14 Practical Contributions

This study makes various important practical contributions and provides actionable approaches to bring improvement in presentation skills pedagogy in multilingual and higher education contexts, with each insight embedded in both data and theory.

One of the major implications is the integration of presentation skills courses among all engineering courses as findings indicated the lack of opportunities for students due to limited exposure to these classes/courses. Drawing on Kolb's Experiential learning theory, this study enhances the need of repeated practice for skill development and integrating it across disciplines would increase students experiential learning opportunities.

The findings also demonstrated the significance of students centred approaches and interactive mode of teaching. The evidence from data shows that activities such as role plays and discussions etc improve students' confidence. This aligns with Wegener's idea of Communities of Practice and Long's interaction hypothesis, which highlights the significance of collaboration and interaction in learning. Consequently, there is need to integrate peer learning activities and active participation moving beyond the conventional lecture methods.

Addressing the feedback provision, evidence from data highlights lack of structured feedback, which is highlighted in both Kolb's theory and Long's interaction hypothesis which emphasises the significance of feedback in iterative improvement. Thus, by incorporating self-assessment, peer feedback and teachers personalized feedback can bring improvement in students' overall performance.

Another critical area that emerged from data involves communication apprehension and language barriers, specially this being a multilingual context. The findings revealed that students' language anxiety directly affects their desire to conduct their presentations, which aligns with Communication apprehension theory, which highlights the need of conducive classroom environment and incorporation of strategies that gradually build students confidence.

The study also highlights the need of resources such as technology and authentic materials as the focus group discussions revealed challenges students encountered such as gap between their classroom learning and professional expectations in future. Drawing on Experiential learning theory, this gap can be bridged by integrating industry relevant presentations, digital tools and recorded practice sessions.

Finally, the study addresses the significance of teacher's professional development. The data from interviews shows gaps in teaching knowledge in terms of interactive teaching methodology. This aligns with theoretical perspectives such as Communities of Practice and Experiential Learning, which highlights the need of guided participation and reflective practice in effective learning. Therefore, it's imperative to provide teachers with trainings, workshops, resources, and opportunities for reflective development that can eventually enhance their ability to support students' communication and presentation skills.

A reflexive consideration of these contributions reveals that, while many of these recommendations align with international research on ESL and SLA education, the Pakistani context introduces specific challenges, such as large classroom sizes, limited to no exposure to English outside the classroom, and cultural norms related to authority and public speaking. These findings highlights that globally established pedagogical approaches needs to be carefully adapted by local linguistic, cultural, and institutional realities in order to achieve meaningful and sustainable outcomes.

7.15 My Learning

This section offers an opportunity to reflect and share my research experience throughout this PhD. My interest in conducting this research stemmed from my involvement in teaching over several years and at various levels including secondary and higher education, in the private and government sector. My motivation for this research also developed throughout this period; teaching students from various backgrounds for several years and experiencing their issues and witnessing their weaknesses during the period gave me an invaluable insight.

I initiated this thesis with the belief that the issue faced by students in the university is serious, that many suffer from it and that it affects their grades and state of mind. Teaching and learning presentation skills seemed to be a tough, bumpy road along with several obstacles instead of an enjoyable and productive learning process. As this is an ethnographic study, my positioning played a pivotal role, as I had inside knowledge of the teaching

mechanisms used and the students' demographics. The discussion involves my positioning along with the data collected through the methods used in this study. It also highlights how my learning throughout this thesis impacted my own thinking and teaching methods including the innovations I could bring to my practice in future.

As I have mentioned throughout this thesis, I tried to maintain my criticality throughout the research and to utilise the data to support an informed perspective. I have tried to balance my role and analyse the data in a professional, objective manner. However, my position at university provided me with a deeper understand of the teaching and learning of presentation skills at the institution. From the beginning of this PhD program, I was aware of what I would be aiming to achieve in identifying core influential aspects such as how well teachers deliver presentation skills at the university. I chose methods to collect data, so that I could access the perceptions of all the stakeholders involved and fully understand teaching and learning from both sides.

My learning throughout this journey has been shifting; on several occasions my beliefs and perceptions changed. Before starting this research, I had a prior understanding of presentation skills and the teaching and learning process, but my ideas were challenged at certain points when I engaged with participants and while reviewing the literature in detail. My views were challenged and questioned by various opinions stated in focus group discussions with students, interviews with the teachers and during my observations. This made the research findings more interesting and provided greater depth to the study.

As this is an ethnographic study, I found it interesting to gather in-depth knowledge on this field from different groups of students who belong to particular social groups in Pakistan. It was useful to consider my own positionality before submitting the ethics form, as I had to consider whether any aspect could affect my research or the participants' narratives. The new knowledge I presented in the chapter involved the use of various strategies that were more communicative, enhancing students' abilities, and incorporating major changes in policy to facilitate the provision of resources to teachers and students.

7.16 Concluding Thoughts

This study considers my own experience and how I evolved as a researcher, including whether this research would benefit my teaching practices in future. Joining hands with policymaking and making it a consultative process are imperative actions which could provide insights into students' experiences and inform the policy makers on the policies

required to meet students' and the global market. This study was primarily inspired from Wenger's (1998) framework discussing shared participation, social dynamics and peer collaboration shaping presentation skills of students, and Kolb's (1984) cycle discussing the need of repeated practice and reflective cycles in enhancing their presentations. Applying Wenger (1998) and Kolb's (1984) lenses reflect that learning is a social and reflective process which cannot be obtained by applying a single theory. In addition to, McCroskey's (1977) CA offered valuable insights into emotional challenges faced by students, and Long's (1996) interaction hypothesis highlighted the significance of peer and student teacher interaction.

This was an ethnographic study that used qualitative methods, specifically observations, interviews and focus group discussions as data collection instruments. The research outcomes answered the research questions developed and the research investigated the process of developing presentation skills in English at one of the major engineering universities in Pakistan. Students coming from various backgrounds and most with no prior knowledge or experience of presentations and in English. This causes stress among students and impacts their grades. Students described feeling afraid to face audiences and with weak English-speaking skills their fear increased, resulting in poor performances. Teachers predominantly employed direct instruction and interactive methods to a lesser extent, and considered the large classes, limited time, and lack of adequate resources limiting in terms of pedagogical choices.

The need for an encouraging classroom environment was recognised where the teacher provides students with opportunities to interact with peers in group discussions, and offer constructive feedback based on their individual needs and weaknesses. There is also a need to indulge these courses across all disciplines in the university. Thus, from students to teachers to policy makers, contributions are required at all levels to facilitate the development of presentation skills amongst students.

