



## A Review of English Textbook at Secondary Level in the Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

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### Abstract

*The purpose of this study was to review English Text Book at Secondary Level in the Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), Pakistan. Major objectives of the study were to present the views of the teachers and students about the get up of the book, arrangement and suitability of the prose lessons and related exercises, suitability of the poems as well as the approach and methodology used in grammar units and related exercises assessed by the teachers and students. The study was conducted through descriptive survey research. The population of the research study comprised all the English Teachers and Students studying the subject of English Textbook 2 in all Secondary Schools (Government/ Private, Boys / Girls, Urban / Rural and Residential / Days Schools) in District Mardan, (KPK). Eight Secondary Schools were selected as sample using cluster random sampling technique. Two English Teachers and Five students each studying English Book 2 presently were taken from each of sampled schools using convenient sampling. A close ended structured questionnaire was developed and framed on five points Lickert Scale which comprised twenty items. The questionnaire was administered to the English teachers and secondary class students studying the subject of English Book 2 for the collection of data by the researcher himself. The data was analyzed using Mean Score, Standard Deviation and Percentage. The findings of the study were to bring significant changes in the textbook. The study recommended that the interest of the students should be always kept in mind while a textbook is being framed.*

**Keywords:** English book 2 for class 10<sup>th</sup>, learning through textbook, practicality of the textbook, framing an english textbook.

### Introduction

The effective process of teaching learning is incomplete without a textbook. The term textbook has been defined as, “basic book used in a particular course of study”<sup>1</sup>. The Webster Encyclopedia Dictionary<sup>2</sup> calls it as, “A book used by a student in some branch of study”; whereas it also stands for, “A book containing the main principles of a subject”<sup>3</sup>.

Dr. Rehana Masroor in the foreword of Textbook Development (Part- III) explains that textbook is an important tool in the hands of a teacher and a student. It is used as an important source in transferring knowledge, believes, behavioural aspects and skills. It caters primarily for the cognitive elements and techniques to necessary knowledge and skills in a learner, which is the main focus of the curriculum. It is a complete body of knowledge and has its own course to run<sup>4</sup>.

According to KEDI Cyber Museum<sup>5</sup>, textbooks were considered as printed books only in the past but presently they also comprise different kinds of material that include discs, visual media (video, film footage) as well as electronic publications (electronic books, CD- ROMSs). On the other hands, the history of education shows that due to the prominent contributions of the printing press for the last 500 years textbook has played important role in the renaissance of education both in the East and West<sup>6</sup>.

The present day student instead of relying on the teachers' instructions only can easily retain both new and old ideas through textbook<sup>7</sup>. Like most of the developing countries, in our Pakistani Education System a textbook is the most important source of instruction and considered at the heart of educational activities<sup>8</sup>.

English Language has got very prominent position as a second compulsory language in Pakistan due to its global and international importance. It is being taught as a compulsory subject in educational institutions at different levels mostly from class I to B.A/B.SC<sup>9</sup>. The text book is one of the most important tools in the hands of a language teacher especially foreign language teacher. Therefore, no truthful knowledge of English language can be given to the learners without proper textbooks and teaching aids<sup>10</sup>.

Mahmood, K<sup>11</sup> in his research study developed a “Textbook Evaluation Form” in compatibility with internationally available criteria for textbook evaluation. He has developed eight important characteristics for the textbook evaluation as a research instrument. They are conformity to curriculum policy and scope, vocabulary and format, horizontal and vertical alignment of the text, acceptability, text reliability, cognitive development and creative thinking, learning and Assessment and Bias free.

In the recommendations of his research study Deur, C<sup>12</sup> has put forwarded some of the important recommendations for designing an ideal English textbook. They are about the medium and convenient size of the textbook, the durability of its binding, clear font structure and printing, attractive title, required illustrations, suitability of the content with the mental level of the students and easiness in the language of the text.

