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## **A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE MODERN AND TRADITIONAL TEACHING STRATEGIES USED BY THE ESL TEACHERS AND THEIR EFFECTS ON STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT**

### **ABSTRACT:**

*It has been observed by the linguists that the performance of the students is greatly affected by the use of teaching strategies especially in second language learning class/ ESL class. Teachers with the best teaching strategies provide better results than those who use traditional methods of teaching or who do not use any specific method of teaching. In Pakistan, the performance of ESL learners is unsatisfactory and, therefore the researcher has taken this very important issue to investigate. The main objective of this research is to investigate different teaching strategies used by the English language teachers and to explore any possible relationship between the teaching strategies used and students' achievement in ESL classes. For the current study, 141 teachers, both male and female, teaching English at secondary level, are selected from Bahawalpur District of Punjab, Pakistan with their 5198 ESL Learners. A survey questionnaire and the board result marks of the students in the subject of English are used as instruments to collect data for the current research study. Data was analyzed using SPSS. Results show that teachers are making use of different modern teaching strategies which have a positive affect on the students' achievement.*

**Keywords:** Teaching strategies, classical teaching, modern teaching strategies, language achievement, teaching learning process.

### **Introduction and Literature Review**

The twentieth century has passed, but the teacher's job is still the same, i.e. to decide on the most effective strategy of teaching that will help all students, whether front or back benches, eager to learn or reluctant, bright, average or dull ones (Crockett & Kauffman, 1998). The whole world agrees that we need talented, competent and bright teachers to achieve educational goals and teach students to such high standards that will end the achievement gap. Teachers hold the key to nation building and no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers (Beyioku, 2008). It is true that the role of the teachers is vital for imparting knowledge.

Aderemi (2006) has stated that the achievement of the students is directly proportional to the teachers and teaching strategies used by them. It is the teacher who teaches his students keeping in mind the basic principles of learning and students' achievement. Everyone is much familiar with the fact that the lesson is not interesting in itself and it is the duty of the teachers to make it interesting by using various teaching methods to grasp students' attention thus making effective learning possible. Teaching strategies play a primary role in the teaching-learning process and are major determinants of talented, skilled and learned students. In Pakistan, two main types of teaching strategies i.e. traditional or classical and modern, are used by the school teachers. And it is interesting to note that the students belonging to rural areas are taught using traditional teaching methods. While on the other hand, modern methods of teaching are employed for students belonging to urban areas comparatively. Traditional methods of teaching do not develop any intellectual growth among students while modern teaching methods enhance critical thinking, creativity and independence among students thus ensuring their critical and intellectual growth.

Language teaching has mostly been done by the traditional ways of teaching or sophisticatedly called "teacher-dominated interaction" (Broughton, *et al.* 1994). Traditional method of teaching is deeply teacher-centered (Richards, 2004) rather than modern student-oriented, as Scrivener (2005) asserts that traditional teaching works like 'jug and mug' i.e knowledge is poured from one container into a vacant container. Kuzu (2007) explains it as an approach that relies on the traditional outlook of education, where teacher is the main source of knowledge and learners are passive

recipients only. To sum up, the traditional methodology stresses mainly on the teacher for teaching and learning process. It is also assumed that if students listen to the teacher's lectures, provided by his elucidations and instances, they will not only be able to comprehend but also to use the acquired knowledge in real life situations.

Although traditional methods of teaching, for example Grammar Translation Method (GTM), are tried and tested methods, but they are also not devoid of problems especially in today's world where technology has made language learning quite better, attracting, motivating, pleasant and interactive. The focus of traditional teaching is grammatical rules and lexical items. As Richards (2004) has stated that earlier language learning and teaching views pay first and foremost attention to the mastery of grammatical rules and grammatical competency.

GTM is based on the classical approach to the target language. It looks upon the language as a set of grammatical rules with a large number of lexical items that are combined together per rules. Its focus is on teaching rules and putting those rules into practice. Here students are required to memorize without having a complete understanding i.e. rote learning. The traditional teaching methods, therefore, choose from a limited variety of activities. Mostly they deliver lectures and prefer exercises and involve students in translation activities, from their native tongue or first language to the target language or English. They make students learn and memorize grammatical rules and isolated vocabulary items (Richards, 2004). The GTM claims that if students will listen to the teacher attentively they will learn well and will not make any mistake. But this method does not develop such attention and interest as extensive lectures with dictations, translations, routine lectures about rules, and drills without any communicative environment in the classroom leaves a student disengaged, disinterested and demotivated.

