

EVALUATION OF THE FEDERAL ENGLISH TEXTBOOK OF GRADE ONE OF
FEDERAL SCHOOLS IN PAKISTAN

¹Asra Khan, ²Sundas Rafique*, ³Shafaq Khalid

1. Assistant Professor, Department of English, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan, Pakistan.
2. M. Phil. Scholar, Department of English, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan, Pakistan.
3. Lecturer, Department of English, Akhuwat College for Women, Chakwal, Pakistan.

*Corresponding Author Email: sundasrafiq795@gmail.com

Abstract

A textbook is a valuable resource that collects relevant information and knowledge. However, textbooks often have limitations, making textbook evaluation crucial to determine their effectiveness. Therefore, this research is an evaluation of federal English textbook of grade 1 used in schools under the federal directorate of education in Pakistan. The textbook is based on national education policy 2017-2025 and is approved by Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, Government of Pakistan. The study aims to assess the content and pedagogy (by focusing on the content, vocabulary and grammar, and exercises and activities) and visual appeal of the textbook. The analysis is carried out qualitatively by adapting Miekley's (2005) checklist to subjectively interpret the text. Convenience sampling is employed, with the first five units of the textbook selected for analysis to thoroughly examine the text. The findings of each element are labeled according to the terms used by Miekley (2005) as "Excellent", "Good", "Adequate", "Poor", or "Totally lacking". The findings show that the textbook is excellent in relation to its content having organization, vocabulary and grammar having coherence and variety, and visual appeal as pleasing and aesthetic. However, the textbook's content is poor in showing the target language culture, providing authentic samples of language, and in its exercises and activities, which fail to effectively promote interactivity and comprehension skills. Moreover, the content totally lacks real-life problems that could challenge students to reflect critically. The present research is significant because it can assist educators as well as textbook developers to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the textbook.

Keywords: textbook evaluation, content and pedagogy, visual appeal, federal English textbook, grade 1

Introduction

Importance of textbooks

Prior to the prevalent usage of the internet, teachers of English language relied heavily on textbooks as a primary source for teaching practices (Richards, 1998). In fact, many educators still find it challenging to conduct language activities without access to textbooks (Jahan et al., 2020). Davison (1975) proposes that after the teacher, the textbook is the utmost significant element in a foreign language classroom. Hutchinson and Torres (1994) also advise that textbooks should be considered as an essential component of English language teaching. The advantages of using a textbook include more liberation in student learning, letting them to advance self-directed learning skills (Ur, 2015). A disadvantage of not using a textbook is that students may become excessively dependent on their teachers for direction (Ur, 2015). Moreover, printed resources are often beheld as more trustworthy and upright than teacher-generated resources (Sheldon, 1988). In Pakistan, where educators frequently lack the essential training to select auxiliary resources for their language classrooms, they incline to be dependent on textbooks (Jahan et al., 2020). This dependence is comprehensible, as a well-designed and accurately made textbook can deliver educators with a firm base for applying effective teaching approaches and practices (Jahan et al., 2020).

To further understand this, we need to define what makes a textbook well-designed. Miekley (2005) provides four criteria to consider when evaluating the quality of an ESL textbook in the form of a checklist: content, vocabulary and grammar, exercises and activities and attractiveness of the textbook. The content of the textbook is important to evaluate as Nazeer et al. (2015) states that a textbook is usually a primary source of content and teaching methods for teachers to use in their classrooms and to transmit the information to the younger generation. Miekley's (2005) checklist determines the value of content based on the organization of subject matter, depiction of target language culture, inclusion of authentic language samples, real-life issues, a range of literary genres, and sentence structures. Similarly to Miekley's (2005) point of view about organization in subject matter, Ahour and Ahmadi (2012) also state that textbooks are a means of transmitting knowledge in a structured manner. The content can be used for real-life issues by presenting global issues in a balanced way (UNESCO, 2016), helping students recognize their own biases and encouraging them to challenge those biases (Fuchs et al., 2020), and presenting historical events by showing both sides of the issue and encouraging students to think critically about what they're reading (Gaul, 2014, as cited in UNESCO, 2016).

