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Exploring the Role of Arts & Crafts Projected in Local and Foreign English Textbooks in Pakistani Context at Primary Level

Abstract:

The purpose of the current study is exploring and comparing the representation style of arts & crafts which is projected in the local and foreign textbooks in Pakistani context at primary level. The content analysis was employed to find out percentages of categories and sub categories of reading passages and exercises of the prescribed English textbooks in this research. For relevant data collection an eclectic model was devised as some of the major categories with slight modification were taken from Stern, H.H. (1983) model. The analysis of the two selected textbooks revealed that the Oxford textbook tends to promote activities based on arts and crafts as they help the child to unfold his/her creativity, intelligence and sense of beauty and aesthetics. They help to enjoy the pleasure creativity and beauty through the study of music, pictures/paintings and sculptures. On the contrary the PTB textbook plays an inactive role as it offers insufficient instructional material to its learners in this indispensable area of learning, and activate their artistic talent.

Key Words:

Ideology, Socio-Cultural Practices, Foreign Language Education, Inter-Cultural Speaker.

Introduction

Arts and crafts denote to a wide range of activities concerning to make things with one's own hands, in other perspectives. All the handiworks based upon making attractive and useful things by hand are given the names as arts and crafts. EFL learners enjoy arts and crafts as due to these activities, they may learn skills such as colouring, paintings, making crafted items or making things (Prins, 2008). Moreover, Prins (2008) indicates that arts and crafts are a form of expression or an aptitude to do human doings and the products of these events, typically relating to creative or practical skills. Picture making, paintings, sculptures, music, dance, drama, and visual arts are included in this field. In the course of teaching/learning process of L2, it is very significant to have learners motivated with the things they love, and they like to do, they requisite to have the self-assurance and low nervousness and anxiety so that they have better results and not to produce any perceptual barrier which will upset them in their future. Such kind of approach was propagated by Stephen Krashen's Affective Filter hypothesis. Krashen (1982) claims that foreign language learning should occur in an anxiety-free situation. He asserts that anxiety produces an emotive difficulty that restricts the normal ability to learn languages. Krashen states this barrier as an 'Affective Filter'. In this regard, it is the duty of teachers to mitigate their learners' this state of affairs as much as they can do by developing program based activities that involve their attention and concentration to encourage them to communicate in the target language and facilitate them to feel efficacious.

This 'Affective Filter' hypothesis speculates the concept of an effective filter which is a mental barrier that stops the learners from entirely consuming the understandable response they obtain for the target language learning.

The objectives of the study were to investigate the statements by which the arts & crafts activities are projected in the local and foreign English textbooks and to observe the impact of arts & crafts proposed in the local and

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Oxford English textbooks on 5th-grade learners while learning English as a foreign language.

EFL Textbooks in English Language Classroom

The textbook is a western medium of instruction that has become an inevitable part of the education system in the whole world. Textbooks require the classroom and are the most used medium for knowledge transmission in the school system, particularly where financial resources are restricted ([Altbach, Kelly, Petrie and Weiss, 1990](#)). Prior to the western system of classroom education that relies heavily on textbooks, other organizations attended to the education system of the youth in each society. Katez (1976) indicates that schools existed in the seventeenth and eighteenth century but that these organizations bear little resemblance to the institutions that developed in the mid-nineteenth century cities that were age-graded, hierarchically structured, primarily free often compulsory, and administered by expert and taught by trained staff.

In countries adhering to the Muslim religion, education is conducted orally by mullah using the Quraan. In the African context, beyond education in formal institutions, there are secret societies that pass on the traditions and culture within groups. Societies worldwide have also used the apprenticeship system to transmit the traditions, culture and skills of each society ([Rogoff, 1990](#)). To these traditional pedagogies, the classroom is a modern western invention that is a mark of modernization. Though the western educational model has not entirely replaced traditional systems, it is being superseded by western texts which logically represent the values and culture of countries producing these textbooks.

