



Classroom Implementation of National Curriculum, through English Textbook at High School in Pakistan

Rahat Bashir, University of Central Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan, rahat.bashir1@gmail.com

Musarat Yasmin, University of Gujrat, Hafiz Hayat Campus, Gujrat, Pakistan, musaratalvi@hotmail.com

Sumera Shan Ahmad, University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Pakistan, sumera.ahmad@umt.edu.pk

ABSTRACT- The study aims to inspect the content of the 9th grade English book of Punjab Textbook Board, and to examine its implementation in relation to the benchmarks and objectives set by the national Curriculum of Punjab. The ultimate target is to observe the inculcation of the set targets of the national curriculum through a thoroughly designed syllabus. The objectives of this research are to critically evaluate the book, culturally, linguistically, pedagogically, contextually, and grammatically, and secondly to seek out the actual implementation of the designed activities in the classrooms, according to the benchmarks, standards and competencies provided by the national curriculum. For this purpose, the data was collected through 500 students of Punjab, located in different cities, irrespective of their genders through random sampling. The students were from the government and semi-government schools. A carefully designed questionnaire was distributed to assemble the results. Further, the opinion of 5 subject specialists was taken into an account to testify the validity and appropriacy of the textbook content of the book. The results concluded that the books contain all features of developing language skills, but has ignored listening skills altogether. Moreover, the content is not diverse in nature, and student reading abilities are not polished and proficient. They are trained for cramping the answers of the questions and are not made expert in developing writing skills. Thirdly, the speaking activities, which are the part of the syllabus and curriculum are not utilized at all in the classes, owing to the fact that they are not the part of the Punjab board exams. There is a dire need to implement all the activities in the classroom, along with the change in the examination system, which is quite outdated and is not appropriate for the development of all four skills.

Keywords: Benchmarks' implementation, Education, Text book evaluation, National curriculum, Teaching strategies, Quality education, Engineering education

I. INTRODUCTION

Text plays a vital role in teaching and learning philosophy. Textbook is helpful and is an independent source of learning for a learner. Moreover, the textbook provides a uniformed syllabus to all the students of one grade (Lodhi, Farman, & Saleem, 2019). Sometimes, it becomes difficult for a student to get the maximum benefit from the textbook, autonomously, and consequently the learner is unable to perform and meet the benchmarks set by the curriculum (Lathif, 2015). The purpose of this study is to closely evaluate the content and activities of Pakistani English Textbook of 9th class, in relation to the benchmarks given in National Curriculum of Pakistan 2006, for the 9th class, against which the chosen textbook has been designed and students are evaluated in their matriculation examination. The first objective of the study is to critically evaluate the book, culturally, linguistically, pedagogically, contextually, and grammatically. The second objective is to seek out the actual implementation of the designed activities in the classrooms, according to the benchmarks, standards and competencies provided by the national curriculum and to correlate the learning outcomes of the learners with the learning outcomes of Punjab Textbook curriculum. This study will answer why the learners are unable to perform and show the relevant skills, in spite of the fact that the activities are well designed purposefully. In Pakistani academic system, supplementary material, school libraries, audio-video aids are not available in most of the cases, in almost all of the subjects and there is a dire need to review the textbooks to see the pitfalls of the material to refine it further (Govt. of Pakistan, 2007). And this is one of the reason why a huge bulk of learners are dependent on the textbooks only, and the Green Paper on the Textbook and Learning Materials of Ministry of Education Pakistan also admits that, the textbook is the only available learning material in most of the schools. Furthermore, the environment of many of the private and government institute is not favorable for the active learning (National Education Policy Review Team, 2006). Kausar, Mushtaq & Badshah (2016) highlighted the shortcomings of English at intermediate level in terms of its organization, planning and subject matter. Shah, Hassan & Iqbal (2015), stresses the need of redesigning the course book of English of 6 and 7th grades, as they are not linguistically appropriate but also ideologically inadequate. Another evaluation was done on English textbook of 9th class, where it was pointed out that textbooks have failed to maintain the balance in between the four skills of English and an immediate action was required to update the material to value the variety of learners (Naseem, Shah & Tabassum, 2015). Lodhi,

Farman, & Saleem (2019) stresses the need of including interesting and skill oriented materials. The previous literature is about the types of activities, equal division of skills and overall planning of the textbook. None of the research has been carried out to see the actual implementation of national curriculum objectives through the course book of English. This study will dig out if the national curriculum has been followed in its true sense through its real life application in the classroom or it is just refrained to the textbooks pages.