Miekley (2005) also determines the value of vocabulary and grammar in a textbook based on the presentation of new words in a variety of ways and the ordering of grammar rules in an increasingly difficult and coherent way. While the value of exercises and activities is determined by their interactivity and their ability to make students read for comprehension. Lastly, Miekley (2005) determines the attractiveness of the textbook based on the appearance of the title page, the aesthetic quality of imagery, images that add meaning to the text and interesting textual material. Hall (2011) also focuses on the attractiveness of the textbook, stating that textbooks offer a

combination of exciting and motivating language input that inspires students. The design elements in textbooks should be grade-specific and chosen carefully to help students focus and understand what they're reading, as well as to encourage them to use the textbook (The Education Policy Toolbox, 2022).

Analysis vs. Evaluation

Rea-Dickens and Germaine (1994) stress that evaluation is a necessary aspect of teaching as well as learning. According to Nazeer et al. (2015), evaluation can take different forms, depending on what we're trying to evaluate. Evaluation is a structured procedure that includes assembling and analyzing data to decide whether the information is effective (Nazeer et al., 2015).

It's worth noting that there's a difference between "analysis" and "evaluation". Littlejohn (1998) and McGrath (2002) put it as analysis is about uncovering what's there, whereas evaluation is about finding out if what we're looking for is there and giving it a value. In other words, analysis is about describing what's present, while evaluation is about judging the quality or effectiveness of that information.

Problem Statement

According to Bano (2005), in Pakistan, textbooks are widely regarded as the primary authority on knowledge for both students and teachers. While according to Jahan et al. (2020), teachers tend to rely heavily on textbooks in Pakistan. So it is necessary for researchers to evaluate textbooks. Hence, the aim of this research is to evaluate the federal English textbook for grade 1.

Significance of this research

Mahmood (2011) states that due to the significant role of textbooks in many developing countries, including Pakistan, it is essential to evaluate these materials by those who will use them and experts in the field. So this study is significant as it is going to assist educators as well as textbook developers to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the federal English textbook of grade 1, in relation to its content and pedagogy and visual appeal.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of this research is to evaluate the federal English textbook for grade 1.

The objectives are:

- 1) To evaluate the content and pedagogy of the textbook, focusing on the content and the presentation of vocabulary, grammar, exercises and activities.
- 2) To assess the visual appeal of the textbook through its imagery and overall textual design.

Research Questions

- 1) How effective is the textbook in terms of its content, vocabulary, grammar, exercises and activities?
- 2) How effectively does the textbook appeal aesthetically through its imagery and overall textual design?

Literature Review

Textbook Evaluation

According to Tomlinson (1998), textbook evaluation is about measuring the worth of the material found in the textbook. According to Jahan et al. (2020), a thoughtful analysis of the textbook can help identify its strengths and limitations in a specific context, thereby enabling teachers to make informed decisions about how to utilize the material to maximize student learning outcomes.

For Tomlinson (2001), textbook evaluation is an essential part of the applied linguistics field, where educators, supervisors, managers, and material designers can assess the efficiency and value of educational materials. Grant (1987) points out that there is no such thing as a perfect textbook, and therefore, it is needed to assess English language teaching resources to determine their worth and meet the needs of users in educational settings. Genesee (2001) describes textbook evaluation as a procedure of gathering, examining, and interpreting material to improve language competence and enhance educational programs. In addition, Sheldon (1988) highlights the professional, financial, and administrative benefits that come with selecting a suitable language-teaching textbook.