According to [Fantini, Alvino E. \(1997\)](#), language teaching has traditionally been associated with particular methods and their implementation. Essentially, the adaptation of a method implies the use of techniques and instructional material designed to produce language learning. Methods in a language learning context provide the learner and teacher with materials and techniques that will secure a successful language learning outcome for the learner. Within the context of foreign language education, an instructional method typically provides a textbook, teacher's manual, student book and sometimes a student workbook. 'A notable exception to this orientation is community language learning (CLL) in which the speech of learners is recorded and used in the process of learning the language' ([Phillipson, 1992](#)). [Stevick, E. \(1980\)](#) further adds and is of the view that recent methods of language teaching provide audiotapes for listening comprehension exercises, and with the advent of video cassettes, these have also become the part of the material in language teaching. Despite these instructional resources textbooks, remain at the core of many language teaching programs throughout the world. Language teaching methods have evolved over the years, and this evolution is reflected in the textbooks. Textbooks used in English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom have provided the primary source of information on the culture and language (syntax, lexicon and morphology) for studying a language. [Cortazzi, M & Jin, L. \(1999\)](#) strengthen this view and are of the opinion that the method adopted by the teachers usually determines the type of textbook used in the EFL classroom. The grammar-translation method, for example, equated competence in a foreign language with knowledge of the grammar. 'Textbooks were a source of exercises, activities and examples that the learner used when studying a foreign language via the grammar-translation method. This method has been used in teaching classical languages and is still used in some modern classroom settings that rely on textbooks for instruction. The expected student outcome was the ability to analyze the target language' ([Larsen-Freeman, D. \(2000\)](#)). According to [Ducháčková, S. \(2006\)](#), the direct method (DM) avoids the use of textbooks in the early stages. As its name suggests, the direct method relies heavily on the use of the target language as a means of instruction and avoids translation. Nonetheless, in an initial learning period, teachers depended on textbooks in the target language to provide learners with organized content and a resource for studying the grammar. The expected student outcome was the ability to analyse the target language. The direct method avoids the use of textbooks in the early stages. As its name suggests, it heavily relies on the use of the target language as a means of instruction and avoids translation. Nonetheless, after an initial learning period, teachers depend on textbooks in the target language to provide the learners with organized content and as a resource for studying the grammar. The expected student

outcomes emphasize the ability to understand the language directly and with minimal contrasts between the target and native language. This idea was further improved with the arguments of [Richards, J. & Rodgers T. \(2007\)](#) when they argue that dialogues, pattern drills and memorization are some of the elements used in presenting the language to learners in the audio-lingual method. Emphasis was on oral aspects of language, including on pronunciation, but textbooks with the dialogues to be memorized by students learning the language were a crucial part of the method. The focus of this methodology was the ability to understand and speak the language. Textbooks developed for EFL classrooms arrange a language based on theoretical principals that provide support for the method. Thus in the grammar-translation method, for example, texts were structured around a grammar point, and exercises focused on the rules to be learnt. More recently a typically textbook includes culturally authentic readings, sometimes actual native texts, and a more communicative drive. A four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) approach replaced the earlier audio-lingual emphasis. With the change in emphasis to four skills, listening comprehension exercises, comprehension practice and paragraph writing or a similar pattern were followed in subsections of the textbook. In a functional/notional syllabus content is organized in terms of notion (time-space and quantity) and functions (greeting, inquiring and informing) being taught in a given lesson. The focus of such textbooks is the presentation of the particular aspect of language ([Richardson, G. 1983](#)).

To conclude, the expected student outcomes in language programs depended on the prevailing methodological approach during the past four decades. The textbook, however, remained the fundamental component whatever the approach. The present study does not include an investigation of outcomes, but the analysis of textbooks contents which are culturally pregnant.

Activities related to arts and crafts are considered constructive to the target students, especially in financially poorer countries. In the field of EFL, however, the use of imported textbooks that are not written with the EFL student in mind is common ([Stern, H.H. & A. Weinrib, 1977](#)). The focus of the present study is to analyze the Oxford English textbook five and the PTB English textbook 5 prescribed for Punjab (Pakistan) government, semi-government and private students to identify arts and crafts activities contained in them. The extent, to which the arts and crafts activities of the countries in which the textbooks were written are present, were analyzed, versus activities of the local (Pakistani) community. Contrastive arts and crafts activities were examined for their significance in the teaching process.

In this study of imported and local instructional material and their historical aspect is also worth mentioning. In the Pakistani context, historical events of the past seventy or so have involved grave changes in the political and government. Since that time there has been a shuffling from a civilian to military and military to civilian government and elections have been held at all levels including two referendums of the military dictators for presidentship. During this period, schools have had to continually adjust within the political climate. Throughout this period, some contents were dropped, and some were included in the curriculum.