A. RATIONALE AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

It is quite tempting to select the textbook "Oxford Progressive English by Rachel Redford" (which is especially designed for O Level candidates for whom English is a second language) for evaluation, because of its extremely rich and user friendly content, colorful and catchy presentation, examination watch features, and thematically linked authentic and stimulating texts from a range of genres (including extracts from media and information articles, travel writing, memoirs, fiction, and poetry) from countries as varied as Cuba, Eastern Russia, Mozambique, Britain and Pakistan, but the dominant thought was that it was a textbook used by a very limited fraction of Pakistani students so its appropriateness or inappropriateness is not going to effect the whole strata of Pakistani students. This thought leads the researcher to the selection of a textbook prepared by Punjab Textbook Board for grade 9 and the following reasons consolidated this selection:

- Firstly, this is the textbook which is taught to all the students, irrespective of public or private sector, who are going to appear in Punjab Board's
- Secondly, this book is designed by an institution which is officially here in Pakistan, to determine and design syllabi in accordance with national curricula.
- Thirdly, 9th grade is a grade which serves as a bridge between lower and higher classes (between school and college), so, the comprehension of concepts taught in higher classes is crucially dependent on the language skills developed at this level.
- Fourthly, it is vitally necessary to explore why our teachers and students fail to produce desired language skills/results after spending their time, energies and efforts in classes. Is this linguistic incompetence a result of poor language syllabi?
- Finally, a child belonging to a rich family can afford to study in best institutions with opportunities of exposure to best textbooks but what kind of textbooks are there for the children of commoners?

B. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Below are the objectives of this study, which are investigated:

- To critically evaluate the book, culturally, linguistically, pedagogically, contextually, and grammatically.
- To seek out the actual implementation of the designed activities in the classrooms, according to the benchmarks, standards and competencies provided by the national curriculum.

C. METHODOLOGY

A total of five government and semi-government schools were selected for this study from Lahore, Kasur, Sheikhpura, Gujranwala, Hafizabad, through cluster sampling. A sample of 500 students (males and females) was selected randomly. From each city a hundred of students (students of matriculation) were selected for the filling up of questionnaire, with an equal ratio of male and female. It was make sure that school does not offer A and O levels. So, that the main focus of the schools was to prepare their students for board exams. A simple questionnaire was designed by following the benchmarks, given in the National Curriculum of 9th class. The questionnaire was pilot tested in a local academy of Lahore and few lexical amendments were made to make it more student friendly and easier. Moreover, it was translated in Urdu, where the researcher couldn't go herself to get the questionnaires filled up. In most of the cases the questionnaires were filled up in the presence of the researcher and he herself explained the difficulties where the students got stuck. Secondly, five of the teachers from the same schools were selected, who had been teaching matriculation system and English as a subject for more than five years for the overall evaluation of the book. A checklist was given to them, which was the mixture of many of the checklists used by different researchers. It was adapted for the convenience and for the maximum insight of the book. A discussion was generated through the checklist, which become the part of the critique of the book for the investigation of its content, layout, organization, activities, linguistic skills, context, teaching methodology and layout. Checklist is attached herewith.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. RECENT RESEARCH ON PAKISTANI TEXTBOOK

Textbooks occupy a significant place in teaching and learning process. Its importance cannot be ignored, as both teachers and students get their benefits for setting their goals. There is various research on different aspects of textbook at different levels. Lodhi (2019) evaluated Punjab Textbook of Pakistan at intermediate level and found that Mr. Chips was not of students' interest and it has been considered a burden. Moreover, the text itself did not display enough linguistic skills and the teachers did not use interesting activities to develop students' interest in learning English. Similarly, in 2017, Gulzar conducted a research in Multan division for the evaluation of English textbook from the teachers' perspective and it was concluded that the teachers were overall satisfied with the content, material and activities. Textbook was sufficient enough in developing critical thinking skills, but the images needed to be improved. In the continuum, one very significant research concluded its result that needs analysis of the students was totally in contradiction with the curriculum and designed activities in the books. The students required speaking skills and the books attention was on grammar. This leads to the demotivation of students and their interest in English (Shah, Hassan & Iqbal, 2015). All these researches are in depth and have given deep insight into the textbook data, but none of the research has been carried out in Pakistan from the students' perspective and talks about if all the said tasks given in the books are actually applied in the class English classes and to what extent National Curriculum benchmarks are achieved through the use of the designed books.

Hutchinson and Waters (2004) say that evaluation is "A matter of judging the fitness of something for a particular purpose". Harmer (2001, p. 301) gives the definition of course book evaluation as it is a kind of a judgment about the performance of a book.

B. TEXTBOOK EVALUATION

Riazi (2003) says that course book evaluation is important to choose textbook for a new language program. It highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the textbooks so that they can be updated. In fact, the quality of learning-teaching procedure depends on the selection of language teaching materials. Among the materials which are used in a language classroom, the course book plays a vital part in learners' success or failure. So, considerable attention should be given to examine such kind of material based on valid and reliable tools. Different methods are used to conduct course book evaluation.