According to a Government Notification<sup>13</sup>, the main objective of the National Textbook and Learning Material Policy, 2006 is, "Improvement in the quality of education at all levels through better quality Textbooks at affordable prices and other learning materials for promoting Pakistan as knowledge- based society." Our country is confronted with many challenges in which education is one of them. Our education system is passing through the issues of quantitative expansion and qualitative assurance. One of the qualitative issues is the alignment between the curriculum and the textbooks. The common use of textbook in classroom teaching is inevitable<sup>14</sup>. It is a very useful and accessible resource which both the teachers and the taught can utilize according to their needs; therefore, the selection of an appropriate textbook is a process that needs careful attention<sup>15</sup>.

The findings their research study made by Ahmad. A, et al<sup>16</sup> concluded, "the condition of learning English at secondary level in N.W.F.P. (Khyber Pukhtunkhwa) is worse and there is a need to address these problems on priority bases especially in the Provincial government schools of N.W.F.P. (Khyber Pukhtunkhwa)". The aims of education cannot be achieved if poor quality of text books are provided to the students at secondary level .On the contrary, " if a text book is properly planned and utilized then it will be a useful tool for both the teacher and student"<sup>17</sup>.

**Statement of the Problem:** The purpose of this study was to review English Text Book at Secondary Level in the Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), Pakistan.

**Objectives:** Following were the objectives of this study: i. To analyze the views of the teachers and students about the get up, arrangement and suitability of the prose lessons and related exercises. ii. To know the suitability of the poems assessed by the teachers and students. iii. To present the opinions of the teachers and students about the approach and methodology used in grammar units and related exercises. iv. To put forward suitable recommendations for the improvement of the Textbook.

**Delimiation of the Study:** The study was delimited to: i. The views of the teachers and students only, ii. Only four areas i.e., get up of the book, arrangement and suitability of the lessons and exercises, suitability of the poems and approach, methodology of the grammar units and related exercises. iii. Secondary level English Teachers and students in District Mardan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa only.

## Research Methodology

The study was delimited to analyze the views of the teachers and students for four areas about English Textbook 2 for Class 10<sup>TH</sup> Published by NWFP (Khyber Pakhtunkhawa) Peshawar, Pakistan.

**Population and Sampling:** Population of the study comprised all the English Teachers and students studying the subject of English Textbook 2 in all Secondary Schools (Government / Private, Boys / Girls, Urban / Rural and Residential / Days Schools) in District Mardan. Due to time constraints and limited resources, eight Secondary Schools were selected as sample using cluster random sampling technique. Two English Teachers and five students each studying English Book 2 were taken from each of sampled schools using convenient sampling.

**Instrumentation:** A close ended structured questionnaire was developed for the English Teachers and Secondary Class students studying the subject of English Book 2. The questionnaire was framed on five points Lickert Scale and comprised twenty items. The facets of the items were focused on get up, arrangement and suitability of the lessons and exercises, suitability of the poems and approach and methodology in grammar units of the English Book 2 for the 10<sup>th</sup> Class. The questionnaire was administered to the English teachers and secondary class students studying the subject of English Book 2 for the collection of data by the researcher.

**Pilot Testing:** For the improvement and refinement of research instrument, the questionnaire was administered first to the students and teachers of one school in District Mardan, Khyber Pakhtunkhawa and then to the research scholars. In the light of their suggestions, some of the items were rephrased and modified for the final administration on the whole sample.

## Results and Discussion

**Data Analysis:** The data which were collected through the questionnaire was analyzed by using Mean Score, Standard Deviation and Percentage. The following scale for Mean Score was used to draw the results:

The Mean Score= 1.00 --- 1.50 = Strongly Disagree

The Mean Score= 1.51 --- 2.50 = Disagree

The Mean Score= 2.51 --- 3.50 = Undecided

The Mean Score= 3.51 --- 4.50 = Agree

The Mean Score= 4.51 --- 5.00 = Strongly Agree

**Data Tabulation and Anaylysis:** Table 1 shows that the respondents were, "Agree" to the easy readability of the present textbook with Mean Score, Standard Deviation and Percentage as = 4.4, 5.1,96% . They "Disagreed" to the durability of the binding of the book with Mean Score, Standard Deviation and Percentage as= 2.2, 3.8 and 73% correspondingly. They were, "Undecided" about the appropriateness of the front and title pages, the good quality of paper used and the spelling mistakes

in the book with Mean Score= 3.44,2.94, 2.7 and Standard Deviation= 3.5, 2.9,1.8 and Percentage as= 66%,52% and 55% respectively.

