



**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Role of English Textbooks in Language Skills Development: A Case Study Of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

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**ABSTRACT**

The objectives of the study are to investigate how secondary school teachers view secondary textbooks in relation to the English Curriculum 2006's stated goals, and to identify the issues faced by teachers in using the textbooks to achieve the curriculum's communicative goals. The study investigates the perception of secondary school teachers towards effectiveness of English textbooks (Grades IX-X) in realizing the language learning objectives delineated in English Curriculum for Secondary Level in Pakistan. Employing a Mixed Methods approach with an Explanatory Sequential design. The findings reveal a generally positive view among teachers on the effectiveness of English textbooks various aspects. The secondary school teachers also expressed satisfaction with how textbooks align with the stated aims of English Curriculum 2006. However, some challenges were identified. The research makes the following recommendations to close these gaps and improve language instruction at the secondary level: upgrading textbooks, offering focused teacher training, and including more interactive activities.

**KEYWORDS** Curriculum, English Textbooks, Secondary School Teachers, Language Skills

**Introduction**

Language is a meaning system made up of ignorant vocal symbols that is utilized for communication. The foundation of human language, in contrast to all other communication systems, is a set of ten thousand vocabulary items made up of several dozen speech sounds. When speaking with others, a speaker of any language can construct an infinite number of phrases and sentences using the words they know. (Jackendoff, 2006).

Fast globalization processes are making it more and more necessary to be fluent with several languages. English is widely utilized for political, cultural, scientific, and communication purposes globally; as such, being an expert in the language is essential than ever. (Chen & Goh, 2011).

English is important to Pakistan's educational system because it is used as medium of instruction and official language of the country. It is language of business serving as a global lingua franca. To keep pace with the rapidly advancing world, many curricular changes have been made over the years with the goal of improving English language instruction in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and acknowledged English as the medium of instruction from Grade-I to secondary classes in order to fulfill the academic needs of the learners to get higher education. The Ministry of Education implemented the English Curriculum 2006 across the province with an aim to develop critical thinking and

communicative competence in learners. Rigorous efforts were carried out for nurturing the fundamental language abilities such as speaking, writing, listening, and reading. The spirit of any curriculum is reflected in textbooks. In our educational system, the textbooks are used as sole resource in the classroom and have a major impact on how well this system works.

English textbooks in secondary classes are vital resources for translating and implementing the curriculum aims, assisting teachers and learners both in realizing the targeted learning objectives. The primary goal of language teaching is to improve students' real-life communication skills so they can use the language effectively in everyday situations. In past, grammar translation method was widely used in English teaching classrooms in Pakistan as the focus of English instruction had been on the memorization of syntax and rules ignoring the language's transactional nature. As a result, the learners mastered grammar rules but were unable to speak a few words in English." (Hafeez, 2004, p. 27).

### **Literature Review**

Textbooks are essential to the implementation of curricula because they offer organized content that corresponds with the curriculum's stated educational goals. Richards (2001) asserts that textbooks assist teachers in planning lessons and evaluations while assisting students in following a methodical learning process. For textbooks to be effective, they must, however, be in line with curricular objectives. This is especially true for language education, where the development of a full language requires a balance between various abilities, including speaking, writing, reading, and listening.

Numerous research conducted in Pakistan have emphasized how English textbooks influence language training. Textbooks play a crucial role in outlining the breadth and order of the material, but they have frequently come under fire for placing an undue emphasis on writing and grammar at the expense of speaking and listening. Because of this, kids frequently acquire passive language skills but struggle with active communication – a skill that is essential for interactions in the real world.

Teachers are essential to the successful application of texts. Their perspectives and experiences might offer insightful information on the advantages and disadvantages of textbooks in accomplishing curriculum goals. Research conducted in different settings has revealed that teachers frequently view textbooks as stiff and unyielding, which restricts their capacity to modify lectures to fit the different needs of their students (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994). Teachers in Pakistan have voiced concerns regarding the dated content of English textbooks and the lack of emphasis placed on communicative activities – activities that are crucial for the development of speaking and listening abilities (Shah, 2012).