This study notes the lack of a uniform system in Pakistan which causes disparities between social classes and leads to a huge gap between the standards of education particularly in language development. The findings also highlighted that there is a culture of multiple languages in the country, i.e. regional which researchers should further examine the impacts of in practice. This will have profound effects on the teaching of presentation skills, and this research would offer knowledge regarding effective classroom strategies. The data analysis and findings of this study also emphasise the importance of teachers' professionalism, and what changes they can introduce on an individual level. Moreover, as regional languages and

Urdu are used in the university, this leads to the tension where the courses are taught in English, and students use their regional languages.

I have identified various research areas to further investigate as prompted by this study including the aspects hindering presentation skills, gender differences, and the role of language, and appropriate teaching methodologies. It is important that teachers are given time and support to operationalise innovative practices. This is possible by conducting further research into teaching, learning and policy development, to support the enactment of presentation skills to the desired standard. This study poses to be a significant contribution in existing gap in the context of presentation skills development in Pakistani students while also paving ways for future researchers.

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9 Appendices

Appendix A: Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and Course learning outcomes (CLOs):

Program outcomes are the narrower statements that describe what students are expected to know and be able to do by the time of graduation. These relate to the knowledge, skills and attitude that the students acquire while progressing through the program. It is to be demonstrated that the students have achieved the following (PLOs): (as set by PEC)

PLO1 Engineering Knowledge: An ability to apply knowledge of mathematics, science, engineering fundamentals and an engineering specialization to the solution of complex engineering problems.

PLO2 Problem Analysis: An ability to identify, formulate, research literature, and analyse complex engineering problems reaching substantiated conclusions using first principles of mathematics, natural sciences and engineering sciences.

PLO3 Design/Development of Solutions: An ability to design solutions for complex engineering problems and design systems, components or processes that meet specified needs with appropriate consideration for public health and safety, cultural, societal, and environmental considerations.

PLO4 Investigation: An ability to investigate complex engineering problems in a methodical way including literature survey, design and conduct of experiments, analysis and interpretation of experimental data, and synthesis of information to derive valid conclusions.

PLO5 Modern Tool Usage: An ability to create, select and apply appropriate techniques, resources, and modern engineering and IT tools, including prediction and modeling, to complex engineering activities, with an understanding of the limitations.

PLO6 The Engineer and Society: An ability to apply reasoning informed by contextual knowledge to assess societal, health, safety, legal and cultural issues and the consequent responsibilities relevant to professional engineering practice and solution to complex engineering problems.

PLO7 Environment and Sustainability: An ability to understand the impact of professional engineering solutions in societal and environmental contexts and demonstrate knowledge of and need for sustainable development.

PLO8 Ethics: Apply ethical principles and commit to professional ethics and responsibilities and norms of engineering practice.

PLO9 Individual and Team Work: An ability to work effectively, as an individual or in a team, on multifaceted and /or multidisciplinary settings.

PLO10 Communication: An ability to communicate effectively, orally as well as in writing, on complex engineering activities with the engineering community and with society at large, such as being able to comprehend and write effective reports and design documentation, make effective presentations, and give and receive clear instructions.

PLO11 Project Management: An ability to demonstrate management skills and apply engineering principles to one's own work, as a member and/or leader in a team, to manage projects in a multidisciplinary environment.

PLO12 Lifelong Learning: An ability to recognise importance of, and pursue lifelong learning in the broader context of innovation and technological developments.

The twelve PLOs/ graduate attributes provided by the PEC have been adopted by UET, Lahore as the PLOs for its Engineering Program. It is ensured that these PLOs are achieved by respective CLOs .

Mapping of PLOs to PEOs

The mapping of PLOs to PEOs is shown in the following table:

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)		PEOs			
		PEO 1	PEO 2	PEO 3	
PLO 1	Engineering Knowledge	√	√		
PLO 2	Problem Analysis	√			
PLO 3	Design/Development of Solutions	√			
PLO 4	Investigation	√		√	
PLO 5	Modern Tool Usage	√	√		
PLO 6	The Engineer and Society	√	√		
PLO 7	Environment and Sustainability		√	√	
PLO 8	Ethics			√	
PLO 9	Individual and Team Work		√	√	
PLO 10	Communication		√	√	
PLO 11	Project Management		√	√	
PLO 12	Lifelong Learning		√	√	

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES (CLO)

CLO-1: Developing fluency and raising self-confidence of students to use situational english language in and outside the classroom.

CLO-2: Use of the conventions of the academic English to maintain clarity in written expression.

CLO-3: To enhance the interpersonal skills of students through different case studies.

CLO-4: Exhibit such supporting language techniques and personality grooming which cater to the requirements of the corporate sector.

CLO: 5: Make connections between the text, their own lives, and a variety of media.

MAPPING OF CLOs TO PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

CLOs/PLOs	CLO:1	CLO:2	CLO:3	CLO:4
PLO:1 (Engineering Knowledge)				
PLO:2 (Problem Analysis)				
PLO:3 (Design Development of Solutions)				
PLO:4 (Investigation)				
PLO:5 (Modern Tool Usage)				
PLO:6 (Engineer & Society)				
PLO:7 (Environment and Sustainability)				
PLO:8 (Ethics)				
PLO:9 (Individual & Team Work)				
PLO:10 (Communication)	√	√	√	√
PLO:11 (Project Management)				
PLO:12 (Life Long Learning)				

MAPPING OF CLOs TO PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

CLOs/PLOs	CLO:1	CLO:2	CLO:3	CLO:4	CLO:5
PLO:1 (Knowledge Base)	√	√	√		
PLO:2 (Application)		√	√		√
PLO:3 (Designing Skills)				√	
PLO:4 (Problem Solving)					√
PLO:5 (Analysis and Critical Thinking)					√
PLO:6 (Industrial Tools)		√	√	√	
PLO:7 (Engineering Management Skills)			√		
PLO:8 (Professionalism and Ethics)					
PLO:9 (Professional Development and Self-learning)			√	√	√
PLO:10 (Team Work)		√			
PLO:11 (Communication Skills)	√	√		√	√
PLO:12 (Leadership)		√			

MAPPING OF CLOs TO ASSESSMENT MODULES

CLOs/Assessment Modules	CLO:1	CLO:2	CLO:3	CLO:4	CLO:5
Assignments (10%)	√	√	√	√	√
Quizzes (20%)	√			√	√
Midterm Exam (20%)	√				
Final Exam (50%)	√		√	√	

Appendix B: Observation Schedule

Name of the department	No of classes observed	Time	Technique
D 1	1=lecture and presentations By the students	90 min of lecture 30 of presentations	Ethnographic observations, hand written field note video recordings
D 2	1=lecture 3 presentations	80 min of lecture 40 min of presentations	
D 3	1=lecture 2 presentations By the students	90 min of lecture 30 min of presentations	
D 4	1=lecture 3 presentations by students	60 min of lecture 60 min of presentations	
D 5	1=lecture	60 min	