Table 2 shows that the respondents were, “Agree” to the items related to motivation of the students in the lessons; their motivation through the difficult words and their meanings given at the end of the lesson, answering the short questions by them easily and their development of comprehension level in the lessons portion with Mean Score = 4.0,4.0,4.1,3.7 and Standard Deviation = 4.2,5.1,4.5,3.8 and Percentage= 84%,89%,89%,82% respectively. The respondents were, “Undecided” about relativity of the lessons in the textbook with the students’ previous knowledge with Mean Score= 3.4, Standard Deviation= 2.4 and Percentage= 57%.

Table 3 shows that the respondents were, “Undecided” about the suitability of the poems with the abilities and interest of the students and the ability of the students in paraphrasing the stanzas with Mean Score= 3.5,3.3, Standard Deviation= 3.0,2.5 and

Percentage as= 68%,55%. But they, “Agreed” that the poems in the text are according to the age level of the students; students answer questions based on stanzas easily and the knowledge of the students about the rhyming words and rhyming schemes with Mean Score= 3.6,3.7,3.8; Standard Deviation=2.0,4.4,3.6 and Percentage as= 66%,80%,77% accordingly.

Table 4 shows that the respondents, “Agreed” with the arrangement of grammar units in proper sequence and doing the exercises by the students with the help of the examples with Mean Score= 4.0, 4.1, Standard Deviation= 3.1, 4.9 and Percentage as =79%, 93 %. They were, “Undecided” about the interests of the students in doing the exercises in the grammar unit with Mean Score= 3.5 Standard Deviation= 3.1and Percentage as = 68%. The respondents also, “Agreed” that the grammar units develop the writing and speaking skills of the students and are related to the previous knowledge of the students with Mean Score= 3.8, 3.6; Standard Deviation = 2.9, 4.0, and Percentage as= 73%, 70%.

**Table-1**  
**Get up of the textbook**

S.No	Item	M	SD	%
1	The front and back title pages of the present textbook are appropriate	3.44	3.5	66
2	The paper of the textbook is of good quality	2.94	2.9	52
3	The textbook is easily readable	4.4	5.1	96
4	There are spellings mistakes in the textbook	2.7	1.8	55
5	The binding of the book is durable	2.2	3.8	73

**Table-2**  
**Arrangement and Suitability of Lessons and Exercises**

S.No	Item	M	SD	%
1	Lessons in the book motivate the students.	4.0	4.2	84
2	Lessons are related with the previous knowledge of the students.	3.4	2.4	57
3	Difficult words and their meanings given at the end of the lessons motivate the students in their learning.	4.0	5.1	89
4	Short questions given in the exercises are easily answered by the students in their own words.	4.1	4.5	89
5	The lessons develop the comprehension level of the students.	3.7	3.4	82

**Table-3**  
**Suitability of the Poems**

S.No	Item	M	SD	%
1	Poems given in the text are according to the abilities and interest of the students	3.5	3.0	68
2	The poems are according to the age level of the students	3.6	2.0	66
3	The students are able to paraphrase the stanzas given in the poems	3.3	2.5	55
4	Questions based on stanzas are easily answered by the students	3.7	4.4	80
5	Students know the rhyming words and rhyming scheme in the poems	3.8	3.6	77