C. DIFFERENT METHODS TO EVALUATE TEXTBOOK

Ur (1996) suggested some criteria to assess the English language textbooks. These criteria consist of many features such as to what extent the objectives of the syllabus and real life uses of language and pronunciation have been achieved. It also focused on the suitability and variety of the topics, tasks, physical layout and instructions. The features were also about the organization and gradation of the content. They included lexical information and grammatical structures and explanation. The checklist considered the practice and fluency practice in listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

Peacock (1997) proposed a checklist which is developed to examine the English as a Foreign Language textbooks up to the intermediate level. The purpose of the checklist is to facilitate as much detailed investigation as is possible to be done in the time usually specified for textbook analysis by English as Foreign Language teachers. His checklist consists of eight components of general impression. They are about the quality and impression of the book. They deal with the suitability and motivation of the learners. They consider the cultural aspects, teaching methodologies, students' book and additional material provided with the textbooks.

Daneshfar and Abdollahi (2018) undertook the task to evaluate a pre-English book to the students of Iran, which is taught to the students as a compulsory course to gear-up their English for their further chosen programs. The book was assessed by teachers and students in relation to the book content, skills, activities, planning and layout. The purpose was to check and assess the teachers and students' attitudes and behavior towards the book. It was found that teachers were moderately satisfied with the content and the students were satisfied with everything, except the fact the listening skills were highly ignored. It was evaluated by using the questionnaire developed by Litz (2005). Ayun & Indrawati analyzed the tasks presented in Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas X Semester I. This book was used by the tenth graders and it covered all the four skills of English and its content was evaluated by using Likert-type scale. Results indicated that it was in match with objectives set by the Indonesian Curriculum 2013, and the skills, along with the activities were periodically distributed and spread. And it is suitable for the prescribed grade. However, it was suggested that the book lacked the appropriate listening material and few of the activities were not well connected, for which the teacher needed to design self-made material to bridge the gap.

D. RESEARCH GAP

Above mentioned all literature is about the evaluation of textbooks only. None of the research to the best of my knowledge has been conducted so far on the textbook of 9th class to evaluate the content and organization of the book in relation to the objectives set by the National Curriculum. It is felt that designing of the book is important and significant, but it lost its substantial worth if it is not implemented properly and the desired learning outcomes are not produced and observed. So, this study will bridge this gap and will analyze the units, exercises and activities extensively.

III. DATA REPRESENTATION

This section represents the data, collected through questionnaires filled by the students of 9th class. The questionnaire was designed to see the actual implementation and learning outcomes of the designed curriculum in relation to the national Curriculum of Pakistan 2006, according to which students are able to do all the tasks which are shown in the questionnaire.

The table 1 shown below is the calculation of the responses made by the respondents of 9th class, about the skills that they developed through the content provided by their recommended book of Punjab Text Book Board. It is reminded again here that this study is not only evaluating the content of the book, but the actual implementation of those activities, which are responsible to develop certain skills in the students, that are mentioned in the National Curriculum of 2006.

Statement numbers 1 to 5 are to gauge the reading and critical thinking skills. 6 to 8 statements are to measure writing skills. Next four statements (9,10,11,12) are to check the integration of speaking skills in the classroom, and the last seven statements (13-19) are about grammar skills. Each of the response is calculated and its percentage is written, along with the mean, to get to know the overall situation.

TABLE 1
QUESTIONNAIRE AND THE RESPONSES

Statements	Yes	No	Sometime
You can find the topic sentence and supporting sentences in the paragraphs of your English book.	52.30	26.96	20.74
You scan and skim before reading the English lesson.	15.53	84.47	
You yourself write the summary of the lesson/poem.	16.23	70.27	13.5
You go to the library to find out additional information regarding English.	22.51	55.75	21.77
You relate stories with your daily lives in class discussions	8.5	79.23	12.27
You write paragraph/essays with clear topic sentences.	31.72	68.28	
You write essays and stories on your own or memorize from teachers' notes/guide books.	13.77(on my own)	86.23(notes)	
You can review the stories; plot, character and setting.	11.42	88.58	
You do different speaking activities in English class after every lesson.	7.53	80.44	12.03
You can take the interview of your friend / neighbor in English.	6.89	93.11	
You can share your opinion on the topics orally	31.29	45.54	23.17
You do pronunciation activities in the English class.	6.39	88.38	5.23
You can find out parts of speech in sentence.	80.51	2.10	17.39
You can change past tense into future.	85.71	2.75	11.54
You can change direct narration of all types into indirect narration	40.25	39.50	20.19
You can make adjectives from nouns and verbs.	80.36	1.37	18.27
You can punctuate the sentences.	57.43	12.31	30.26
You can use active voice and passive voice correctly.	43.68	19.13	37.19
You can use and write all clauses and phrases in your sentences orally and in writing	23.88	60.34	15.78