Statement of the Problem

The textbooks that are used in primary schools of financially poorer countries for teaching EFL are principally imported from English speaking countries. Logically, the presentation of arts and crafts of these countries are not reflected in the contents and other productions of the imported books.

Research Questions

The research questions of the study are stated below:

- i. What types of representation style of arts & crafts are projected in the local and Oxford English textbooks?
- ii. What is the impact of arts & crafts projected in the local and Oxford English textbooks on 5th-grade learners while learning L2?

Materials and Methods

The main purpose of the study was to analyze and compare EFL textbooks (foreign and local) prescribed for primary schools (fifth grade) in Pakistan to identify arts & crafts activities which are projected in the local and foreign textbooks. To what extent arts & crafts activities of the countries in which the texts were written are present, will be analyzed, versus arts & crafts activities of the local community. Data were collected from the two English textbooks 5 (foreign and local) prescribed for the primary schools of the Punjab (Pakistan) province. Units of both textbooks were read in addition to exercises both written and oral as well as activities designed for listening comprehension. Reading passages were categorized by themes and sub-themes. Reading passages that did not fit the previously designed sub-themes were listed as miscellaneous. Content analysis will be employed to find out the percentages of categories and subcategories of reading passages and exercises in these two books. For relevant data collection, an eclectic model was devised as some of the major categories with slight modification were taken from [Stern, H.H. \(1983\)](#) model in which he proposed six aspects of culture teaching. While in the formation of subcategories, the researcher has employed his own teaching experience. In this research project, arts and crafts activities are divided into three subcategories such as pictures/paintings, sculptures and music. At the start reading passages of the two books were read and classified based on themes. Themes originally refer to the underlying thought or general impression of a reading passage, providing the reader with its general sense and implications. Statements regarding arts & crafts activities were recognized for analysis, and its sub-themes were identified

Arts & Crafts

Table 1.

Textbooks	Paintings	Sculptures	Music	Total
The Oxford textbook				
The Punjab textbook				

Arts & Crafts

The first objective of the current research was:

To investigate the statements by which the arts & crafts activities are projected in the local and foreign English textbooks in Pakistani context at the primary level.

Table 2.

Textbooks	Pictures/Paintings	Sculptures	Music	Total
Oxford Textbook	06 18.75%	07 21.88%	19 59.38%	32
The Punjab Textbook	06 85.71%	00 00.00%	01 14.29%	07

Note: statistical figures in columns refer to the analysed statements and their percentage about Arts and Crafts:

Arts and craft was the category devised for the data analysis attained from the two English textbooks. This main category was divided into three subcategories as pictures/paintings, sculptures and music. In the Oxford textbook statements indicating the sub-theme of pictures/painting were reported six times which were 18.75% of the total 32 statements. On the other hand, in the PTB textbook, six statements were analyzed in this context, with 85.71% of the total number of statements.

After he had.....the Picture, he Showed into the Teacher.

A. drew

B. draw

C. drawn

D. drawing

E. drew

- On the corner of a page of a book, draw a little picture of a man walking (Oxford textbook 5, p. 139).
- We see a large number of different pictures quickly following each other (Oxford textbook 5, p. 139).
- We see twenty-four different pictures in each second of time! In between each picture, there is a very short time when there is no picture at all (Oxford textbook 5, p. 139).
- But we do not see this because we go on seeing the picture which has just gone (Oxford textbook 5, p. 139).
- We see 86,400 different pictures in one hour (Oxford textbook 5, p. 139).
- The pictures of our national heroes are also displayed on the boards (PTB textbook 5, p. 12).
- The walls of the room are covered with charts (PTB textbook 5, p. 12).
- In the Oxford textbook, seven statements were analysed, which pointed towards sculptures with 21.88% of the total statements. On the other hand, the PTB textbook did not offer a single one so, and the percentage remained zero in this subcategory.
- They built a very big wooden horse (Oxford textbook 5, p. 65).
- The Greeks left the [wooden] horse outside the wall (Oxford textbook 5, p. 65).
- They did not see the door on the side because it was cleverly made (Oxford textbook 5, p. 65).
- That night, when the Trojans were asleep, the soldiers opened the door in the wooden horse and came out (Oxford textbook 5, p. 65).
- Music was the last subcategory to be analysed in both the textbooks. In this sub-theme, the Oxford textbook surpassed the PTB textbook with a leading margin as in the Oxford textbook, and the researcher found 19 statements out of 32 with 59.38% of the total statements. While in the PTB textbook, only a single statement was analysed, carrying just 14.29% of the total number.
- The girl sings(Oxford textbook 5, p. 01).
- They sang the song nicely (Oxford textbook 5, p. 04).
- He likes music (Oxford textbook 5, p. 31).