According to Miekley (2005), even though the value of ESL reading textbooks has enhanced significantly, choosing the right one for students can still be a challenging task for educators. Program managers and educators are often under stress to adopt new textbooks regularly, and sometimes they have to make a decision quickly. Despite the many excellent ESL textbooks available, choosing the right one can be overwhelming. Some educators may ask too many questions during the evaluation process and never complete it, while others may choose a textbook without thoroughly evaluating it, only to replace it later with another one that wasn't thoroughly evaluated. This highlights the importance of having a systematic approach to evaluating ESL textbooks to ensure that teachers and administrators can make informed decisions about which ones to use (Miekley, 2005).

Contemporary studies of textbook evaluation in Pakistan

Karim and Haq (2014) examined two English language teaching textbooks used in Pakistani schools, focusing on the hidden ideological assumptions and cultural values embedded in their content. They analyzed the textbooks' units, examining the genre, content, and hidden curriculum. Their second part of the analysis focused on the exercises at the end of each unit. The findings showed that the textbooks promote distinct cultures of language learning and teaching, reflecting different ideologies and values. Nazeer et al. (2015) also assessed the strengths and flaws of secondary school textbooks for 6th and 7th graders. The findings indicated that the textbooks lack vital features, even in basic linguistic abilities, and hence must be reviewed. Meanwhile, Shah et al. (2015) conducted a similar evaluation of English textbooks selected by Dar-e-Arqam School for 6th and 7th grades. Their results echoed the apprehensions of Nazeer et al. (2015), revealing that learners' major need was to improve their speaking skills,

but the syllabus focused too much on grammar, which was a minor requirement. The study concluded that the existing textbooks do not meet the requirements of Pakistani students and suggested that the school either review the textbooks or select others to guarantee fruitful English language learning. In alignment with this, Jahan et al. (2020) also recommended including authentic texts from real-life conditions to offer students with a regular spoken language experience and support them improve their language skills. They evaluated the usefulness of including the communicative language teaching approach in English textbook for grade 6. They developed a checklist to assess the textbooks' physical attributes, goals, content, and language skills. The findings revealed that the textbook needs to be reviewed to mirror modern communicative language teaching methods. Moreover, Gurmani et al. (2021) studied the vocabulary in English textbooks for 11th and 12th grade students in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. The researchers used software to analyze the corpus of the books and compared it to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) criteria. The results indicated that both countries' textbooks lacked vocabulary, particularly in terms of word types and CEFR vocabulary criterions. However, the textbooks in Pakistan were found to have a bigger vocabulary size, more word types, and a more comprehensive CEFR vocabulary than those in Saudi Arabia. Meanwhile, Mariam et al.'s (2022) study focused on assessing the strengths and weaknesses of eight English language textbooks used in class. The results revealed that students were dissatisfied with the language representation, lesson topics, exercises, and content, seeking more engaging materials and follow-up activities. Furthermore, internal evaluation indicated that the language in the book was also monotonous and complex, failing to cater to the students' level. As a result, students struggled to comprehend the language. A similar concern was raised by Kakar & Kaukab (2023) in their study on English language textbooks in Baluchistan's secondary schools. They found that the textbooks covered all learning objectives specified in Pakistan's national curriculum, but the objectives were not effectively organized. The assessment strategies that were mostly based on lower-level cognitive skills, as described in Bloom's taxonomy, and prioritized "Grammar" and "Writing" competencies over "Reading Comprehension and Thinking" Skills. In contrast, "Oral communication" competency was largely neglected, and "listening skills" were completely ignored. Furthermore, the textbooks lacked guidelines for teachers and students on assessment practices. In another study, Khan (2024) analyzed the English textbooks published by the Punjab Textbook Board for grades 6, 7, and 8 using the Multiple Intelligences (MI) theory. The quantitative analysis revealed that the textbooks primarily emphasized linguistic intelligence, accounting for 100% of activities, but only minimally included other intelligences (between 3.6% to 15.8%). In contrast, students' MI profiles showed spatial intelligence as the most dominant with 96.3%. The findings suggest updating textbooks to include more MI activities and considering students' backgrounds to create engaging learning environments, boost student confidence, and enhance English proficiency.