The Four Skills approach is a language learning method that focuses on developing proficiency in four primary language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills are essential for effective communication and are developed through various activities. Listening involves understanding spoken language, which is crucial for real-life communication. Speaking involves producing spoken language, focusing on pronunciation, fluency, and clear expression. Reading involves understanding written text, recognizing words and phrases, and understanding the meaning of passages. Writing involves producing written content, improving grammar, vocabulary, organization, creativity, and communication. The curriculum should align with the specific needs and goals of learners and the context of the language, creating an engaging and effective learning experience. (GOP, SNC 2020, p. 10)

## **Focus of English Curriculum 2006**

The English Curriculum of 2006 establishes criteria and benchmarks for language learning abilities, being an outcome-based curriculum. For the primary, elementary, secondary, and upper secondary levels, it creates student learning outcomes (SLOs) according to grade level. While some SLOs might not be available for paper exams, they are nonetheless included for ongoing evaluation in the classroom

The English Curriculum 2006 places a strong emphasis on communicative language instruction (CLT), which eschews memorization of grammar rules in favor of using language as a tool for authentic communication. With the help of this method, which promotes interactive and student-centered learning, children can practice speaking, listening, and solving problems in authentic settings. However, the availability of suitable teaching resources, such as textbooks with communicative activities integrated, is essential to the success of CLT. The traditional textbook format in Pakistan has made it difficult to adopt CLT, in part because rote learning and grammar are frequently given precedence over conversation and engagement.

According to Curriculum 2006, students should participate more actively in communicative situations and speak less when learning a language. To optimize learning results, educators should employ teaching practices that engage students as active learners while taking into account their experiences, interests, and background.

In order to encourage teachers to practice critical thinking and engage students through intellectually challenging activities, NCEL 2006 assigns students real-world problem-solving projects. Inquiry-based learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving via dialogue, role-playing, and inquiry skills are all encouraged by the English Curriculum.

The English Curriculum 2006 is a comprehensive document that aims to improve learners' English proficiency for greater employment possibilities and global economic engagement, as well as to build language learning abilities and promote national policies for English education.

## **Material and Methods**

### **Research Design**

A mixed-method research strategy is used in this study to provide a thorough grasp of the research issues by integrating quantitative and qualitative methodologies. 375 secondary school teachers from different districts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa participated in a survey for the quantitative component, while 20 curriculum experts participated in semi-structured interviews for the qualitative component.

### **Sample and Sampling Techniques**

In order to explore the function of textbooks in curriculum development, the study used a purposive sample of male and female secondary school teachers who were teaching English using textbooks for Grades IX-X.

### **Data Collection**

Teachers' perceptions of textbooks' effectiveness in fulfilling the objectives of the English Curriculum 2006 were examined by a questionnaire, and curriculum experts' semi-structured interviews focused on textbook and curriculum alignment. Data collection was

done in four months. The Provincial Institute of Teachers Education (PITE) Peshawar provided the researcher with information on the training program for teachers. The researcher visited the training venues in Southern districts and a few other districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during a training session.

### Data Analysis

In order to fully comprehend the research issues, the study employed both quantitative and qualitative data analysis to pinpoint recurring themes and trends in teachers' perceptions during interviews with curriculum experts.

### Results and Discussion

**Table 1**  
**Development of Reading & Writing Skills**

S.	Statements	SDA f (%)	DA f (%)	N f (%)	A f (%)	SA f (%)	N f (%)
1	The reading content from English language textbooks (IX-X) enhances students' ability to analyze paragraph's structure	2 (.5)	211 (57.7)	113 (30.9)	39 (10.7)	1 (.3)	366 (100.0)
2	To analyse the content to recognise its theme utilizing language learning skills i.e. reading comprehension and critical thinking	0 (0)	46 (12.6)	122 (33.3)	195 (53.3)	3 (.8)	366 (100)
3	To communicate with literary works for pleasure and information	0 (0)	100 (27.3)	68 (18.6)	196 (53.6)	2 (.5)	366 (100)
4	To translate mind maps/pictures for into written text	13 (3.6)	94 (25.7)	176 (48.1)	82 (22.4)	1 (.3)	366 (100)
5	To utilize information in their daily life situation learnt earlier	1 (.3)	211 (57.7)	1 (.3)	149 (40.7)	4 (1.1)	366 (100)
6	To interpret pre-writing strategies like brainstorming, mind mapping	0 (0)	184 (50.3)	45 (12.3)	133 (36.3)	4 (1.1)	366 (100)
7	To know various types of composition and basics of composition writing	1 (.3)	100 (27.3)	157 (42.9)	104 (28.4)	4 (1.1)	366 (100)
8	To analyse given text for writing:						
	• a) summary/ paraphrase,	0 (0)	45 (12.3)	115 (31.4)	203 (55.5)	3 (.8)	366 (100)
	• b) Formal letter/application	0 (0)	1 (.3)	53 (14.5)	220 (60.1)	92 (25.1)	366 (100)
	• c) narrative and expository essay	0 (0)	230 (62.8)	83 (22.7)	53 (14.5)	0 (0)	366 (100)
	• d) Simple book Review	62 (16.9)	92 (25.1)	212 (57.9)	0 (0)	0 (0)	366 (100)