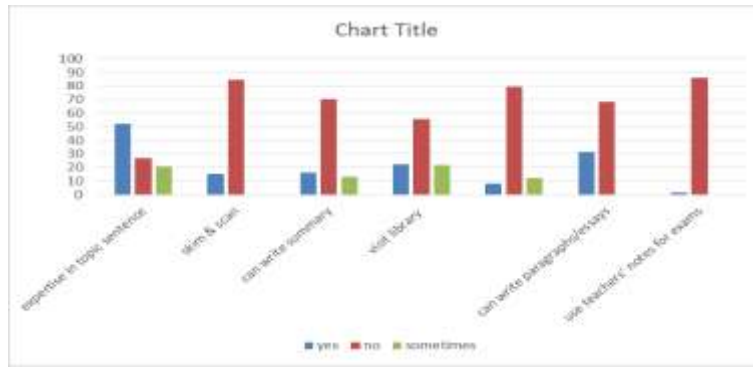


FIGURE 1. Graph of Reading Skills and Critical Thinking

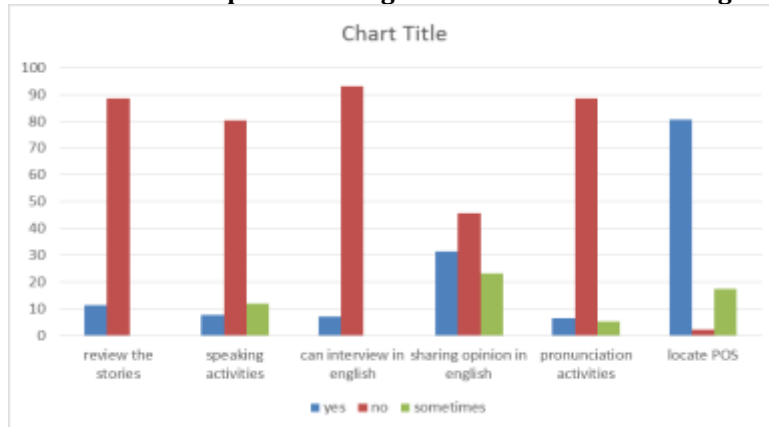


FIGURE 2. Graph of Writing and Speaking Skills

It is clearly evident from the data representation in figure 1 that students reading skills are not properly taken care of. For example, only the half of the students think that they can find the topic sentence and supporting statements (52.3%). Furthermore, they are not trained at all for skimming and scanning (84.47% don't do) and they cannot write the summary on their own. Only a very small number of percentage is skilled (16.23%). They don't go to the library for additional information for improving their critical thinking skill. 55.72% have never been to the library. Surprisingly, they don't do discussion and don't relate the stories with their daily life experiences, as it is one of the basic activity of oral communication, almost in all the lessons of Punjab Textbook. Only 8.5% affirmed, and it's the minimal amount. They cannot write proper paragraphs with topic sentence and supporting statements and they are dependent on guides and teachers' notes for the preparation of exams and answering the questions in written form.

The graph in figure 2 displays their writing skills and how they are empowered by speaking skills. They can't write reviews; 11.42% negated and they cannot take someone's interview in English, which is one of the basic component and benchmark of national curriculum, nor they can give opinion in English on any topic, neither any kind of pronunciation activity is carried out in the class, which is also one of the key constituent of national curriculum objectives.

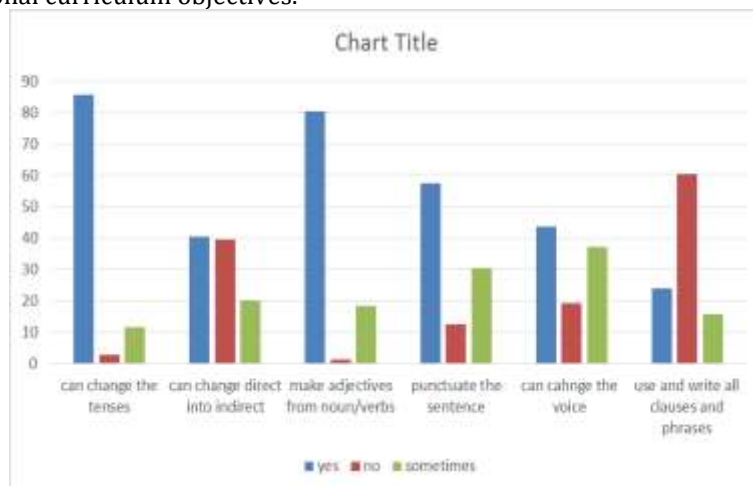


FIGURE 3. Graph of Grammar

TABLE 2
TOTAL NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES IN THE 9TH CLASS TEXTBOOK