Modern teaching methodology, unlike traditional teaching methodology, is much more student-centered. It "helps learning to happen," unlike a teacher-centered class, it engages students in the process of learning using various techniques. Teachers always motivate and encourage students to take part in the teaching-learning process, communicate, discuss, do practical things or use language in real life situations. They don't make their students get

bored by unending lectures and forcing them to learn in a specific time period rather they allow them to learn at their own speed (Scrivener, 2005). But it is interesting to note that students learn ESL/ EFL with a high speed when they are allowed to participate, communicate and do practical things (Richards, 2008).

Modern teaching methodology has shifted its attention to produce competency and knowledge so that learners can use grammatical rules and vocabulary items appropriately and according to the purpose of communication, e.g. to make requests, to give or take advice or any information, to suggest, to express desires, demands needs and etc. (Richards, 2008). For fulfilling the needs and the expectations of students, teachers' teaching methodologies, courses and books have been adjusted, to some degree, in the world. Along with grammar, lexical items are crucial to learn English language. It is a very important part of learning English language.

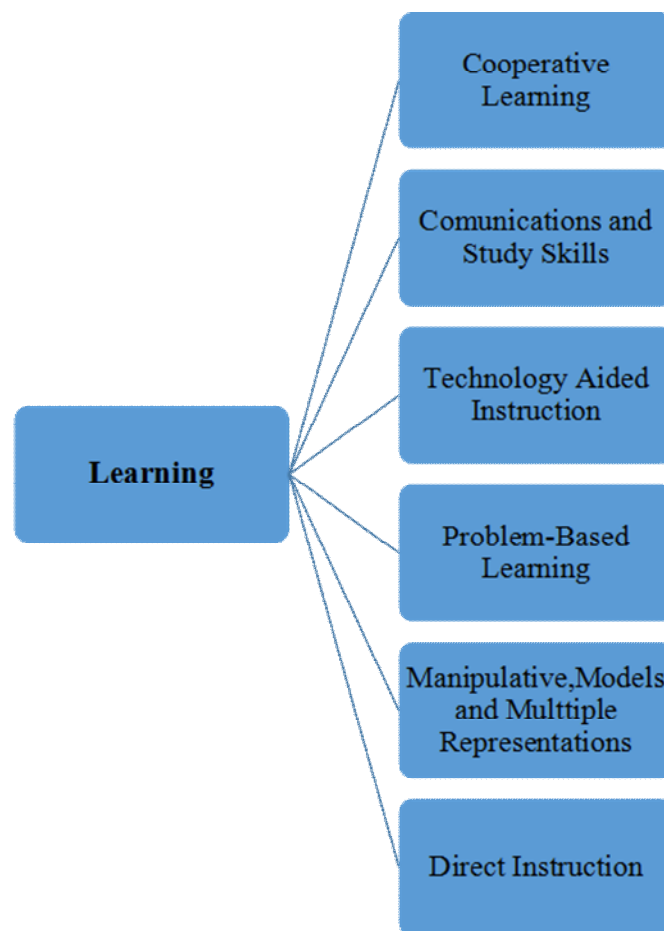
To sum up, modern teaching methodology includes the interaction connected to the involvement of the learners in each and every activity going on in the class, during the lesson. It changes the role of a teacher from a dominating and authoritative person, assuming him to be the mere source of knowledge, to a guide who helps students to learn. His job is to select suitable activities for the language learners to guide them in their lessons and activities, and to motivate and involve them in the activities so they cannot only practice the language but can also do experiments with it. The teacher teaches his students how to communicate and to convey their intended meanings. We can say that these two teaching methodologies are very different. These two approaches are different in several important ways mentioned below:

- ⇒ What the teacher does,
- ⇒ how he organizes lessons,
- ⇒ how much he makes learners' active involvement in the learning process possible,
- ⇒ how much the learners are responsible for their own learning and
- ⇒ the ways adopted by the teacher to assess students' learning.