While his brother.....the piano

A. Had Played

B. Will Play

C. Was Playing

(Oxford textbook 5, p. 31).

- She has sung for five minutes (Oxford textbook 5, p. 47).
- She started singing(Oxford textbook 5, p. 47).
- I didn't use to like music, but I do now (Oxford textbook 5, p. 50).
- Zohra was singing and so(Oxford textbook 5, p. 86).
- Helen stopped singing and soTeresa (Oxford textbook 5, p. 86).
- Mary sings very nicely (Oxford textbook 5, p. 87).
- Helen sings very nicely, too (Oxford textbook 5, p. 87).
- Aslam sings well (PTB textbook 5, p. 03).

Chapter IV was divided into three portions. Section one was comprised of the detailed account of these two analysed textbooks, second part discussed the objectives of the present study and summarized the findings, and the last part offered the discussion on the findings.

Discussions on the Findings

One of the evils of colonialism was the defamation of the Sub Continent cultures and traditions. Young people are particularly defenceless when they are bombarded with cultural attributes of other people that are supposed to be superior to their own. In both the textbooks, a minor number of arts and crafts activities are portrayed and in public sector schools arts, and crafts are not included in the curriculum as a subject. By the introduction of arts and crafts as a subject to the young learners and involving them in such types of activities in schools, the administration can improve their mental, physical and social development. By introducing arts and crafts as a subject or inclusion of excessive textual material can be very beneficial for the learners in numerous ways such as it enhances students creativity, sharpens decision-making skills of the students, it improves students' memory and visual learning, it boosts confidence among the students, it helps the learners to be socializing, it also improves self-expression of the students. Arts and crafts not only help in the above-mentioned characteristics but also in improving their academic excellence. Above all, arts and crafts activities are such activities filled with lots of fun for learners.

The present investigation has reported the research findings of the arts & crafts activities should be enhanced that are projected in the local and foreign textbooks in Pakistani context at the primary level. These findings are further discussed below in response to the research question, which is devised using the research objective as a cue.

Research Question# 01

What types of representation style of arts & crafts are projected in the local and Oxford English textbooks?

In the modern world, visual sources of communication are very important. Over the last decades, the importance of photographic materials in education has increased rapidly. Realizing the importance of arts and crafts based activities in the educational sector, the sub-themes of this research project such as pictures/paintings, sculptures and music increase learners' physical and social development. Arts and crafts activities are divided into three subcategories such as pictures/paintings, sculptures and music. The analysis of the two selected textbooks revealed that the Oxford textbook tends to promote activities based on arts and crafts as they help the child to unfold his/her creativity, intelligence and sense of beauty and aesthetics. They help to enjoy the pleasure of creativity and beauty through the study of music, pictures/paintings and sculptures. On the contrary, the PTB textbook plays an inactive role as it offers insufficient instructional material to its learners in this indispensable area of learning.

Research Question# 02

What is the impact of arts & crafts projected in the local and Oxford English textbooks on 5th-grade learners while learning L2?

Arts and crafts was the category devised for the data analysis attained from the two English textbooks. This main category was divided into three subcategories as pictures/paintings, sculptures and music. In the Oxford textbook statements indicating the sub-theme of pictures/painting were reported six times which were 18.75% of the total 32 statements. On the other hand, in the PTB textbook, six statements were analyzed in this context, with 85.71% of the total number of statements. There is no doubt that arts and crafts activities are actually fun for the young learners and can mature their leaning capabilities and the Oxford English textbook for grade five performed this responsibility well as compare the PTB published English textbook. Arts and craft activities like pictures/paintings, sculptures and music, which can improve and enhance the interest of the leaners and activate their artistic talent. By familiarizing arts and crafts based activities to the young leaners and connecting them in such activities in schools, the institutions will invest in building their intellectual/cognitive, physical, and social development. Similarly, arts and crafts activities can enhance the agility of the students, improvement of hand-eye coordination, make able to students in learning to appreciate art and culture,

improve their self-expression, boost their confidence, and help the learners to become social, enhance creativity among the students, boost their memory and visual learning and sharpen learners' skills of decision making.

Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

The current study has its starting point to view and compare the arts and crafts activities suggested in the two English textbooks in the context of Pakistan.

The instructional material offered in the Oxford English textbook 5 indicates that the key importance is attached to providing learners with diverse sights of English-speaking nations and their cultures irrespective of the context in which this textbook is written. This textbook also indicates that the selection of texts, topics and exercises for the development of the target students' intercultural awareness and of their cultural and national values. In both the textbooks, a minor number of arts and crafts activities are portrayed, and in public sector schools, arts and crafts are not included in the curriculum as a subject. The analysis of the two selected textbooks revealed that the Oxford textbook tends to promote activities based on arts and crafts as they help the child to unfold his/her creativity, intelligence and sense of beauty and aesthetics. They help to enjoy the pleasure of creativity and beauty through the study of music, pictures/paintings and sculptures. On the contrary, the PTB textbook plays an inactive role as it offers insufficient instructional material to its learners in this indispensable area of learning. Arts and craft activities like pictures/paintings, sculptures and music, which can improve and enhance the interest of the learners and activate their artistic talent. By familiarizing arts and crafts based activities to the young learners and connecting them in such activities in schools, the institutions will invest in building their intellectual/cognitive, physical, and social development. Similarly, arts and crafts activities can enhance the agility of the students, improvement of hand-eye coordination, make able to students in learning to appreciate art and culture, improve their self-expression, and boost their confidence. By the introduction of arts and crafts as a subject to the young learners and involving them in such types of activities in schools, the administration can improve their mental, physical and social development. By introducing arts and crafts as a subject or inclusion of excessive textual material can be very beneficial for the learners in numerous ways such as it enhances students creativity, sharpens decision-making skills of the students, it improves students' memory and visual learning, it boosts confidence among the students, it helps the learners to be socializing, it also improves self-expression of the students.

Contribution/Originality of the Study

The significance of the present study lies in the fact that through the thorough analysis of arts and crafts activities contained in the textbooks, an instrument in the form of suggestions and recommendations would be developed to identify and evaluate these factors as they are found in a Pakistani EFL context. The current study, therefore, offers guidelines in the form of recommendations that can be applicable for researchers, teachers and administrators who deal with the production and use of textbooks at the primary school level.

- i. The existing study is noteworthy since it investigates the role of arts & crafts projected in local and foreign English textbooks in Pakistani context at the primary level.
- ii. Statistics from the study investigates the representation style of arts & crafts and the impact of these activities projected in the local and Oxford English textbooks on 5th-grade learners while learning L2.
- iii. The research is significant as it explores arts and craft activities like pictures/paintings, sculptures and music, which can improve and enhance the interest of the learners and activate their artistic talent.
- iv. The contemporary study would contribute both the curriculum wings, i.e. federal and provincial, in planning a suitable curriculum to make Pakistani kids comfortable in learning a foreign language.

Limitations of the Study and Research Gaps

In conducting the current research work, a huge number of limitations were perceived, and research gaps were generated as publicised underneath:

- i. The present research is limited to explore the texts of Oxford English Textbook Grade 5 and the English Textbook 5. So, further researches on below and upper grades of the conducted research can be piloted to view the all-inclusive perspective of the target population.
- ii. This work is limited to reconnoitre the texts of Oxford English Textbook Grade 5 and the English Textbook 5 published by Punjab (Pakistan) Textbook Board (PTB) prescribed for the government, semi-government and private schools of the Punjab province. Contrary to this in future researches, the other three provinces of Pakistan can also be included for improved consideration of the subject.
- iii. This study includes only the comparison of Oxford English Textbook Grade 5 and the English Textbook 5 published by Punjab (Pakistan) Textbook Board (PTB). While in upcoming researches this circle can be expanded to Cambridge EFL Textbooks and other publishing agencies' textbooks published for Pakistani learners so, that the results and findings to be more universal and comprehensive.

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