Name of Activity	No. of Activity	Total Activities	Percentage
Vocabulary	39	228	17.11
Speaking	36	228	15.79
Reading	35	228	15.35
Writing	41	228	17.98
Grammar	72	228	31.58
Pronunciation	05	228	2.19

The graph in figure 3 is the representation of grammar activities, conducted in the class. The results show that much effort is put in grammar section, as in most of the cases, 60% students are agreed that grammar activities are held in the classes and they feel confident in them. Only in the use of clauses and phrases they have shown reluctance.

IV. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The above data explicitly explains that existence of activities in the textbook does not guarantee the real application of the them in the classroom setting. The textbook itself has been evaluated and discussed in the later part of this discussion. In the first part, it has been evaluated that to what extent national curriculum objectives are achieved through the use of drafted activities. As it has been mentioned in the textbook of 9th also that the has been designed and tailored against the benchmarks, expectations and objectives set by national curriculum of Pakistan 2006. Few of the benchmarks were chosen, which were considered basic and easy and were mentioned in the first step of national curriculum. Results show that students reading skills are below average. They are not habitual of skimming and scanning and they seldom visit library for further reading. Only half of them can simply locate the topic sentence and supporting sentence. This clearly tells the whole story of reading process and reading standard. The question arises that why these students are not made proficient in reading, in spite of the fact that the syllabus is given and the activities are drafted for the enhancement of the skill. The answer lies in the matriculation system of evaluation. And most significantly, the academic question which are given in the exams. The extra activities of reading are not worth important for the teachers, nor for the students, because those thinking questions and critical interrogations are never made part of the exams. Since the main aim is to score high, so the rest of the activities are considered useless and insignificant and teachers do not do them in the class. Secondly, the Punjab board does not give different questions from the lessons, rather the questions are set and fixed. This is why students memorize and cramp the answers of the questions from the guide books or from the teachers' notes and never take the pains of writing the answers on their own. Moreover, the questions are in textbook are of lower thinking level and do not trigger and challenge higher order thinking skills of Blooms Taxonomy. This is one of the reason that students are not critical and good thinker. Reading is one of the fundamental unit of other cognitive skills. It will be no surprise to say that other skills, either linguistic or cognitive skills are directly or indirectly related to the development of reading skills. A good reading exposure and skillfully driven reading habit constitute a healthy and critical mind (Melby-Lervåg, Redick, & Hulme, 2016). The text does not contain any cultural and traditional element of Pakistan, nor does it cover any socio, economic and psychological aspect of nation. For example, there isn't any chapter on tolerance, empathy, honesty, diversity, justice and global issues etc. There are 35 activities of reading in the book, which makes the total of 15.35%. Reading activities are of different types. For instance, comprehension, matching the column, rearranging, paraphrasing, summarizing, but the 43% of the activities are of comprehension and they are of lower level, which is quite suspicious, alarming and serious issue, as it is hampering students' abilities to learn and generate new ideas, and they are being trained for memory testing and route learning.

Punjab textbook book of class has good number of speaking activities. 40 activities are specifically specified for the improvement of speaking skills, which include, interviewing, giving opinion, phonetic transcription, stress, dialogue, role-play and presentation. But the data says, hardly any activity related to speaking skills happens in the class. The question is why the teachers are ignorant towards the speaking skills and are not eager to enhance speaking skills. Apart from teachers own poor communication skills. The major factor is Punjab board examination system. Students are never evaluated on their speaking skills. No marks are allocated for testing speaking skills in the papers. Consequently, one very important is totally callously overlooked, which is quite substantial in their future life. Cotter (2007) argues that as students learn to use English in the classroom setting, they should also be involved in learning about how language works. They should be asked to reflect on various aspects of language, to develop a common language for talking about

language, and to use this knowledge to evaluate texts critically in terms of effectiveness, meaning and accuracy. Someone who speaks well, would similarly understand when to use different grammar points. Students who are weakly equipped with oral communication skills, face difficulties in the later part of their lives and suffer from low level of confidence, in professional life also.