Appendix C: Focus Group Schedule

Name of department	Participants	Time
D 1	6 students	38 min
D 2	6 students	46 min
D 3	8 students	60 min
D 4	7 students	50 min

Appendix D: Interview Schedule

Methods	Participants	Time
Interviews	Teachers	Time of audio Recordings
1	T1	33 minutes
2	T2	38 minutes
3	T3	37 minutes
4	T4	15 minutes
5	T5	32 minutes
6	T6	16 minutes
7	T7	31 minutes

Appendix E: Data Collection Framework

To have a framework to provide the time given to the collection of data from each research tool, an inventory can be found in the table below:

Type of Data	Time	Visits
Classroom Observations	1 to 2 hours/Visit	5
Teachers' semi structured Interviews	30 to 45-Minutes/Visit	7
Focus Group discussions with students	30-Minutes to 1 hour /Visit	4

Appendix F: Course Outline : Technical Writing and Presentation Skills

Course Title: Technical Writing and Presentation Skills

Course Code: HU-221

Credit Hours: 01

Contact Hours: 03 per week

Course Description:

The course has been designed to teach students how to adapt their writing to different audiences and purposes. It will help learners develop strategies for making subjects clear to readers who need to understand them. Through this course, learners will learn to write in a clear and concise style, present information logically, and design documents in which format contributes to clarity and efficiency.

Course Objectives:

1. To enable the students to learn principles of effective technical writing.
2. To help the students recognise and adapt writing for a variety of audiences and situations.
3. To enable the students to apply effective writing strategies in order to produce concise, clear and meaningful documents ranging from technical definitions to technical proposals and reports.
4. To facilitate the students in developing effective presentation skills for presenting technical and research reports, proposals, or abstracts.

Methodology:

The teaching of concepts shall take place through lectures, during which analysis of technical examples will help the students grasp the concepts being taught. To check and reinforce understanding, exercises will follow each new concept. The instructor must incorporate presentations into the writing process.

Class Policy:

Punctuality and regularity are extremely important for this course. Anybody with less than 75% attendance will not be evaluated. All reading material will be given prior to or during the class. Everyone will be responsible for getting a personal copy of each handout

given. Every student should keep all lecture notes, reading materials and assignments for this course in a separate folder.

Evaluation Criteria:

Attendance/ Class participation:	10 Marks
Quiz I	10 Marks
Mid-term Exam	30 Marks
Quiz 2	10 Marks
End-term Exam	40 marks

Reference books:

- 1) Raymond V. Lesikar & Marie E. Flatley. Basic Business Communication. McGraw-Hill/Irwin [2001].
- 2) Sharon J. Gerson & Steven M. Gerson. Technical Communication: Process and Product. Boston: Pearson Inc. [2017].
- 3) Suzan Last; Candice Neveu & Monika Smith. Technical Writing Essentials: Introduction to Professional Communications in the Technical Fields. [2019]
- 4) Andrea J. Rutherford. Basic Communication Skills for Technology. Pearson [2000].

Course Contents: Technical Writing and Presentation Skills, Course Code HU-221

Main Topics	Contents
Introduction to Technical Communication	A. What is technical communication? B. Factors to consider in technical communication C. Examining 1. Purpose 2. Audience 3. Format 4. Style D. Recognising different audiences E. Involving the audience F. Determining how to provide content
Making Writing Effective	A. Achieving parallelism in writing B. Grammar, spelling and punctuation C. Editing and proofreading in the writing process D. Elements of clear writing
Understanding the Writing Process	1. Directness

	2. Brevity 3. Sentence structure 4. Sentence length 5. Specific and concrete words 6. Coherence and cohesion E. Pitfalls to avoid 1. Hackneyed phrases 2. Redundancies 3. Slang 4. E-language 5. Passive voice 6. Sexist language
Paragraph Writing	A. Writing effective paragraphs for technology B. Paragraph Structure: Topic statements, supporting details, and concluding statements C. Developing a clear pattern of organisation in different types of paragraphs D. Use of transition signals
Business Correspondence	A. Emails 1. Format 2. Analysis of sample emails 3. Practice B. Business letters 1. Format 2. Analysis of sample emails 3. Practice C. Memorandums 1. Format 2. Analysis of sample memorandums 3. Practice
Business Correspondence	A. Curriculum Vitae/ Résumé B. Cover letter

Business Correspondence	A. Minutes of the meeting B. E-portfolio
Assessment Week	No lecture of Technical Writing and Presentation Skills shall take place during the mid-semester exam week
Interview Skills	A. Types of interviews B. Important interview questions and scenarios C. Strategies for a successful job interview D. Mock interviews
Writing Technical Reports	A. Writing product reviews B. Writing technical instructions and manuals C. Writing technical descriptions and specifications D. Writing technical definitions Case studies: Published reviews and research papers
Types of Reports	A. Different types of reports written by engineers • Proposals • Feasibility reports • Research reports • Inspection reports • Progress reports • Material testing reports • Failure reports B. Structure of Formal Reports • Title • Abstract/ Executive Summary • Table of Contents • List of Illustrations • Introduction • Literature review • Methodology • Results/ Analysis • Discussion/Interpretation • Conclusion • Recommendations • References • Appendix • Glossary C. Samples, reading material, and writing
Parts of a Formal Technical Report	
Parts of a Research Report	

Understanding the Difference between Formal and Informal Reports	practice
Writing Reports Publishing and Presenting Reports	A. Using and Describing Graphics (Tables, Graphs, Images) B. Avoiding Plagiarism C. Reference Styles D. In-text Citation E. IEEE reference style guide and EndNote F. Publishing and presenting reports/posters/articles
Report Defence	Presentation (Multimedia/ Poster) of Reports

Appendix G: Course Outline: Communication Skills

Course Title: Communication Skills

Course Code: HU111L

Credit Hours: 01

Contact Hours: 03 per week

Course Description:

Communication Skills is a practical course that offers an opportunity to learn, apply and practise the principles of interpersonal communication in daily life. Psychological, social, cultural, and linguistic aspects that influence interpersonal and inter-organisational interactions have been emphasised.

Course Objectives:

1. To improve the students' communication skills required to be competent communicators.
2. To improve the students' understanding of day-to-day functional use of language.
3. To increase the students' understanding of communication skills leading to successful behaviour in business setups.
4. To enhance the students' basic written communication in a professional context.
5. To apprise the students with social and business etiquette and manners.
6. To acquaint the students with the importance of non-verbal communication.

Methodology:

The following methods and materials will be used to attain the overall course objectives.