Research Gap

The above literature highlights the significance of evaluating English language textbooks in Pakistani schools to make sure that they are effective. Moreover there is lack of research in relation to federal textbooks' evaluation, so this research is an effort to fill the gap by evaluating federal English textbook of grade 1.

Methodology

The first 5 units of the federal English textbook of grade 1 are evaluated qualitatively by using Miekley's (2005) checklist. Miekley (2005) provides a checklist which is a helpful way to judge if a textbook is good for ESL/EFL students. Each question in the list comes from new studies or older checklists about teaching second languages (L2) and checking textbooks in general. The checklist takes some parts from Byrd's (2001) and Skierso's (1991) lists. This checklist not only helps pick English textbooks faster but also ensures the process is done with more trust (Miekley, 2005).

The checklist is distributed into three main segments; textbook, teacher's manual and context. As Miekley (2005) suggests that the textbook evaluator may mark any item in the checklist as mandatory, optional or not applicable, so last two parts (i.e. teacher's manual and context) of the checklist are marked as not applicable. The checklist is also adapted because of the reasons that this qualitative study is a small scale research, while different parts of the checklist demand the corpus analysis of the textbook, classroom observation, comparison of the curriculum with the textbook and knowing teachers' perceptions to find concluding results. Moreover, teacher's manual was not found to be evaluated in terms of the criteria provided in the second part of the checklist. So the last two parts (i.e. teacher's manual and context) of the checklist are marked as "not applicable" in the context of this research, while the textbook is evaluated by applying the first part of the checklist. The first part consists of four subparts; content, vocabulary and grammar, exercises and activities and attractiveness of the text and physical make-up. The checklist (Miekley, 2005) determines the value of content based on the organization of subject matter, depiction of target language culture, inclusion of authentic language samples, real-life issues, a range of literary genres, and sentence structures. While the value of vocabulary and grammar is determined based on the presentation of new words in a variety of ways and the ordering of grammar rules in an increasingly difficult and coherent way. The value of exercises and activities is determined by their interactivity and their ability to make students read for comprehension. Lastly, Miekley (2005) determines the attractiveness of the textbook based on the appearance of the title page, the aesthetic quality of imagery, images that add meaning to the text and interesting textual material.

Figure 1 shows the adapted form of the checklist (Miekley, 2005) with which the textbook is evaluated.