The only one aspect, where students feel their selves self-reliant and confident is the grammar part. There are 72 activities of grammar in 9th class book, which includes, all parts of speech, all clauses and phrases, punctuation, tenses, conditional sentences, active voice & passive voice, direct indirect narration, transitional devices and types of sentences. Besides huge number of grammar activities and students' confidence in handling grammar section, one major reason is the inclusion of grammar activities in the matriculation board exams. Student feel pressurized to learn grammar, to sore high. The point to notice is that these students learn and write grammar in isolation and do not use in context. This is the reason; they can't write even the small paragraph on their own. Grammar has been taught and best practiced through the three Ps- present, practice, produce|| (Larsen-Freeman, 2009, p.523), but Long and Doughty, criticized the three Ps model that students fail to apply their knowledge of grammar when they are communicating. Students know the grammar- at least, they know the rules explicitly- but they fail to apply them in communication. This problem arises that students cannot handle the knowledge practically, when it's not made functional. Language is context sensitive and students must know how to apply the rules in a written or oral communication. Teaching without context makes the knowledge of grammar senseless and useless (Long & Doughty, 2009, p. 523).

There are 41 activities related to writing skills, which are about essay writing, summarizing, book reviewing, email writing, letter writing, paragraph writing and expository exposition. All these activities are not practiced in the class, because the teachers provide them with the notes and they don't take pains in checking individual writing. As the ultimate goal is not writing, but to attempt the set pet questions answers in the exams. So the answers are provided and are learnt by the, this totally marred the creative writing skills of the students. In addition, the questions are of the lowest level Blooms Taxonomy and do not meet the higher order thinking skills.

The given checklist, rates the textbook in between below average, poor and average, out of the four option of poor, below average, average, above average and excellent. There are many physical and psychological factors which hinder it from falling in the categories of above average or excellent. For example, the elements of students' interest, individual differences, prior knowledge, available resources and psychological presentation of material for better learning and retention appear to be not properly kept in mind while designing the material. It appears as if the authors introduced whatever they thought important for students from their point of view but ignored the educational techniques required to ensure the maximum utility of the contents. There is much room for improvement in this book, which are discussed in detail below.

This book is practically teacher-centered and teacher-dependent. It does not make students independent-learners and they have to depend on teachers for most of the part. Students fail to complete the tasks on their own and if they do on their own, they fail to check whether they have done the job correctly or incorrectly unless told by teachers, as the book does not provide much help in this regard. For example, Activity E on page 67 which gives a list of 8 words and asks students for providing their denotative meanings and their positive and negative connotations. Though the first one is done for providing sample but even then, most of the students are not able to do it without the help of teacher; firstly, because our students at this level have limited L2 lexicons and secondly students are mostly not well familiar with different shades of meanings of a word. Moreover, 3 words out of the 7 are not there in the concerned text or any previous lesson. This will further harm their self-confidence. This situation would be totally perplexing for students belonging to rural areas or to less educated families for they would not be able to get any help from their environment. They may develop even psychological barriers in their minds when they find themselves helpless in such situations.

One can notice even conceptual mistakes, for example, on P.84 words 'Whose' and 'Woods' are given as one of the examples of Alliteration, which is totally misleading as the initial sounds of these words are totally different despite having the same letters! (copy attached)

Too much vocabulary load is given to the students and no efforts or strategies for retention of new words are used. Hardly, we can see a newly introduced word in any subsequent lesson.

Sometimes certain things are included in the objectives or learning outcomes of a unit but the relevant unit's content and its activities contain nothing relevant to that objective the learning outcome of 'discussing the qualities of a good orator' in unit 6 (p.62).

The lines of texts are not numbered, so there are no clues in exercises where to locate certain words/phrases/information for contextual information in the text. The funny, rather grave, thing is that the only two places where it has been tried to provide clues for location of relevant information, provide wrong clues; for example: [p.129 {C}] all the four line numbers given as clues for the four words are wrong.

(Evidence: the word 'emphasize' is in line---3, not in line--- 2,

the word 'appreciative' is in line---12, not in line---10,
the word 'lush' is in line---55, not in line---43'
the word 'pageant' is in line ---57, not in line---21).

The second place is [P.116 {A}] which asks for providing synonyms for the selected words, the paragraph numbers are provided for reference, but the word 'rapid' with the clue of 'Para 3', is not there in para 3, not even in the whole lesson; anyhow, its synonym mushroom is there. The thing which makes it worse is that it harms the authenticity and credibility of the book in students' minds. They easily come to the conclusion that proper care has not been taken in the preparation of the book and may have doubts about the reliability of the contents also.

There are also big gaps between students' prior knowledge and tasks to do. For example, there is a grammar activity of 'Direct and Indirect Narration' on page 99, which simply defines direct speech in two lines and gives three examples; then, without explaining or even defining what indirect speech is, three model sentences for indirect speech are given and on the basis of this meagre information students are asked to recapitulate their previous knowledge about narration and tell the rules for changing direct statements, interrogative sentences, and imperative sentences into indirect speech. They are further required to rewrite the 3rd para of the unit into indirect speech and change the narration of five sentences of different types (tasks B, C, D). It should be kept in mind that there is no information or activity regarding the concept of 'Narration' in 8th grade's book of English by Punjab Textbook Board.