1. Group discussions
2. Case studies
3. Presentations
4. A/V aids
5. Audio/Video clips
6. Pair work
7. Handouts
8. Home assignments
9. Quizzes

Note: Throughout the course the teacher will stress upon the importance of extracurricular reading of books and magazines. Students will be encouraged to watch TV Channels functioning in English, listen to live speakers on the internet and to speak English outside the classroom.

Attendance Policy:

Attendance is extremely important in the course. UET attendance policy (minimum 75% attendance) will be strictly observed for any evaluation.

Evaluation Criteria:

1. Sessional: 30 marks
2. Midterm: 30 marks
3. End term: 40 marks

Reference Books and sources:

1. Herta A. Murphy, Herbert W. Hildebrandt & Jane P. Thomas. Effective Business Communications. McGraw-Hill/Irwin [1997].
2. Raymond V. Lesikar & Marie E. Flatley. Basic Business Communication. McGraw-Hill/Irwin [2001].
3. Terry Mohan, Helen McGregor, Shirley Saunders & Ray Archee. Communicating as Professionals. Cengage Learning Australia [2007].
4. Pat Maier, Anna Barney & Geraldine Price. Study Skills for Science, Engineering and Technology Students. Pearson [2009].
5. Janet Gerber. 650+ English Phrases for Everyday Speaking. [2014]
6. Harvard University Competency Dictionary
7. Academic Language Function Toolkit. District-Wide Academic Support Teams [2010].

Course Contents:

Main Topics	Contents
Introduction to Communication Skills	A. Communication principles B. Importance of effective communication skills in business environments C. Types of Communication in business organisations 1. Internal-operational 2. External-operational 3. Personal D. Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Communication E. Challenges of communication in the global market F. Cross cultural sensitivity G. Cultural stereotypes
Components, Process and Barriers of Communication	A. Components and process of communication 1. Context 2. Sender/Encoder

	3. Message 4. Medium 5. Receiver/Decoder 6. Feedback B. Second language barriers C. Dealing with disruptive behaviours
Non-Verbal Communication	A. Appearance and dress codes B. Body language C. Vocalics/ Paralanguage D. Silence, time and space E. Importance of listening in communication
7 Cs of Communication	A. Completeness B. Conciseness C. Clarity D. Concreteness E. Consideration F. Correctness G. Courtesy
Study Skills	A. Brainstorming B. Time management C. Effective reading strategies D. Note-taking E. Organisation F. Summarising G. Paraphrasing H. Identifying learning styles
Personal Grooming Soft Skills, Professional Ethics and Graduate Attributes	A. Social and business etiquette and manners B. Relationship building C. Empathy D. Emotional intelligence E. Critical thinking F. Conflict management G. Negotiation skills H. Problem solving skills I. Stress management J. Code of ethics for engineers K. Graduate attributes L. Deciding a career path
Public Speaking	A. Reading and listening good public speeches and analysing their components
Presentation Skills	A. Difference between informal and formal presentations B. Modes of formal presentation I. Extemporaneous

	II. Prepared III. Reading out form a written text IV. Combination of the above-mentioned methods C. Purpose of oral presentations I. Entertain II. Persuade III. Inform IV. Sell D. Mechanics of presentations I. Organisation II. Preparation (including AVAs) III. Rehearsals IV. Presentations The teacher shall demonstrate presentations both with and without AVAs
Assessment Week	No lectures of communication skills shall take place during the mind-term exam week
Presentations Skills	Individual presentations
Functional English	A. Functional use of language 1. Formulating questions 2. Introducing 3. Apologizing 4. Making requests 5. Interrupting 6. Paying compliments 7. Talking about likes and dislikes 8. Agreeing and disagreeing 9. Stating your opinion 10. Complaining B. Vocabulary building
Functional English	Role-play/Speaking activities
Listening, Speaking and Writing	A. Application writing B. Writing a statement of purpose (SOP) C. Listening skills D. Pronunciation
Assessment Week	Viva
Assessment Week	Multimedia presentations

Appendix H: Course Outline: Basic English

Course Title: Basic English

Course Code: HU-001

Contact Hours: 03 per week

Credit Hours: 0

Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to improve the proficiency of the undergraduate engineering students in spoken English. By integrating listening, speaking, reading, and writing, it aims at developing their language skills and enhancing their contextual use of English. With a focus on social interaction, the course draws specific attention to the accurate use of linguistic structures, improvement of pronunciation and levels of formality.

Course Objectives

1. To improve the students' understanding of the functional use of language.
2. To improve the students' speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills.
3. To sensitize the students towards the formal and informal use of English.

Evaluation Criteria

Sessional Marks: 30 Marks

Midterm Exam: 30 Marks

End Term Exam: 40 Marks

Attendance Policy

UET attendance policy (minimum 75% attendance) will be strictly observed for any evaluation.

Reference Books

8. Michael Swan. Practical English Usage. Oxford University Press [2005].
9. Academic Language Function Toolkit. District-Wide Academic Support Teams [2010].
10. Janet Gerber. 650+ English Phrases for Everyday Speaking. [2014]
11. Sidney Greenbaum. Oxford English Grammar. Oxford University Press [1996].

Course Contents: Basic English

Week	Contents
1	A. Tenses B. Parts of Speech
2	A. Sentence structure B. Subject verb agreement C. Complex Sentences
3	A. Common grammatical errors
4	A. Punctuation
5	A. Vocabulary building B. Transition words
6	A. Pronunciation B. Listening Comprehension
7	A. Introducing B. Greeting C. Asking questions D. Making Requests
8	Exam Week
9	A. Paying Compliments B. Agreeing and disagreeing C. Inviting D. Declining Invitations E. Apologizing
10	A. Describing a situation, person, and place B. Comparing and contrasting C. Talking about the past D. Talking about the future
11	A. Asking for directions B. Giving directions C. Asking for opinions D. Giving opinions

	E. Asking for instructions F. Giving instructions
12	A. Sharing narratives B. Reading short stories C. Reading excerpts, comic strips, interviews, and other common texts
13	A. Expressing doubt B. Expressing preferences C. Talking about likes and dislikes D. Complaining E. Interrupting F. Explaining
14	A. Talking about food, holidays, family, and friends
15	A. Buying and selling B. Predicting C. Talking about weather D. Listening to news and sharing information
16	Presentations/ Role Play Activities

Appendix I: Course Outline: Functional English

Course Title: Functional English

Course Code: HU-201

Contact Hours: 03 per week

Credit Hours: 03

Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to improve the proficiency of the undergraduate engineering students in spoken and written English. By integrating listening, speaking, reading, and writing on an advanced, it aims at developing their language skills and enhancing their contextual use of English. With a focus on social interaction, the course draws specific attention to the accurate use of linguistic structures and emphasises the improvement of pronunciation, comprehension, and levels of formality.