The majority of secondary school teachers inquired about believed that the Grades IX-X English textbooks support the objectives of the curriculum, especially when it comes to fostering students' writing and reading abilities. It was discovered that the textbooks had enough tasks for vocabulary development, grammatical practice, and reading comprehension. Teachers are worried, nevertheless, that the texts fall short in addressing the communicative aims of the curriculum, especially when it comes to speaking and listening abilities.

**Table 2**  
**Development of communicative Skills**

S. No	Statements	SDA f (%)	DA f (%)	N f (%)	A f (%)	SA f (%)	N f (%)
1	Students are supported through exercises and content included in the English	2 (.3)	113 (31.1)	96 (26.5)	151 (41.0)	4 (1.1)	366 (100)

language textbooks (IX-X): To communicate personal needs and preferences							
2	To pose and reply to questions	30 (8.5)	139 (37.7)	87 (24.0)	109 (29.5)	1 (.3)	366 (100)
3	To exchange knowledge and concepts while pronouncing words correctly	1 (.3)	230 (62.6)	43 (12.0)	90 (24.9)	2 (.3)	366 (100)
4	To communicate effectively with a range of audience	60 (16.1)	146 (40.2)	108 (29.2)	52 (14.5)	0 (0)	366 (100)

The textbooks were shown to be less successful in developing speaking and listening abilities than in writing, even though they were thought to be beneficial in boosting reading and writing. Teachers noted that interactive exercises and real-world communication scenarios—both crucial for the development of oral communication skills—were absent from the texts. Furthermore, there were either no listening exercises or not enough of them, which reduced the amount of real English spoken by the pupils.

No doubt, encouraging the communicative and practical aspects of the language is the primary goal of English instruction. It does not, however, disregard how learners establish standards and values, which are crucial for fostering harmony and peace in society. In order to foster nationalism and a love of their cultural heritage, the national curriculum also maintains awareness of how to transmit teaching experiences and language learning abilities in line with national and cultural boundaries. (GOP, NCEL, 2006, p. 2).

**Table 3**  
**Cultural Relevance**

S. No	Statements	SDA f (%)	DA f (%)	N f (%)	A f (%)	SA f (%)	N f (%)
1	The content has no bias regarding religious, cultural, gender, Occupational aspects	2 (.5)	2 (.5)	40 (12)	250 (70)	71 (17)	366 (100)
2	The text develops nationalism	2 (.5)	97 (27.)	260 (72)	7 (1.5)	0 (0)	366 (100)
3	Text encourages democratic attitudes	30 (8)	139 (37.)	80 (23)	116 (31)	1 (.3)	366 (100)
4	The content encourages harmony and peaceful co-existence among various segments	2 (.5)	2 (.5)	50 (14)	212 (58)	99 (27)	366 (100)

Teachers have expressed serious concerns about the textbooks' lack of cultural relevance. Many educators believed that the material in the textbooks had no bearing on the real-world experiences and cultural backgrounds of the students. Because of this, students frequently struggled to connect with the content, which demotivated them and made them lose interest in studying English. Teachers proposed that adding more texts and examples that are relevant to students' cultures would help them relate to the material and enhance their language skills in general.