But in both approaches, teacher has a fundamental responsibility as both the planner and the facilitator of learning as he is the one who decides what goals, learners need to accomplish and he has to guide them throughout the learning process (Jones,

Palinscar, Ogle and Carr, 1987). It is also an acknowledged fact that no matter what teaching approach teacher uses, students will learn more when they are motivated than when they are not. It means knowledge will be more effectual when teacher makes it attractive, motivating, pleasurable, a bit difficult and demanding for the learner.

Walberg (1984) proposes, that the teaching method should be researched empirically for its effectiveness beyond the theory from which it derives. For the purposes of this study, quality of instruction is the focus. Figure 1 displays an instructional focus from Walberg's model.



**Figure 1: Walberg's Model**

Cooperative learning is a teaching strategy, used in a classroom setting, marked by learners working together in groups

to accomplish a shared goal (Hass, 2002). Johnson & Johnson (2002) stated it as a teaching strategy that enhances learners' knowledge and helps them to achieve common objectives. Slavin (1995) has also stated that it increases learners' learning outcomes. The main focus of this strategy is learner. This strategy gained more fame than pure lecture based teaching strategy. It effects and enhances learners' oral skills in English (Pattanpichet, 2011); their reading skills (Bolukbas, Keskin and Polat, 2011; Meng, 2010 and Law, 2011) and English writing skills (Roddy, 2009). Communication is an important factor to be considered while teaching English language. It is a two way process between speaker and listener. Hass (2002) has defined communication skills as an instructional strategy that teaches learners to read and study the information in an effective way. This strategy teaches and provides the learners with chances to communicate their ideas orally and verbally. It is a teaching strategy making use of computer software applications to enhance the performance of the learners (Hass, 2002). It is a type of language instruction strategy that combines the use of technology. Such type of language instruction has become famous over some period of years and has proved its effectiveness in the educational sector, especially in language teaching. A wide range of research studies in ESL/ EFL teaching have shown the significance of technology usage and recommended its use to improve learners' academic achievement and increase motivation among learners (Blake, 2000; Cheng, 2003; Cheng & Liou, 2000; Egbert, 2002; Higgins, 1993; Kramsch & Andersen, 1999; LeLoup & Ponterio, 2003; Skinner & Austin, 1999; Strambi & Bouvet, 2003; Willetts, 1992; Williams & Williams, 2000). It is also known as computer assisted instruction (CAI), or computer-mediated communication (CMC) or computer assisted language learning (CALL). Problem based learning strategy is about teaching the students through problem solving. In it students have to rely on the information that is given in the problem and based on this information, they have to find out its solution (Hass, 2002). Manipulatives, Models and Multiple Representations (MMR) has been defined by Hass (2002) as a teaching strategy that manipulates the material and use models and different aids to teach students. Direct instruction is an instructional strategy that teaches through establishing a direction and a foundation for learning new concepts with the old ones.

English is a second language for Pakistani students, but it is

hard for them to comprehend it, so it is crucial for the teachers to use such interesting teaching methodologies to develop the interest of the learners to learn English language. During the teaching process, a teacher must consider learner and the environment in which he is learning the language. As Elizabeth (2007) had asserted that while teaching teachers should think about the learner, his ability and potential to learn and above all the environment in which learning is going to take place. It is a dilemma that our education system coupled with faulty teaching methodologies adopted by the teachers has made the learning of the English language a problem for a number of students. Here a teacher must come forward and play his role and help his students in constructing the knowledge of language through different tasks and activities. But unfortunately, in our institutions, teachers still emphasize grammatical rules presented without any contextual usage or practical applications. They neglect to teach communicative part of the language and in this way communication skill as well. As a result, we find students who have crammed all the grammatical rules like a parrot, but they are not able to use them in real life situations and for communication purpose. It means that such students fail to achieve communicative competence.

The percentage of failure in English in Pakistan at every level is alarming. At all levels, especially at secondary level, many students give up their studies on account of the fear of failure in English. Gillani (2004) pointing towards this situation said, "The high failure rates at matriculation, intermediate and degree level show that our students fail to achieve desired objectives as well as the desired level of proficiency in English."