Course Objectives

1. To enable the students to listen, understand and respond to verbal communication in a range of familiar contexts
2. To develop students' understanding of everyday words and their uses and effects, and apply this understanding in different contexts
3. To enable the students to read with accuracy straightforward texts encountered in everyday life and work
4. To enable the students to write straightforward texts and documents with clarity and effectiveness, and demonstrate a sound grasp of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Evaluation Criteria:

Sessional: 30 Marks

Midterm Exam: 30 Marks

End term Exam: 40 Marks

Attendance Policy:

UET attendance policy (minimum 75% attendance) will be strictly observed for any evaluation.

Reference Books:

12. Michael Swan. Practical English Usage. Oxford University Press [2005].
13. Academic Language Function Toolkit. District-Wide Academic Support Teams [2010].
14. Janet Gerber. 650+ English Phrases for Everyday Speaking. [2014]

15. Sidney Greenbaum. Oxford English Grammar. Oxford University Press [1996].

Course Contents: Functional English

Contents	
C.	Tenses
D.	Parts of Speech
E.	Sentence structure
F.	Subject verb agreement
G.	Complex Sentences
H.	Punctuation
I.	Direct and Indirect constructions
J.	Passive and active voice
K.	Coherence and cohesion
A.	Common grammatical errors
C.	Vocabulary building
D.	Transition words
E.	Idioms
F.	Phrasal verbs
A.	Writing paragraphs (Narrative, descriptive, expository, and argumentative, etc.)
B.	Writing Essays
B.	Paraphrasing
A.	Summarising
Exam Week	
A.	Functional use of English
B.	Role Play Activities
F.	Reading Comprehension (at least 10 passages)
A.	Listening Comprehension

G.	Speaking and writing on a variety of topics provided by the instructor
D.	Pronunciation practice (rules, correction, and rehearsal)
E.	Translating texts from Urdu/Arabic into English
F.	Reviewing texts and presenting or writing short review reports
G.	Describing graphs, charts, and tables
Presentations	

Appendix J: Semi Structured Interviews

- **Semi Structured Interviews**
- **Participants: Teachers**
- **Department: D1**
- **No. of participants: 7**
- **Duration of interview: 30 to 45 minutes**
- **Method of recording: audio recording**
- **Language: English, Urdu**

The questions include:

- 1. What's your view regarding students' presentation skills at this university?**
- 2. What are the methods and techniques do you use to improve students' presentation skills?**
- 3. What in your opinion is the most effective method that helped bringing improvement in presentation skills of students?**
- 4. Do you think teachers are successfully reaching their set goals in imparting language education and improving presentation skills of students at the university?**
- 5. On what scales do you measure students' performance in presentation?**
- 6. What are the factors that are affecting their language improvement or causing hurdle in reaching required standard of presentation skills?**
- 7. Do students experience same amount of anxiety in all other language skills as much as they face in presentation skills?**
- 8. How do you feel about the institution's support of the department?**
- 9. What do you believe are the major strengths in your teaching methodology? or any weaknesses?**
- 10. How does your department assess teaching effectiveness?**
- 11. What would you like to recommend administration, staff and your colleagues/teachers to improve the teaching method in order to maximise output?**
- 12. What in your opinion students need to do to accelerate this process and bring improvement?**

Appendix K: Focus Group Discussions

- Focus Group Discussions/ Interviews
- Focus group discussions interviews are the third tool I will be using in my research.
- Participants: Students
- No of participants: 6 to 8
- Duration: 30-60 min
- Method of recording: Video recording
- Language: English, Urdu

Apart from their basic introduction, the questions that will be discussed will include:

1. Do you think there is a requirement to have this course in presentation skills? How do you think it might help you advance academically and professionally in future?
2. How do you feel about your Presentation skills (English) learning progress so far?
3. What language skills do you find most easy?
4. What are the major factors that affect your performance in presentation? If any
5. What in your opinion can be done on the teacher's part that can improve your learning in this regard?
6. What do you expect administration to do in terms of provision of resources etc. that will aid your process of learning?
7. What part of the presentation do you find most difficult?
8. Do you think the instructions/directions given to you are sufficient in classes? Are you given enough resources/handouts?
9. What changes have you brought in your schedule since you have joined university? E.g. reading, group discussions, getting involved in public speaking/discussions?
10. Do you think the time allocated for these courses is sufficient or does it needs to be increased?
11. Are you satisfied with the teaching practices? What teaching method do you find most effective?

Appendix L: Observation Protocol

(Source: Creswell & Creswell 2018)

An example from field notes and research Journal

Teacher's Name / Pseudonym Teacher T3 No. of Students 32	Department / Pseudonym D2 Time : Time 10-11:30
Descriptive Notes 10:05 The lesson starts . Teacher starts with English Now she has switched to Urdu . Teacher begins with power point with title "Engaging the audience" . Slides are text heavy , lots of bullet points . 10:15 Teacher starts explaining the importance of eye contact ;	Reflective Notes . use of English language use of Urdu language . Lecture on presentation skills . Teacher's style is very formal , lecture based . Thinking if this is engaging students

Descriptive

Tried to give an example of Elon Musk presentation, but the video clip is not playing.

The CR of the class stood up and helping teacher to fix it but no luck.

10:35
Teacher continues without the video and is talking about body language.

Teacher is directly leading from slides.

Reflective

Some Students are on phones.

Technical difficulty seems to ~~irritate~~ ~~seem~~ frustrating for teacher.

Students attention wavering & Is this topic not relevant to their concerns?

Content seems very general.

Student attention shifting. Are they used to some more dynamic lesson.

Descriptive

10:45

Teacher moves on to the aspects of presentations, such as time organization and clarity of slides.

Teacher has asked some students of left to stop talking.

11:05

Teacher is putting emphasis on students ~~that~~ reading and watching documentation in free time.

Reflective

Some student's seems to pay attention.

Some students talking to each other (whispering) in order.

Students are listening.

A student went out for the third time.

Descriptive Notes

11:15 Teacher is asking students, about what content do they find interesting - that can be used.

Some students are saying. Books, One is saying she watches videos on youtube with subtitles.

Many are silent.

11:25

Teacher is taking their attendance and asking them to brainstorm

Some topics on which they'll have discussion next time.

Reflective Notes

Teacher asking student's preference

What students find useful.

Teacher is winding up the class.

Day 4 Research Journal/Diary

Obs — lecture

walking into the classroom, I was hoping to get some useful content today. The class being Male dominated, Girls are getting the back bench.

The tex heavy slides didnt seem very promising. The pause because of the tech failure seems to cause a disconnection.