When students have not studied the concept of narration in previous grades or earlier units of this book and this book is still working on basic types of tenses how can they be demanded to do the above-mentioned tasks all of a sudden? Even, if teacher is meant to explain the relevant concepts what about students' psychological selves? What about their confidence and security levels? Had it not been better to introduce the concept and rules in bits over a number of units instead of asking for all the rules and niceties at a single point in a unit?

Some types of tasks appear to be really utopian in comparison with Pakistan's educational scenario; for example; asking students to consult a thesaurus to find out or provide certain number of the synonyms of certain words or asking teachers to use case and shelf labels, and reference section in library to make students understand kinds of catalogue cards i.e. author card, title card, subject card. And Asking teachers to arrange students' visit to a Recycling Plant.

Using a thesaurus is not a common phenomenon in Pakistan. Even many of the Pakistani teachers, especially those in rural areas or those who got their degrees privately, would not be having any know-how about thesaurus use; the availability of thesaurus is another problem! One may suggest using thesaurus online to solve the availability issue but the ground reality is this that computer and internet facilities are also not available to a significantly large proportion of schools and students.

Similarly, most of the schools in Pakistan don't have even libraries so how much justified is it to ask teachers to use case and shelf labels, and reference section in library to make students understand kinds of catalogue cards i.e. author card, title card, subject card? Likewise, arranging visit to a Recycling Plant sounds good but would not be, mostly, practically possible.

There are no anticipation guides at the starts of units which may catch students' attention and guide them about the context of the text. Whereas, anticipation guide is a comprehension strategy that is used before reading to activate students' prior knowledge and build curiosity about a new topic. It may also provide background information about the particular text selection. (McKenna, M.C, 2002).

The texts do not familiarize students with the culture of target language speakers. Language style is bookish and needs to be made more natural and real. Lack of different genres and language styles limits students' exposure to the target language. This poor exposure contributes to poor competence and poor performance in further academic and professional life. There is a lack of interpretational questions and more focus is on retrieval of information. Thus, there is insufficient effort to develop higher order thinking skills among students. All the questions match with lower level thinking skills.

Out of context tasks cause poor morale and demotivation among students. The book extremely lacks fun element. Listening skills are totally ignored. there isn't any single activity or task present in the book. If we fail to develop students' listening skills in target language how can we expect them to communicate effectively in target language!

There seems to be an effort to contextualize tasks but the flaw which drastically harms the utility of this effort is that students are made to work on certain things or concepts in earlier units but the concepts' definition/explanation or supporting materials like what to do or how to do are presented in much later units. Order of presentation affects the utility of the information provided in the book. For instance, from the very first unit students are made to do writing tasks like para/essay writing, summarizing, paraphrasing etc. but a very good and helpful list of 'Transitional devices' is introduced in second last unit. Had it been introduced earlier students would have got great help from it in their writing tasks and done much practice in the utilization of these devices.

The textbook contains certain appreciative features also which are shared and discussed by the teachers through the checklist and discussion based on it. The textbook is cost effective and affordable. It does not comprise any culturally, religiously or politically offensive material. Pictures and illustrations are relevant and help students in predicting about the topic. Good linguistic expressions are selected for activities regarding oral communication skills which show syllabus designers' concern regarding the need for developing oral communication competence among students. (We see two different and contrasting practices here, on the one hand, the syllabus designers appear keen to address the issue of oral competence among students while on the other hand, oral activities are generally ignored by most of teachers as they know these are not going to be a part of board's exam. This professional dishonesty is quite unfortunate but it would be unfair if we do not appreciate the syllabus designers' effort in this regard.)

After every four units a review is given. We might be critical about the utility of review activities as they are mostly recalling and comprehension level activities but their role for making both the teachers and the students realize the need of monitoring their progress and effectiveness of teaching and learning should be appreciated. At least, it makes them think about their level of attainment. Definitions and examples used to explain grammatical concepts are mostly simple and easy (though the number of explanatory examples is quite insufficient but their clarity is a definite plus!) We see a conscious and consistent effort on behalf of the syllabus designers to develop dictionary skills among students by adding activities and tasks regarding pronunciation, intonation, synonyms, antonyms, etc. The range of vocabulary is extensive. Students are made familiar with the concepts of mind maps and flow charts. Sample rubrics at the end makes clear what to care about while writing for exams.