In Pakistani educational system, the secondary level has two folded importance. This stage is a base for higher education as well as the stage of termination. Results have shown that the maximum number of students, at secondary level, fails generally in the subject of English. The subject of English becomes a nightmare or phobia for the students. In addition to other factors of teaching / learning process, teaching methodology has greater importance. Teachers use the strategies which they perceive the best to teach in a specific subject. And in Pakistan, like other countries, our teachers have started using modern techniques to teach English language. The aim of the work is to find out the teaching strategies used in the teaching of English, as well as practical effectiveness

by measuring ESL students' achievement.

### **Research Questions**

Following research questions have been raised in the current study.

- 1) What are the teaching strategies that are used by the teachers to enhance the ESL students' achievement in learning second language?
- 2) What is the overall effect of using these strategies for the ESL student's achievement?
- 3) How do teachers' gender affects their students'/ ESL learners' achievement?

### **Research Methodology**

A mixed method research approach, with a descriptive study design, was adopted. Creswell and Clark (2007) have defined it as a combination of rationalistic belief and inquiry methods. This approach guides a researcher towards the direction of the data collection and analysis. Its main aim is to understand the research problems in a better way while applying both quantitative and qualitative approaches rather in isolation. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2010) have defined it as an investigation process that helps in selecting precise methods for the research study. It employs two research instrument i.e. a questionnaire from teachers and their final board exams result marks of the students in English. The questionnaire consisted of 50 items, 48 close ended questions having five-point Likert scale and 2 open ended questions. These 48 items are divided into 6 dimensions. These are:

- 1) Co- Operative Learning (Items 1-11),
- 2) Communication and Study Skills (Items 12-21)
- 3) Technology Aided Instruction (Items 22-28)
- 4) Problem Based Learning (Items 29-31)
- 5) Manipulative, Models & Multiple Representations (Items 32-34)
- 6) and Direct Instruction (35-48)

Data was collected from 141 teachers, from 52 Government schools. These schools included 28 girls and 24 boys' schools, while 73 were female and 68 were male teachers among 141 teachers teaching ESL and various government schools. Final board result marks of their 5198 students were collected to see the affects of teaching strategies.

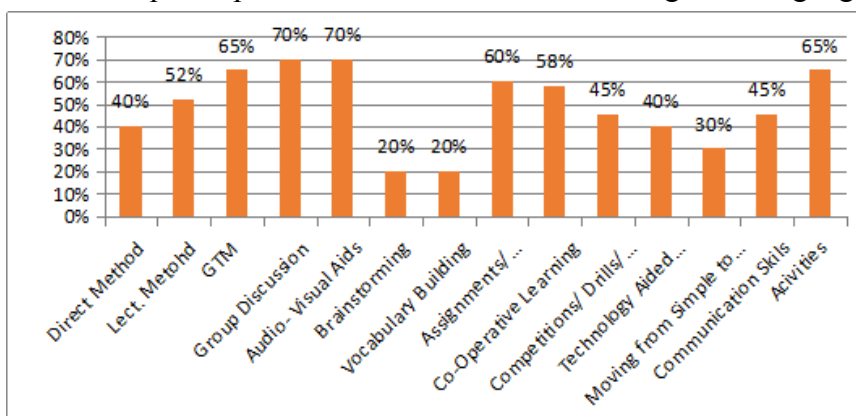


### Data Analysis

**Q.No.1** What are the teaching strategies that are used by the teachers to enhance the ESL students' achievement in learning second language?

Data analysis shows that following English language teaching strategies are used by the teachers. These strategies are shown in the following graph with percentage of usage.