I feel the amount of guidance provided to give a good presentation is very limited. ~~to~~ or Students were not engaged during the class. I am looking forward to see how students manage to present after this amount of

Appendix M: Participant Information Sheet

Name of department:

Title of the study:

Introduction

This section should introduce the researcher to the participant, providing their name and University of Strathclyde contact details as well as their status/ role (e.g. staff, undergraduate/ postgraduate/doctoral student). The language used in the Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form should be tailored to the participants.

What is the purpose of this investigation?

This section should include the aims of the investigation, the reason for it and what it is trying to achieve.

Do you have to take part?

This section should give the participants information on the nature of the investigation and what is expected of them. It should also explain that it is the participant's decision to take part in the investigation or not (i.e. that participation is voluntary) and that refusing to participate or withdrawing participation will not affect any other aspects of the way a person is treated (i.e. participants have a right to withdraw without detriment).

What will you do in the project?

This should provide participants with information on what they will be required to do for the investigation e.g. completing a questionnaire, interviews, attending meetings etc. Information on payment/ reimbursement should be provided here. This section should also provide the location and duration of the investigation and dates that the participant should be aware of.

Why have you been invited to take part?

This should explain the types of participants that are required to take part in the investigation. Should also include an explanation of the nature of the participant's sample; any screening procedures necessary; any inclusion/ exclusion criteria; any special skills/ attributes involved.

What are the potential risks to you in taking part?

This should explain any potential risk, any burdens imposed and any specific preparatory requirements (e.g. special diet, exercise).

What happens to the information in the project?

This section should provide information on the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. If any information provided has to be disclosed, then this should be explained here. Data storage and retention information should also be provided here.

The University of Strathclyde is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office who implements the Data Protection Act 1998. All personal data on participants will be processed in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Thank you for reading this information – please ask any questions if you are unsure about what is written here.

What happens next?

Explain that if the participant is happy to be involved in the project, they will be asked to sign a consent form to confirm this.

If the participant does not want to be involved in the project then thank them for their attention.

Explain the process for participants receiving feedback after the investigation is complete. Inform the participant if the results are to be published.

Researchers contact details:

This should include the name of the researcher and University of Strathclyde contact details (address, phone number and email address – do not include personal contact details).

Chief Investigator details:

This should include the name of the Chief Investigator and the University of Strathclyde contact details (address, phone number and email address– do not include personal contact details).

This investigation was granted ethical approval by the University of Strathclyde Ethics Committee.

If you have any questions/concerns, during or after the investigation, or wish to contact an independent person to whom any questions may be directed or further information may be sought from, please contact:

Secretary to the University Ethics Committee
Research & Knowledge Exchange Services
University of Strathclyde
Graham Hills Building
50 George Street
Glasgow
G1 1QE

Telephone: 0141 548 3707

Email: ethics@strath.ac.uk

Appendix N: Consent Form

Name of department:

Title of the study:

- I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above project and the researcher has answered any queries to my satisfaction.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time, up to the point of completion, without having to give a reason and without any consequences. If I exercise my right to withdraw and I don't want my data to be used, any data which have been collected from me will be destroyed.
- I understand that I can withdraw from the study any personal data (i.e. data which identify me personally) at any time.
- I understand that anonymised data (i.e. data which do not identify me personally) cannot be withdrawn once they have been included in the study.
- I understand that any information recorded in the investigation will remain confidential and no information that identifies me will be made publicly available.
- I consent to being a participant in the project
- I consent to being audio and/or video recorded as part of the project

Where human biological samples are taken e.g. blood samples or biopsy samples then the following wording should be included: I consent to the taking of biological samples from me, and understand that they will be the property of the University of Strathclyde.

Where it is proposed to carry out DNA analysis of material in any samples then the following statement should be included in the consent form: I consent to DNA in the samples being analysed.

For investigations where it has been decided that “no fault compensation” cover will be provided the following wording needs to be included: In agreeing to participate in this investigation I am aware that I may be entitled to compensation for accidental bodily injury, including death or disease, arising out of the investigation without the need to prove fault. However, such compensation is subject to acceptance of the Conditions of Compensation, a copy of which is available on request.

(PRINT NAME)	
Signature of Participant:	Date:

Appendix O: Pre-codes

1. Activating learning styles	58. Teacher's schedule	115. Motivating environment
2. Addressing performance anxiety	59. Teacher training	116. Peer interactions
3. Advice on frustration	60. Administrative support	117. Group dynamics
4. Ask questions	61. Facilities	118. Collaborative work
5. Ask speaker to slow down or repeat	62. Peer pressure	119. Real-world scenarios
6. Asking questions	63. Job motivation	120. Authentic materials
7. Audience	64. Varied teachers' responses	121. Future needs
8. Background knowledge	65. Incentives	122. Individual needs
9. Body language	66. Encouragement	123. Constructive feedback
10. Breathing technique for anxiety	67. Discouraging attitudes	124. Individual learning styles and goals
11. Building self-esteem	68. Fear of public speaking	125. Self-assurance in communication
12. Classroom environment	69. Language learning difficulties	126. Perceptions of enjoyment
13. Campus environment	70. Practice at home	127. Multimedia
14. Change phone setting to English	71. Hostel environment	128. Providing support

15. Class presentations	72. Rural background	129. Peer tutoring
16. Background knowledge	73. Interview preparation	130. Language exchange
17. Research	74. Real-world needs	131. Study groups
18. Organisation	75. Ongoing feedback	132. Language labs
19. AV aids	76. Speak with friends and family	133. Online materials
20. Resources	77. Speak slowly	134. English language development
21. Language barrier	78. Cultural barrier in pronunciation	135. Content-specific courses
22. Regional language	79. Not getting a lot of opportunities	136. Hands-on activities
23. Lecture	80. Less time for presentation skills	137. Interactive methods over traditional lectures
24. Group work	81. Struggling	138. Using technology
25. Constraints	82. Mocking others during presentations	139. Future careers as engineers
26. Structure	83. Different exposure level	140. Assignments on English-related topic
27. Fluency	84. Less time to teach communication skills	141. Design review
28. Organisation	85. 40 and more students in class	142. Project proposals

29. Lecture	86. Too much technical content and very less	143. Technical briefings
30. Feedback	87. Time given to communication skills	144. Industry-specific communication
31. Interactive teaching	88. Institutions support: more towards interest	145. Tailored guidance
32. Pacing and pausing	89. Online platforms	146. Individual needs and challenges
33. Peer feedback	90. Satisfaction	147. Respect for language backgrounds
34. Intonation	91. Personal development goals	148. Creating a safe space
35. Practice opportunities	92. Overcoming fears	149. Providing support
36. Self-assessment	93. Expanding comfort zones	150. Peer tutoring
37. Cultural awareness	94. Personal growth	151. Real-world tasks
38. Adapting to audience	95. Ex students' presentation	152. Group work
39. Collaborative learning	96. Academic success	153. Online platforms
40. Scaffolding	97. Grades	154. Language apps
41. Differentiated instruction	98. Assignments	155. Interactive methods over traditional lectures
42. Task-based learning	99. Employability	156. Using technology
43. Biasness	100. Social belonging	157. Future careers as engineers