**Table 4**  
**Content Coverage**

S. No	Statements	SDA f (%)	DA f (%)	N f (%)	A f (%)	SA f (%)	N f (%)
1	The English Curriculum 2006's Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for secondary education are precise and clear	0 (0)	23 (6.3)	86 (23.5)	201 (54.9)	56 (15.3)	366 (100)
2	The SLOs of NCEL emphasize to foster the ability of: a) Reading and critical thinking skills	5 (1.4)	40 (11)	83 (22.6)	210 (58)	28 (7)	366 (100)

	a) b) Writing skills	5 (1.4)	92 (25.1)	110 (30.3)	115 (31.5)	44 (11.9)	366 (100)
	b) c) Speaking and listening skills	15 (4.1)	110 (29.0)	182 (50.9)	55 (15.0)	4 (1.1)	366 (100)
	c) d) Grammar and vocabulary	4 (1.1)	100 (27.3)	13 (3.6)	197 (53.8)	52 (14.2)	366 (100)
	a) e) Development of Social and Ethical values	0 (0)	1 (.3)	84 (23)	191 (52.2)	90 (24.6)	366 (100)
3	The text is interesting and fulfils learners' needs	1 (.3)	212 (57.9)	0 (0)	152 (41.5)	1 (.3)	366 (100)
4	The text is up-to-date and authentic	0 (0)	0 (0)	90 (24.6)	163 (44.5)	113 (30.9)	366 (100)
5	The vocabulary is age and grade fitting	5 (1.4)	307 (83.9)	53 (14.5)	1 (.3)	0 (0)	366 (100)

Teachers felt satisfied that English textbooks cover most Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) in English Curriculum. They agree that content covers all SLOs, with oral communication being the least focused skill. Reading and Grammar are frequently addressed, and focus on knowledge development. However, some teachers observe that content is boring and fail to meet learners' needs. They affirm that content is up-to-date, and the vocabulary is age and grade appropriate.

**Table 5**  
**Social and Ethical values**

S. No	Statements	SDA f (%)	DA f (%)	N f (%)	A f (%)	SA f (%)	N f (%)
	The content promotes following traits:						
	respect for others	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	170 (46.4)	196 (53.6)	366 (100)
	truthfulness	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	210 (57.4)	156 (42.6)	366 (100)
	fairness	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	204 (55.7)	162 (44.3)	366 (100)
1	acceptance	1 (.3)	1 (.3)	0 (0)	170 (46.4)	194 (53.0)	366 (100)
	civic sense	1 (.3)	1 (.3)	96 (27.0)	260 (71.0)	6 (1.6)	366 (100)
	gender equality	1 (.3)	70 (19.1)	87 (24.0)	167 (45.6)	4 (11)	366 (100)
	peaceful co-existence	10 (2.7)	77 (21.0)	86 (23.5)	193 (52.7)	0 (0)	366 (100)

Teachers affirm that content of English textbooks (IX-X) aptly inculcates ethical and social development skills in learners. However, gender disparity and interfaith harmony were partially addressed. Similarly, some teachers affirmed that content of English textbooks (IX-X) promotes interfaith harmony while refuted the statement.

**Table 6**  
**Assessment Exercises**

S. No	Statements	SDA f (%)	DA f (%)	N f (%)	A f (%)	SA f (%)	N f (%)
1	Activities have clear and concise directions	3 (0.9)	165 (45.0)	2 (0.2)	157 (43.2)	39 (10.7)	366 (100)
2	There is sufficient variation in assessment activities	3 (0.9)	98 (27.0)	102 (27.8)	113 (30.9)	50 (13.4)	366 (100)
3	Assessment exercises are aligned with curriculum SLOs	3 (0.9)	117 (32.0)	107 (29.1)	136 (37.1)	3 (0.9)	366 (100)
4	activities assess the students who are under or over-achievers	3 (0.9)	46 (12.6)	157 (43.2)	161 (43.6)	5 (1.4)	366 (100)

5	Glossaries are contained within chapters / textbooks	3 (0.9)	3 (0.9)	57 (16.1)	247 (68.0)	56 (15.3)	366 (100)
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The study reveals mixed responses from Teachers regarding the clarity of instructions in English textbooks (IX-X). Over half affirmed the clarity of instructions, while remaining half disagreed. Some of the teachers agreed that various assessment strategies are included at the end of each lesson. They express their dissatisfaction that assessment strategies do not assess skills, knowledge, and attitudes according to the English curriculum's demands. About half of the teachers agreed that exercises help both under or over achiever students. They confirmed that glossaries are included to each chapter's conclusion.