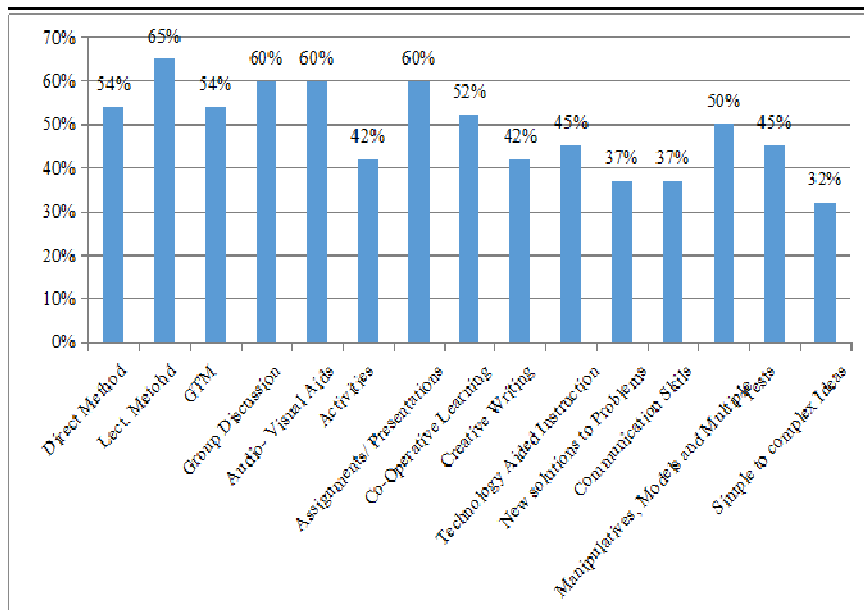
Graph represents the 14 different English language



**Graph. 1 Teaching Strategies used by the Female Teachers**

teaching strategies are used by the female teachers. These strategies include direct method (40%) lecturer method (52 %), GTM (65 %), group discussion (70%), Audio-visual aids (70%), brain storming (20%), vocabulary building (20%), assignment/ presentations (60%), cooperative learning (58%), competitions/ drills/tests (45%), technology aided instruction (40 %), moving from simple to complex ideas (30 %), Communication skills (45 %) and activities (65%). It is worth mentioning that except GTM all teaching strategies belong to modern teaching methodologies.

The graph 2: shown above presents ELT strategies used by the male teachers. 54% of the teachers were using direct method to teach English language to the students. 65% were using lecture method, 54% GTM, 60% of the teachers reported using group discussion and AV aids; 42% of the teachers reported that they conduct different activities; 60% of the male teachers also reported making use of assignments and presentations in the class; 52% mentioned co-operative learning while 42% of the teachers reported encouraging their students for creative writing; 45% of the teachers took help of technology in their instructions. Some of the teachers



**Graph. 2 Teaching Strategies used by the Male Teachers**

i.e. 37% reported new ways and solutions to approach students' problems. 37 % of the teachers like to involve their students in communication skills by motivating them. Half of the male teachers, i.e. 50% reported making use of different manipulative, model representations. 45% of the teachers reported taking tests while 32% mentioned that they try to move from simple to complex ideas.

#### ***Reasons To Consider These Different Strategies Beneficial For ESL Students' Achievement***

Graphs represent that both male and female teachers are making use of different teaching strategies to ensure and increase confidence and interest among learners during the teaching of ESL. By using these methods they make learning process motivating, interesting, easy and communicative. Involving students in different activities enhance their performance in class and board exams as well. Technology is playing a major role in the teaching and learning of English language so our teachers also make use of it in their teaching to positively affect students' learning process.

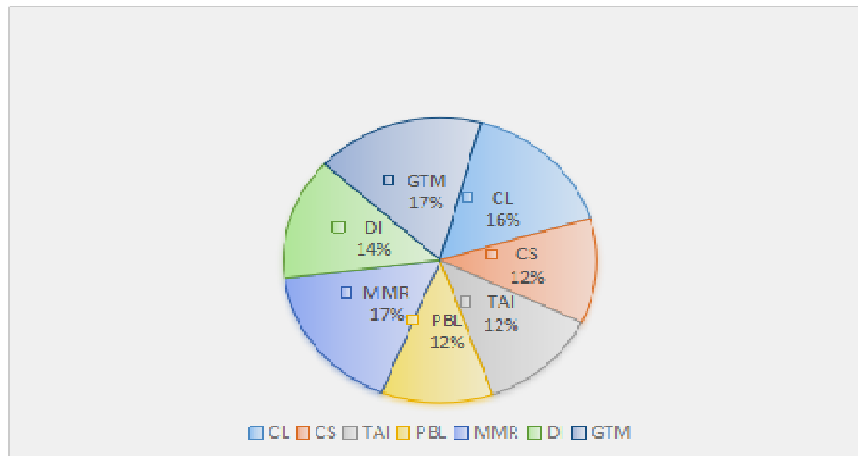
Teachers do not only consult and make use of technology in the form of computer & internet during instructions but they also involve their students and encourage them to incorporate it for their learning purpose. They try to boost the confidence of the

students by introducing lifelike situations and activities. By this strategy they prepare the students to face the real world and express their ideas, thinking and emotions to the entire world.