44. Cultural norms	101. Peer recognition	158. Assignments on English-related topics
45. Task-based learning	102. Positive feedback from instructors	159. Industry-specific communication
46. Reading habit	103. Instructor behaviours	160. Tailored guidance
47. Conversation in English	104. Struggling	161. Individual needs and challenges
48. Electricity shortage	105. Real-world tasks	162. Self-assurance in communication
49. Library	106. Pair/group work	163. Creating a safe space
50. Insufficient resources	107. Discussions	164. Providing support
51. PowerPoint presentations	108. Debates	165. Peer tutoring
52. Non-functional computers	109. Role-playing	166. Respect for language backgrounds
53. Audience	110. Curriculum structure	167. Peer tutoring
54. Non-native English speakers	111. Language apps	168. Peer interactions
55. Gestures	112. Online platforms	169. Positive feedback from instructors
56. Eye contact	113. Blended learning	170. Instructor behaviours
57. Presentation expectation	114. Align with learning objectives	171. Perceptions of enjoyment

Appendix P: Codes

A structured list of codes based on pre-codes:

1. Student Learning and Development

- **Activating learning styles**
- **Addressing performance anxiety**
- **Advice on frustration**
- **Self-assessment**
- **Building self-esteem**
- **Breathing techniques for anxiety**
- **Overcoming anxiety and fears**
- **Expanding comfort zones**
- **Personal development goals**
- **Self-assurance in communication**
- **Individual learning styles and goals**

2. Teaching Methods and Strategies

- **Interactive teaching**
- **Task-based learning**
- **Scaffolding**
- **Differentiated instruction**
- **Role-play**
- **Group work**
- **Collaborative learning**
- **Debates**
- **Blended learning**

3. Classroom and Campus Environment

- **Classroom environment**
- **Campus environment**
- **Creating a safe space**
- **Motivating environment**

- **Peer interactions**
- **Group dynamics**

5. Communication and Presentation Skills

- **Body language**
- **Gestures**
- **Eye contact**
- **Language skills**
- **Pacing and pausing**
- **Audience adaptation**
- **Organisation**
- **Fluency**
- **Cultural awareness**

5. Resources and Support

- **Feedback (peer and instructor)**
- **AV aids**
- **Online platforms**
- **Language labs**
- **Library resources**
- **Authentic materials**

6. Constraints and Barriers

- **Language barriers**
- **Anxiety**
- **Cultural norms**
- **Biasness**
- **Mocking others during presentations**
- **Insufficient resources**
- **Non-functional computers**
- **Electricity shortages**

7. Teacher and Institutional Factors

- **Teacher training**
- **Teacher schedule**
- **Incentives for teachers**
- **Administrative support**
- **Curriculum structure**
- **Institutions' focus on engineering over humanities**

8. Real-World Applications

- **Real-world tasks**
- **Industry-specific communication**
- **Future needs and careers**
- **Employability**

9. Motivation and Peer Influence

- **Encouragement**
- **Positive feedback from instructors**
- **Peer pressure**
- **Peer recognition**

10. English Language Proficiency

- **Language barrier**
- **Cultural barriers in pronunciation**
- **Non-native English speakers**
- **Practice opportunities**
- **Reading habits**

Appendix Q: Ethics Application Form

Please answer all questions

1. Title of the investigation
Please state the title on the PIS and Consent Form, if different:

2. Chief Investigator (must be at least a Grade 7 member of staff or equivalent)

3. Other Strathclyde investigator(s)

Name:

Status:

Department:

Telephone:

E-mail:

Name:

Status:

Department/Institution:

If student(s), name of supervisor:

Telephone:

E-mail:

4. Non-Strathclyde collaborating investigator(s) (where applicable)

5. Overseas Supervisor(s) (where applicable)

Name(s):

Status:

Department/Institution:

Telephone:

Email:

I can confirm that the local supervisor has obtained a copy of the Code of Practice: Yes ☐

No ☐

Please provide details for all supervisors involved in the study:

6. Location of the investigation

7. Duration of the investigation

Duration(years/months):

Start date (expected):

Completion date (expected):

8.Sponsor

Please note that this is not the funder; refer to Section C and Annexes 1 and 3 of the Code of Practice for a definition and the key responsibilities of the sponsor.

Will the sponsor be the University of Strathclyde:

If not, please specify who is the sponsor:

9. Funding body or proposed funding body (if applicable)

Name of funding body: research is the part of PhD studies, Pakistan govt is funding my PhD

Status of proposal – if seeking funding (please click appropriate box):

☐ In preparation

☐ Submitted

☐ Accepted

Date of submission of proposal:

10. Ethical issues

Describe the main ethical issues and how you propose to address them:

11. Objectives of investigation (including the academic rationale and justification for the investigation) Please use plain English.

12. Participants

Please detail the nature of the participants:

13. Nature of the participants

Please note that investigations governed by the Code of Practice that involve any of the types of participants listed in B1(b) must be submitted to the University Ethics Committee (UEC) rather than DEC/SEC for approval.

Do any of the participants fall into a category listed in Section B1(b) (participant considerations) applicable in this investigation:

If yes, please detail which category (and submit this application to the UEC):

14. Method of recruitment

Describe the method of recruitment (see section B4 of the Code of Practice), providing information on any payments, expenses or other incentives.

15. Participant consent

Please state the groups from whom consent/assent will be sought (please refer to the Guidance Document). The PIS and Consent Form(s) to be used should be attached to this application form.

16. Methodology

Investigations governed by the Code of Practice which involve any of the types of projects listed in B1(a) must be submitted to the University Ethics Committee rather than DEC/SEC for approval.

Are any of the categories mentioned in the Code of Practice Section B1(a) (project considerations) applicable in this investigation? No

If 'yes' please detail:

Describe the research methodology and procedure, providing a timeline of activities where possible. Please use plain English.

What specific techniques will be employed and what exactly is asked of the participants? Please identify any non-validated scale or measure and include any scale and measures charts as an Appendix to this application. Please include questionnaires, interview schedules or any other non-standardised method of data collection as appendices to this application.

Where an independent reviewer is not used, then the UEC, DEC or SEC reserves the right to scrutinise the methodology. Has this methodology been subject to independent scrutiny?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please provide the name and contact details of the independent reviewer:

17. Previous experience of the investigator(s) with the procedures involved. Experience should demonstrate an ability to carry out the proposed research in accordance with the written methodology.