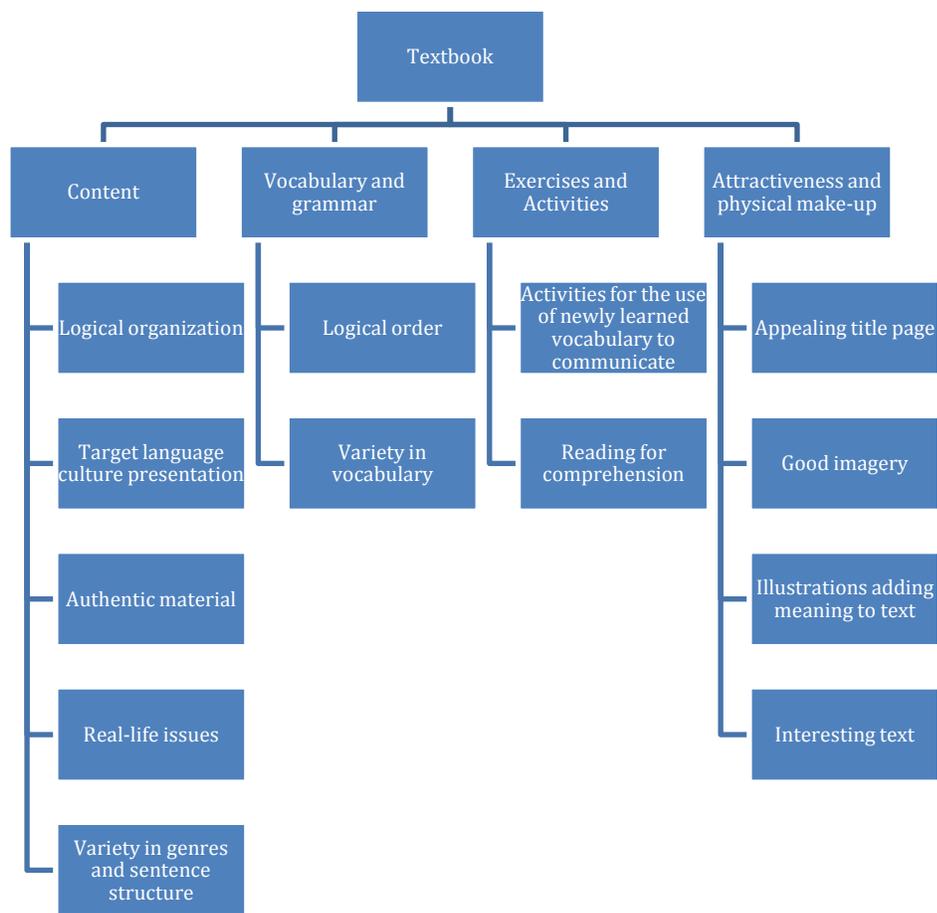


Figure 1 Adapted from Miekley (2005)

Analysis and findings

Content

Is the subject matter presented in an organized manner?

The subject matter is offered in a logical way as Unit 1 lets students recall what they have learnt in the previous class (i.e. English alphabets in capital and small letters). Then Unit 2 is a poem which helps students learn about how English alphabets are used in words and how they sound. The poem presents the use of all the alphabets, for example, the use of “a” is presented as:
“a says a-a-a.

An Apple is sweet.

Thank you Allah for such a nice treat!” (Federal Textbook of English Grade 1, 2020)

After introducing students with the use of English alphabets in words, Unit 3 introduces students with prose text of English. The boy named Ali introduces himself to the readers. He uses many number words which will help students to know that how numbers are used in English prose. For example, he says “I am six years old” (Federal Textbook of English Grade 1, 2020). Moreover, the students can also learn how to introduce themselves. Unit 4 is again a prose text, as Nadiya is introduced in third person narration. This Unit narrates the story of Nadiya and her sister making a pencil shaving art. Unit 5 is a poem which introduces students with names of things and their colors. The poem introduces rhyming words with the change of just one alphabet so students will understand that, with the change of alphabets, sounds and meanings also change. For example “rose” and “nose” in the following lines: “Red is the color of the rose, that I smell with my nose” (Federal Textbook of English Grade 1, 2020).

Does the content serve as a window into learning about the target language culture?

As a whole the content does not represent the English culture, rather the content represents Pakistani culture, as Unit 1 is about English alphabets. Unit 2 presents all things related to Pakistani culture (e.g. kite) except “pancake” which may represent English culture. Unit 3 also represents Pakistani cultural values, like the boy lives with his parents, grandparents and a brother and two sisters. The boy plays with his brother and sisters, as well as with his toys. During night, his father tells him a story. The only reference to English culture is the mention of “sandwich” and “fruit bun” which the boy eats during the lunch break in the school. In Unit 4 Nadiya and her sister are making pencil shaving art and there is nothing which may represent English culture. Unit 5 is a poem about colors, so this unit also does not represent English culture.

Are the reading selections authentic pieces of language?

None of the text is an authentic piece of English language, except the poem “colours” (unit 5) by Rebecca T. Besser.

Compared to texts for native speakers, does the content incorporate real-life problems that challenge the reader to think analytically about her worldview?

Nothing in the text challenges the students to think critically about their worldview, which is good at this early level.

Are the text collections demonstrative of a range of literary genres, and do they encompass several sentence structures?

The text collections are illustrative of different literary categories, as Unit 2 and 5 consist of poems, while Unit 3 contains an introduction of a boy and his family and Unit 4 presents an activity about making pencil shaving art.

The sentence structure in the units is as follows:

Unit 1 consists of English alphabets, so no sentences are present.