Although graph no 1 & 2 present the teaching strategies employed by the teachers during instructions, according to the responses of open-ended items, but in the graph no 3 researcher has merged the related items to their respective teaching strategy and found a new strategy with the six teaching strategies already mentioned. The above pie graph clearly represents that teachers also make use of traditional teaching strategies along with modern ones as is presented in the above graph that 17% of the teachers are employing grammar translation method during the teaching process. Teachers are employing GTM 17%; MMR 17%; CL 16%; DI 14%; PBL, CS & TAI 12% each for making the teaching learning process successful and help their students achieve better marks in the subject of English.

**Q. No. 2** What is the overall effect of different ELT strategies for the language achievement of the learners?

To answer the research question given above, an overall analysis of the questionnaire and students' result marks was carried



**Graph 3 Pie Chart of the Teaching Strategies Used  
(According to Questionnaire's Open-Ended Items)**

out using SPSS

The results clearly represent that overall implication of different ELT strategies by the teachers is highly significant and positively influences the English language achievement of their

students. To find out the truth about the extent and manner in

**Table 1. Co-relation Co efficient and Regression Analysis between Students' Achievement and Other Teaching Strategies**

Predictors	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	P-Value
CL	.953	.909	2.96086	1062.484	.000
CS	.767	.588	6.28144	152.844	.000
TAI	.607	.368	7.77990	62.388	.000
PBL	.494	.244	8.51185	34.509	.000
MMR	.444	.197	8.76998	26.301	.000
DI	.699	.489	6.99766	102.375	.000
GTM	.444	.197	8.76998	26.301	.000

which the frequencies of the usage of the teaching strategies can explain the teachers' students' mean English marks in the board examinations a multiple regression analysis was carried out. It also explained the collective as well as individual effects of different teaching strategies and mean marks. Table No. 2 presents the outcomes of the Multiple Regression Analysis.

In the table the extent of association between the variables (i.e. dependent and independent) has been determined by the multiple R and R<sup>2</sup> while magnitude of the B value i.e. Beta Weight explains the manner of variation. Beta weight is actually the

**Table 2. Multiple Regression Table**

Variable	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Error of the Estimate	Adj. R	B	b	T	P -Value
CL	.953	.909	2.96086	.908	.953	8.425	32.596	.000
CS	.767	.588	6.28144	.584	.767	17.585	12.363	.000
TAI	.607	.368	7.77990	.638	.607	25.193	7.899	.000
PBL	.494	.244	8.51185	.237	.494	29.678	5.874	.000
MMR	.444	.197	8.76998	.190	.444	29.177	5.128	.000
DI	.699	.489	6.99766	.484	.699	18.550	0.118	.000
GTM	.444	.197	8.76998	.190	.444	9.177	.128	.000

- Independent Variable: Teaching strategies
- Dependent Variable: Students' Marks in the subject of English

change in the dependent variable for each unit change in the independent variable. It is characterized as the standard regression co efficient. The value of  $R^2$  i.e. 0.909 signifies that group of independent variables have shared more than 90% variation of dependent variables with P-Value of 0.000 i.e. highly significant value.

**Q No.3** How do teachers' gender affects their students'/ ESL learners' achievement?

To answer the research question given above, independent Samples Test was done between students' marks of male and female teachers. First average marks obtained by the Students of Male & Female Teachers are given in the table no 3

Average marks obtained by the students instructed by 52 male teachers is 38.41 with standard deviation 10.94 while the average marks obtained by the students instructed by 57 female

<b>Table 3. Average marks obtained by the Students of Male &amp; Female Teachers</b>					
<b>Gender</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Std. Error Mean</b>
Marks	Male	52	38.4069	10.94161	1.51733
	Female	57	43.1254	7.95236	1.05332

teachers is 43.13 with standard deviation 7.95. The difference between two average marks is of 4.72.