18. Data collection, storage and security

How and where are data handled? Please specify whether it will be fully anonymous (i.e. the identity unknown even to the researchers) or pseudo-anonymised (i.e. the raw data is anonymised and given a code name, with the key for code names being stored in a separate location from the raw data) - if neither please justify.

Explain how and where it will be stored, who has access to it, how long it will be stored and whether it will be securely destroyed after use:

Will anyone other than the named investigators have access to the data? No
If 'yes' please explain:

19. Potential risks or hazards

Briefly describe the potential Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) hazards and risks associated with the investigation:

Please attach a completed OHS Risk Assessment (S20) for the research. Further Guidance on Risk Assessment and Form can be obtained on [Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing's webpages](#)

20. What method will you use to communicate the outcomes and any additional relevant details of the study to the participants?

21. How will the outcomes of the study be disseminated (e.g. will you seek to publish the results and, if relevant, how will you protect the identities of your participants in said dissemination)?

--

Checklist	Enclosed	N/A
Participant Information Sheet(s)	☐	☐
Consent Form(s)	☐	☐
Sample questionnaire(s)	☐	☐
Sample interview format(s)	☐	☐
Sample advertisement(s)	☐	☐
OHS Risk Assessment (S20)	☐	
Any other documents (please specify below)	☐	☐
Sample observation format	☐	☐
Sample email to vice chancellor format	☐	☐
Sample email to Dean/chairperson format	☐	☐
	☐	☐

22. Chief Investigator and Head of Department Declaration

Please note that unsigned applications will not be accepted and both signatures are required

I have read the University's Code of Practice on Investigations involving Human Beings and have completed this application accordingly. By signing below, I acknowledge that I am aware of and accept my responsibilities as Chief Investigator under Clauses 3.11 – 3.13 of the [Research Governance Framework](#) and that this investigation cannot proceed before all approvals required have been obtained.

Signature of Chief Investigator

Please also type name here:

I confirm I have read this application, I am happy that the study is consistent with departmental strategy, that the staff and/or students involved have the appropriate expertise to undertake the study and that adequate arrangements are in place to supervise any students that might be acting as investigators, that the study has access to the resources needed to conduct the proposed research successfully, and that there are no other departmental-specific issues relating to the study of which I am aware.

Signature of Head of Department

Please also type name here

Date:

/ /

23. Only for University sponsored projects under the remit of the DEC/SEC, with no external funding and no NHS involvement

Head of Department statement on Sponsorship

This application requires the University to sponsor the investigation. This is done by the Head of Department for all DEC applications with exception of those that are externally funded and those which are connected to the NHS (those exceptions should be submitted to R&KES). I am aware of the implications of university sponsorship of the investigation and have assessed this investigation with respect to sponsorship and management risk. As this particular investigation is within the remit of the DEC and has no external funding and no NHS involvement, I agree on behalf of the University that the University is the appropriate sponsor of the investigation and there are no management risks posed by the investigation.

If not applicable, tick here ☐

Signature of Head of Department

Please also type name here

Date: / /

For applications to the University Ethics Committee, the completed form should be sent to ethics@strath.ac.uk with the relevant electronic signatures.

24. Insurance

The questionnaire below must be completed and included in your submission to the UEC/DEC/SEC:

Is the proposed research an investigation or series of investigations conducted on any person for a Medicinal Purpose? Medicinal Purpose means: ▪ treating or preventing disease or diagnosing disease or ▪ ascertaining the existence degree of or extent of a physiological condition or ▪ assisting with or altering in any way the process of conception or ▪ investigating or participating in methods of contraception or ▪ inducing anaesthesia or ▪ otherwise preventing or interfering with the normal operation of a physiological function or ▪ altering the administration of prescribed medication.	Yes / No
--	----------

If “Yes” please go to **Section A (Clinical Trials)** – all questions must be completed

If “No” please go to **Section B (Public Liability)** – all questions must be completed

Section A (Clinical Trials)

Does the proposed research involve subjects who are either: i. under the age of 5 years at the time of the trial; ii. known to be pregnant at the time of the trial	Yes / No
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If “Yes” the UEC should refer to Finance

Is the proposed research limited to: iii. Questionnaires, interviews, psychological activity including CBT; iv. Venepuncture (withdrawal of blood); v. Muscle biopsy; vi. Measurements or monitoring of physiological processes including scanning; vii. Collections of body secretions by non-invasive methods; viii. Intake of foods or nutrients or variation of diet (excluding administration of drugs).	Yes / No
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If “No” the UEC should refer to Finance

Will the proposed research take place within the UK?	Yes / No
--	----------

If “No” the UEC should refer to Finance

Title of Research	
Chief Investigator	
Sponsoring Organisation	
Does the proposed research involve:	
a) investigating or participating in methods of contraception?	Yes / No
b) assisting with or altering the process of conception?	Yes / No
c) the use of drugs?	Yes / No
d) the use of surgery (other than biopsy)?	Yes / No
e) genetic engineering?	Yes / No
f) participants under 5 years of age(other than activities i-vi above)?	Yes / No
g) participants known to be pregnant (other than activities i-vi above)?	Yes / No
h) pharmaceutical product/appliance designed or manufactured by the institution?	Yes / No
i) work outside the United Kingdom?	Yes / No

If “YES” to **any** of the questions a-i please also complete the **Employee Activity Form** (attached).

If “YES” to **any** of the questions a-i, and this is a follow-on phase, please provide details of SUSARs on a separate sheet.

If “Yes” to any of the questions a-i then the UEC/DEC/SEC should refer to Finance (insurance-services@strath.ac.uk).

Section B (Public Liability)

Does the proposed research involve :

a) aircraft or any aerial device	Yes / No
b) hovercraft or any water borne craft	Yes / No
c) ionising radiation	Yes / No
d) asbestos	Yes / No
e) participants under 5 years of age	Yes / No
f) participants known to be pregnant	Yes / No
g) pharmaceutical product/appliance designed or manufactured by the institution?	Yes / No
h) work outside the United Kingdom?	Yes / No

If “**YES**” to any of the questions the UEC/DEC/SEC should refer to Finance (insurance-services@strath.ac.uk).

For NHS applications only - Employee Activity Form

Has NHS Indemnity been provided?	Yes / No
Are Medical Practitioners involved in the project?	Yes / No
If YES, will Medical Practitioners be covered by the MDU or other body?	Yes / No

This section aims to identify the staff involved, their employment contract and the extent of their involvement in the research (in some cases it may be more appropriate to refer to a group of persons rather than individuals).

Chief Investigator

Name	Employer	NHS Honorary Contract?
		Yes / No
Others		
Name	Employer	NHS Honorary Contract?
		Yes / No
		Yes / No
		Yes / No
		Yes / No

Please provide any further relevant information here:

10