Unit 2 contains various types of sentence structures, including, simple, descriptive, interrogative and rhyming sentences.

Unit 3 contains a variety of sentence structures, like simple, compound, complex, and descriptive sentences.

Unit 4 contains various sentence structures, like simple, compound, and imperative sentences.

Unit 5 contains various types of sentence structures, like simple, descriptive and rhyming sentences.

Table 1 shows the rating of content in terms of the criteria provided in Miekley’s (2005) checklist.

Table 1 Content rating in the textbook

1) Content	Excellent 4	Good 3	Adequate 2	Poor 1	Totally Lacking 0
1.1) Is the subject matter presented in an organized manner?	✓				
1.2) Does the content serve as a window into learning about the target language culture?				✓	
1.3) Are the reading selections authentic pieces of language?				✓	
1.4) Compared to texts for native speakers, does the content incorporate real-life problems that challenge the reader to think analytically about her worldview?					✓
1.5) Are the text collections	✓				

demonstrative of a range of literary genres, and do they encompass several sentence structures?

Vocabulary and Grammar

Are the grammar rules offered in a coherent way and in an increasing level of difficulty?

Yes grammatical rules are offered in an increasing level of difficulty, as Unit 1 serves as the base of English language by containing English alphabets, hence it contains no grammatical rules. Unit 2 is a poem, showing how English alphabets are used in words. In the exercise of Unit 2, the students are required to match nouns with pictures. Then they are provided examples of pronouns and later asked to tick the right pronoun for the person or thing shown in the picture. Then Unit 3 introduces a boy “Ali” and his family. The text contains possessive pronouns (e.g. “my”) and is presented in simple present tense. In the exercise, students are required to fill in the blanks by writing nouns. Then they are provided examples of substituting pronouns according to context and later asked to fill the blanks by choosing appropriate pronoun. Unit 4 describes the method of making pencil shaving art. It contains simple present as well as imperative sentences. In the exercise, students are provided examples of singular and plural nouns and then asked to write plural form of singular nouns (by adding “s”). After that, learners also have to fill the blanks by writing “this /that” (demonstrative singular pronouns) by looking at the pictures, provided with the sentences. Unit 5 consists of a poem about colors. In the exercise, students are provided examples of masculine and feminine nouns and then they have to match masculine nouns to the feminine nouns. After that, students are also required to fill the blanks by writing “these/those” (demonstrative plural pronouns) by looking at the pictures, provided with the sentences.

Are the new words presented in different ways?

Yes new words are presented in a variety of ways, as Unit 1 requires the students to trace and then copy three lettered words (like “cat”). In the exercise of Unit 2, words related to physical objects (“igloo”, “quill” and “worm”) are given from the unit and students are required to read them with their meanings. Then the students are also required to match the rhyming words (like “cat” and “mat”). In the exercise of Unit 3, action verbs (“study”, “complete” and “watch”) are given from the unit, which students have to read with their meanings. Then students are demanded to fill in the missing letters from the words used in the Unit. In the exercise of Unit 4, imperative verbs (“collect”, “draw” and “paste”) are given from the unit, which students have to read with their meanings. In the exercise of Unit 5, adjectives (“bright”, “fluffy” and “high”) are given from the unit, which students have to read with their meanings. Then they are provided examples of rhyming words and then they have to circle those words which rhyme with each other.

Table 2 shows the rating of vocabulary and grammar in terms of the criteria provided in Miekley’s (2005) checklist.

Table 2 *Vocabulary and grammar rating in the textbook*

2) Vocabulary and Grammar	Excellent 4	Good 3	Adequate 2	Poor 1	Totally Lacking 0
2.1) Are the grammar rules offered in a coherent way and in an increasing level of difficulty?	✓				
2.2) Are the new words presented in different ways?	✓				

Exercises and Activities

Are there interactive and task-based activities that necessitate students to use newly learned vocabulary to communicate?