V. CONCLUSION

The above discussion leads to the conclusion that overall spread of the activities in the book is justified and reasonable, but there are major drawbacks in its implication and application. The one significant role is played by the pattern of Punjab Board exams. Punjab Board has set comprehension questions, already shared letter writing statements and typical topics of essays. So, the students don't write and the teachers don't insist on to develop their writing and reading skills, as the question paper is not based on creative skills, rather it demands rote learning. It is exclusive of speaking and listening skills and it is an evaluation of memory testing. In this way, students reading and writing skills are considerably ignored and so is their grammar, as they learn grammar in isolation and not in context. These all factor are congregated and led to the failure of the set targets of the national Curriculum of Punjab. This is ironically serious and a grave situation that books are designed to meet the set bench of national curriculum, but the contents are not properly consumed by the learners as it seems from the data that the Punjab matriculation system of English examination has different objectives than the curriculum.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Following suggestions are made for improvement in the light of my overall experience with this book:

Visual appeal is very important. It is the first factor which makes students read, or not to read, a book. So, special efforts should be made to make the book visually appealing. Fine quality paper, differently colored background pages, catchy and colorful pictures, elaborate and interesting illustrations and high quality printing should be used as tools for the job.

- The topics and contents should be of great appeal, catering to the psychological interests of potential target students with their distinct individual selves of varied backgrounds.
- Text's lines should be numbered so that it is easy and economical for students to interact with the text for specific purposes and with peculiar focuses e.g. looking for specific words, information and contextual clues, etc.
- In glossary, a third column which gives Urdu meaning of the lexical entities should be introduced. Since a reasonable portion of students' evaluation comprises 'translations' from English to Urdu or Urdu to English, so it is important to provide standard L1 equivalents to save the time and efforts.
- There is also another benefit, students would see the standard native language equivalents of the foreign words visually, it will help them in better understanding and retention of the words. Moreover, they will be able to relate or create associations in their minds.
- The new vocabulary should be adequately repeated throughout the text book so that they might become permanent part of students' working vocabulary and might be easily retrievable. Similar strategy should be adopted for grammar concepts.
- Syllables, primary/secondary stress and intonation patterns are phonetic concepts; so, if these concepts and their relative activities are to be there in the syllabus, the teachers should be provided with the

relevant helping materials like cassettes and CDs to enable them to perform the task satisfactorily. L2 syllabuses should be based on the vocabulary which is frequently used by the target language's native speakers in everyday conversations, rather big, sophisticated words which are occasionally or restrictedly used in real discourses. Only/mostly authentic texts of target language with appropriate levels of difficulty and complication should be introduced and worked upon in English language classes, it will help students see the use of target language more closely and will introduce them with true flavor of the language.

- Teaching a great number of words does not, necessarily, mean providing a good command over target language. Language learning requires not only knowing lexical items but also knowing their relationships and functions in a given string of utterances/words, in a particular setting. So focus should be on teaching interrelationships, functions and manipulations of words according to context and needs of the situations.
- Similarly, fewer grammatical terms and concepts with more explanatory examples and opportunities of practice should be included in the text book to make it more productive. Introducing a new, complex grammatical term or concept in every second line, paragraph or page is not a psychologically sane strategy, it might be repulsive and might even demotivate students.
- The situations used for language teaching should be as close to real life as possible. A student who is exposed only to a great deal of bookish variety of English finds it very difficult and even may fail to converse successfully in ordinary, common, everyday situations. (And this is a common phenomenon in our society.)
- Psychological factors should be kept in mind while designing, presenting or organizing the texts. Units should proceed from easy to less easy and familiar to less familiar concepts and topics.
- Teaching guides should tell teachers 'how to do' instead of 'what to do'
- Different styles of fonts should be used to differentiate or highlight points of supreme importance or texts of different kinds. It will help in shattering the monotony of presentation and would be appealing to readers.
- The designed tasks should be only one level higher than students' current level of language competence. This will help them to work more confidently and this confidence will lead them to further language exploring adventures, making language-learning an enjoyable experience.
- For improving listening skills, specially designed abstracts/ pieces of texts with well-defined objectives and well-constructed questions should be provided in teachers' guide which should revolve round the topics and concepts which students are studying in their language classes. Teachers can read these texts aloud for listening purposes and ask students for giving the gist, making logical guesses, predicting, skimming and locating specific information by discarding irrelevant details.
- Vocabulary, used for this purpose, should be within their prior range.
- Greater focus should be on the 'functions' of language rather than 'forms' so that students' flair and communicative competence for language might be positively developed.
- Evaluators like teachers, researchers as well as a sample group of students should be practically engaged in while-designing stage of textbook preparation to rate the quality and appropriateness of the material.
- Finally, it is suggested to present different genres and varied styles with multiple examples for presenting the same theme or concept and pay special attention to the elements of high level of human interest, contextualization, relatability, margins of language manipulation, detailed guidelines and provision of samples and checklists for the maximum facilitation of both the students and the teachers.

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