**Table 7**  
**Physical and Utilitarian Attributes**

S. No	Statements	SDA f (%)	DA f (%)	N f (%)	A f (%)	SA f (%)	N f (%)
1	The layout is eye catching	3 (0.9)	101 (27.6)	66 (18.0)	111 (30.4)	91 (24)	366 (100)
2	It reflects effective use of text and illustrations	1 (.3)	99 (27.0)	68 (18.6)	197 (53.8)	1 (.3)	366 (100)
3	Visual and graphical elements have academic importance	4 (1.0)	46 (14.0)	45 (12.0)	266 (73)	0 (0)	366 (100)
4	The price is affordable	3 (0.9)	54 (14.8)	307 (83.2)	1 (.3)	1 (.3)	366 (100)
5	The size is easily portable	58 (16.0)	3 (0.9)	145 (39.5)	157 (43.0)	3 (.8)	366 (100)

According to the study results, English textbooks (IX-X) include practical and tangible elements. More than half of the instructors said the layout of the books is appealing and makes effective use of both text and images. They also believe that visual and graphical elements possess pedagogical relevance. However, teachers remain neutral about the cost-effectiveness of these textbooks. The size of the textbooks is appropriate. The content of English language textbooks is interesting and meets learners' needs. However, teachers disagree with the age and grade appropriateness of vocabulary used.

### Challenges in Teaching with the Textbooks

Given their broad use in comparison to more contemporary resources like movies, CDs, or the internet, which are frequently unavailable, the government acknowledges textbooks as the major teaching resource in classrooms. As a result, textbooks have to exactly align with curriculum objectives so that teachers may use this foundational knowledge to successfully complete all curricular objectives. The content analysis showed that native English textbook authors frequently violate the spirit of the language in order to address the subjects suggested by the curriculum and are not proficient in writing English.

Teachers noted a number of difficulties in utilizing the texts to meet the communicative objectives of the program. A significant obstacle was the absence of additional resources, including audio files or interactive exercises, which are essential for putting communicative language training into practice. Teachers also said that they were forced to use conventional teaching strategies that place a greater emphasis on reading and writing because the textbooks did not offer adequate direction on how to incorporate speaking and listening activities into their classes.

## **Gaps in Textbook Content**

The results show that there are large gaps in the English textbooks' capacity to fulfill the communicative objectives of the curriculum. The textbooks offer a strong basis for improving writing and reading abilities, but they do a poor job of encouraging language learning that is participatory and conversational. One of the main objectives of the English Curriculum 2006 is to enable students to use English in real-world circumstances, yet this imbalance prevents them from doing so.

## **Teachers' Limited Role**

Secondary school teachers play a crucial role in English language instruction, ensuring learners can pursue higher studies. They must adapt lesson plans based on student responses, allowing for improvisational teaching. Living pedagogy presents uncertainty and opportunities, but also motivates teachers. Experts suggest teachers should be given freedom to choose and adapt instruction, while following curriculum guidelines to achieve desired learning outcomes.

## **The Need for Teacher Training**

The report also emphasizes the importance of improved teacher preparation. Due to a lack of resources and training, several teachers stated that they were unprepared to implement communicative language education. In the absence of adequate guidance, educators frequently fall back on conventional grammar-based teaching strategies that are incompatible with the curriculum's emphasis on communicative ability.

## **Conclusion**

This study sheds light on the difficulties secondary school teachers encounter when attempting to satisfy the objectives of the English Curriculum 2006 by using English textbooks for Grades IX–X. The textbooks are good at helping students improve their writing and reading skills, but they are less successful at helping students improve their speaking and listening skills. Revisions that incorporate more communicative activities and culturally appropriate information are required to improve the alignment between the curriculum and the textbooks. Programs for training teachers and additional resources are also necessary to assist the successful implementation of communicative language instruction in Pakistani secondary schools.

## **Recommendations**

The research makes the following recommendations:

1. the textbooks' content is purposefully written which fail to inspire students; hence, material based on real-life that attracts students' interests should be incorporated to the current English textbooks (IX-X).
2. The goal of the English curriculum is for students to become more communicative speakers. Since this cannot be done without the availability of contemporary technology for English instruction, well-equipped English language labs may be established in every school to teach phonics and other functional aspects of the language.
3. textbook authors frequently lacked experience and knowledge in the field; as a result, it is advised that a pool of textbook writers may be established and that initiatives to increase their ability be started.



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