All the units contain interactive activities in the form of written dialogues which students have to read and rehearse in pairs, except Unit 1, which is about recalling English alphabets. But the problem with these activities is that they do not let students use the vocabulary learned in the unit, instead they all provide new vocabulary to students to read and rehearse in pairs. As in Unit 2, students have to greet and introduce each other by using the sentences provided in the exercise. But the activity doesn't use the vocabulary that has been used in the unit; instead, it introduces students with new vocabulary with which they are not familiar. In Unit 3, students have to greet and express social courtesies by using the lines of the dialogue provided in the exercise. This activity also doesn't use the vocabulary used in the unit; instead, it provides new vocabulary to students. In Unit 4, students have to give commands and respond to the command verbally by using the lines provided in the exercise. This Activity also does not have the vocabulary of the unit, yet it follows the structure of the unit, as imperative sentences are used in the unit. In Unit 5, students have to express their needs and reply accordingly by using the lines used in the exercise. The activity just uses the word “color” which is taken from the unit; all other words were not used in the unit.

Do guidelines in the exercises tell students to read for comprehension?

No instruction is explicitly given to the students about reading for comprehension in the textbook, yet the exercises contain a section named “comprehension” which contains some questions that students have to answer after reading the unit. These “comprehension” sections are discussed below:

Unit 1 consists of English alphabets, so it does not contain the “comprehension” section. While in unit 2, questions are not related to comprehension, instead they check the students’ liking or disliking of alphabet poems and how much words they have memorized by reading the unit (e.g. “Tell the names of two new objects starting with letter “t”). In Unit 3, first 4 questions are related to judge that with how much understanding the students have read the unit, while question 5 does not check the comprehension, yet it is an activity based statement, related to students’ personal

life (“Share three things that you do after school”). In Unit 4, first 3 questions check that whether students have read the unit with comprehension, while question 4 and 5 are related to students’ personal liking or disliking and does not relate to the comprehension of the unit (e.g. “Would you like to make your own artwork? What things will you use?”). In Unit 5, only first question is related to the comprehension of the poem, while last 2 questions are not related to the unit, instead they relate to students’ personal liking and disliking and their general observation (e.g. “How do you see different colors?”).

Table 3 shows the rating of exercises and activities in terms of the criteria provided in Miekley’s (2005) checklist.

Table 3 Exercises and activities rating in the textbook

3) Exercises and Activities	Excellent 4	Good 3	Adequate 2	Poor 1	Totally Lacking 0
3.1) Are there interactive and task-based activities that necessitate students to use newly learned vocabulary to communicate?				✓	
3.2) Do guidelines in the exercises tell students to read for comprehension?				✓	

Physical make-up and attractiveness

Is the title page of the textbook pleasing?

The title is attractive as it is colorful and contains interactive illustrations of trees, sun and flowers with children.

Are the images of great aesthetic excellence?

The visual images are of high aesthetic quality, as Unit 1 starts with a picture of a train which has its bogies in the form of first three alphabets of English, in each, a child is looking outside. Unit 2 contains the image of a home, a flag and English alphabets. Unit 3 contains the image of two girls and two boys standing in a grassy ground. A bird is sitting on the hand of a girl. The unit also contains another image of a family, sitting in the TV lounge. Unit 4 contains the image of two pencils which are decorated as if they are flowers. Unit 5 contains the image of a girl who is sitting and painting happily. Another image shows the bright rainbow and flowers.

Does the pictures enhance the meaning of the text rather than detracting from it?

The images add meaning to the text, as in unit 1, which is about English alphabets, the image shows a train which has its bogies in the form of first three alphabets of English. In unit 2, the small images add meaning to the text by showing the things which are being mentioned in the lines of the poem (for example, apple, bee, egg, fish, goat, house etc.). In unit 3, the image adds

meaning to the text by showing the type of activities and family structure which the text describes. In unit 4, the image adds meaning to the text by showing things which are needed for pencil shaving art. In unit 5, which is about colors, the image adds meaning to the text by showing the color of the sky, flower, clouds and grass.