Applying independent sample t-test and assuming unequal variances in the marks of two groups as indicated by the table where value of F-statistic is 7.952 with P-Value .006, the difference

<b>Table 4. Independent Samples Test between Students' Marks of Male and Female Teachers</b>						
	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t- test for Equality of Means			
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean Differences
Marks Equal Variances assumed	7.925	.006	-2.591	107	.011	-4.71852
Equal Variances not Assumed			-2.555	92.446	.012	-4.71852

between the marks of two groups is significant as shown in the table, where the value of t - statistics is -2.555 with d.f 92.446 , and P-Value .012 which is less than level of significance i.e. 5% or .05.

### **Findings**

This study finds that teachers are practicing teaching strategies of co-operative learning; communication and study skills; technology aided instruction; problem based learning; manipulatives, models and multiple representations and direct instructions. Data analysis shows that teachers have used co-operative learning strategy 18%; communication and study skills 17%, technology aided instruction 18%; problem based learning 17%; manipulatives, models and multiple representations 10% and direct instruction strategy 20%. These strategies positively affect the achievement of students in the second language learning process thus proving the relationship between English language teaching strategies used by the ESL teachers and learners' achievement. This achievement difference is obvious from the data analysis that students of the female teachers, who make use of these teaching strategies more than the male teacher, remain successful in achieving more marks.

It also finds that Co-operative learning strategy has a significant effect in the achievement of students. This teaching strategy, as obvious from the data, creates a difference of approximately 9 marks in the achievement of the students. By allowing the students to be involved in the co-operative learning by working with their peers in groups; sharing and discussing their language related problems; involving them in the process of determining the classroom goals and objectives and rewarding their performance in the co-operative setting make the students interested, attracted, motivated and actively involved in the ESL learning process.

Similar is the effect of using communication skills strategy on the achievement of students. This teaching strategy like co-operative learning creates a difference of approximately 9 marks in the achievement of the students. Teacher's encouragement to use English language in the classroom to discuss, share their thoughts orally or in writing, to encourage ask questions when they have misunderstandings or some difficulty, learning and making use of new vocabulary items and grammatical structures, and making oral presentations or written assignments in English proves

beneficial for them and makes possible positive learning in an interactive environment.

Strategies of technology aided instruction and manipulative, model and multiple representations affect positively the achievement of students. Teachers are now following and using the recent trends and technology for teaching English language. They also make use of manipulative, model and representation method that also influences the ESL students' performance in a positive way. These teaching strategies, as evident through data results, create a difference of approximately 12 marks in the achievement of the students. There is a significant effect observed on the achievement of students of using problem based learning. They not only feel involved in the learning process but also understand and pay attention to the learning outcomes. Likewise, the strategy of problem based learning creates a difference of approximately 14 marks in the achievement of the students.

Current research study also reveals a significant effect in the achievement of ESL students of using direct instruction strategy. Providing feedback, lectures, moving from simple to complex ideas, brainstorming, encouraging discussion with the teacher and peers, developing a habit to work not only in groups but independently as well, tests both planned and surprise, activities and presentations cast a positive effect and prove beneficial for the learners. And the students who are taught by using this teaching strategy achieve around 9 marks more than the mother students.

As evident from the data analysis, there is a significant overall effect of different ELT strategies on ESL students' English language achievement. They get advantage of these teaching strategies and perform better in the English language learning process which is evident through their performance in the results of board examinations.

This study finds a difference in the performance of the male and female teachers. Female teachers tend to make use of different teaching strategies frequently and as a result their students perform better and achieve 6-10% marks more than the students of male teachers who employ these less often.

### **Conclusion**

The findings of the study manifest that teachers are using different modern teaching strategies i.e. co-operative learning;

communication and study skills; technology aided instruction; problem based learning; manipulatives, models and multiple representations and direct instructions along with traditional one i.e. GTM. Results show that the usage of modern teaching methodologies is higher and positively influences the students' achievement thus it proves that there is a co-relation between students' achievement and teaching strategies used by the ESL teachers. Students get benefit from these strategies and perform better in the English language learning process which is obvious from their board exam result. The results also reveal that students instructed by the female teachers show better performance than the students instructed by the male teachers.

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