**Table-4**  
**Approach and Methodology in Grammar Units**

S.No	Item	M	SD	%
1	Grammar units are arranged in proper sequence	4.0	3.1	79
2	Examples given for explanation help the students in doing the exercises	4.1	4.9	93
3	The grammar units develop the writing and speaking skills of the students	3.8	2.9	73
4	Students take interest in doing the exercises in the grammar units	3.5	3.1	68
5	Grammar units are related to the previous knowledge of the students.	3.6	4.0	70

**Findings:** There were 20 items in the questionnaire. The facets of the items were focused on get up, arrangement and suitability of the lessons and exercises, suitability of the poems and approach and methodology in grammar units of the English Book 2 for the 10<sup>th</sup> Class. It was administered to 56 respondents out of which 40 were students studying in Class 10<sup>th</sup> and 16 English Teachers teaching to the same class. Out of 20 items 12 items were accepted as, "Agreed" with 60 %. One item was rejected as, "Disagreed" with 5 %. Seven items were, "Undecided" with 35 %. Thus the overall response of the respondents was positive on the questionnaire and its items.

## Conclusion

i. The present Textbook for Secondary School English Book 2 was found to be easily readable by both the teachers and students. They found no difficulty in reading it. ii. The binding of the text book being taught was not durable. iii. Both the teachers and the students found that prose lessons in the textbook motivate the learners. iv. The study revealed that difficult words and their meanings given at the end of each prose lessons motivated the students in their learning. v. Students could easily answer short questions in their own words given in the exercises which are based on prose text. vi. Prose lessons given in the text developed the comprehension level of the students. vii. Poems in the textbook were found to be according to the age level of the students. viii. The study revealed that students could answer questions based on stanzas easily and knew the rhyming words and rhyming scheme in the poems. ix. The arrangement of grammar units were found to be in proper sequence. x. Examples given for explanation were found to be helpful for students in doing the exercises. xi. Grammar units in the textbook developed the writing and speaking skills of the students and were found to be related to the previous knowledge of the learners.

**Recommendations:** i. Since the secondary level students have to make frequent use of their textbooks particularly of compulsory subjects like English both in classrooms and at home, therefore, the binding of the textbooks should be strong enough. The publishers, the concerned experts of the printing process and the textbook designers have to give due attention to make the binding of the English book 2 everlasting and durable. ii. An effective teaching methodology by the teachers is needed to make the prose lessons more interesting and keep the students always motivated. They need to teach the content of the prose lessons by using Audio Visual Aids and latest educational technology. iii. English is an international as well as foreign language. Vocabulary is the backbone of every language and plays key role in the process of effective learning. Meanings of the difficult words make the passages easy to grasp for the students. The students need to be given frequent oral and written practice in classrooms in retaining the difficult words and their meanings. The teachers concerned should make the learners equally aware of the proper application of the words in subjective writings. Explaining the meanings of the difficult

words in Urdu and local language can keep the interest of the students more high and the learning process more effective. Due weightage need to be given in the external Board of Intermediate and Secondary Examinations papers to vocabulary portion. iv. In order to develop the creative capability and originality in the writing skill, short questions given in the exercises need frequent rephrasing during the process of teaching in the class. Other than the short questions given in the exercises, the teachers should frame different questions to make the concepts more clear. The pattern and style of the short questions should be frequently changed to maximize the understanding level and creative writing skill of the learners and minimize reliance on cramming only. v. Different comprehension passages based on daily life experiences should be given to students for thorough reading. Unseen passages with inferential and tricky questions should also be given to the students as class work as well as home work to develop their comprehension level more. vi. While conducting co-curricular activities, equal consideration should be given by the schools to poetry recitation. The learners should be taught general and extra poems other than in the textbook according to their age level through multimedia and Available Audio Visual Aids which will develop their skill of poetry recitation. vii. The inborn talent of the students related to the composition of poems in English should not be overlooked at any stage of schooling. Teachers should groom such type of creative qualities of the students. viii. Besides exercises related to the correct usage of grammar in the textbook, students should be given general exercises to develop their skill in continuous writing in English.

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