Is the text exciting enough that learners will delight in reading it?

Overall the text is interesting, as Unit 1 lets students recall English alphabets which they learned in the previous class. Unit 2 consists of a poem about English alphabets. Unit 3 contains an introduction of a boy and his family. Unit 4 is a guide to create simple artwork. Unit 5 consists of a poem about colors.

Table 4 shows the rating of attractiveness of the text and physical make-up in terms of the criteria provided in Miekley’s (2005) checklist.

Table 4 *Attractiveness rating of the textbook*

4) Attractiveness and Physical Make-up	Excellent 4	Good 3	Adequate 2	Poor 1	Totally Lacking 0
4.1) Is the title page of the textbook pleasing?	✓				
4.2) Are the images of great aesthetic excellence?	✓				
4.3) Does the pictures enhance the meaning of the text rather than detracting from it?	✓				
4.4) Is the text exciting enough that learners will delight in reading it?	✓				

Discussion

The two objectives of the research were to evaluate the content and pedagogy and visual appeal of the textbook. The findings of each element are categorized based in the criteria outlined by Miekley (2005) as “Excellent”, “Good”, “Adequate”, “Poor”, or “Totally lacking”.

In relation to the first objective, the analysis of content shows that the subject matter is excellent in terms of its organization, a range of literary genres and sentence structures. However, it is poor in its authenticity and showing English culture. Additionally, the content totally lacks the real life problems that could challenge students to reflect critically. Despite these shortcomings, the researchers found the overall content satisfactory because the textbook is designed for grade 1 students, and it might not be necessary to emphasize English culture or real-life issues at this early stage.

Regarding vocabulary and grammar, the findings indicate that the textbook is excellent. Grammatical rules are offered in a coherent way and new vocabulary is presented in diverse ways.

In terms of exercises and activities, the findings suggest that the textbook, while containing some interactive activities and questions aimed at assessing reading comprehension, is poor overall. Most exercises are complex and fail to provide students with opportunities to practice vocabulary used in the unit; instead introducing new vocabulary for practice. Furthermore, the questions designed to evaluate reading comprehension actually focus more on memorization and personal opinions rather than true comprehension.

The second objective the research was to assess the visual appeal of the textbook. The findings show that the textbook is excellent in relation to its title page, visual imagery, illustrations, and the overall textual design, all of which can effectively engage students.

Conclusion

This research evaluated the federal English textbook for grade 1, focusing on its content and pedagogy as well as its visual appeal. The research concludes that the textbook is excellent in terms of its content having good organization and a variety of literary genres and sentence structures. It also excels in its presentation of vocabulary and grammar, which is coherent and varied, and in its visual appeal, with engaging title page, visual imagery, illustrations and overall textual design.

However, the textbook is poor in showing the target language culture and providing authentic samples of language. It also falls short in its exercises and activities, which fail to effectively promote interactivity and comprehension skills.

This study was a small scale research, with the analysis limited to the first five units of the textbook. Despite its limitation, the study offers valuable insights for textbook developers, suggesting areas for improvement to enhance the quality of textbooks.

References

- Ahour, T., & Ahmadi, E. (2012). Retrospective evaluation of textbook “Summit 2B” for its suitability for EFL undergraduate students. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 2(5), 195-202.
- Bano, Y. (2005). Curriculum and Textbooks: Issues and Challenges in Pakistan. *ANTRIEP Newsletter*, 10 (1), 3-8.
- Byard, P. (2001). Textbooks: Evaluation and selection and analysis for . *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*, 415-428.
- Davison, W. (1975). Factors in evaluating and selecting texts for the language classroom. *ELT Journal*, 30(4), 310-314.
- Education Policy Toolbox. (2022). Textbook availability and content. Retrieved from <https://policytoolbox.iiep.unesco.org/policy-option/textbook-availability-and-content/> [Last updated 2022]
- Federal Textbook of English Grade 1. (2020). National curriculum council, Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training.
- Fuchs, E., Otto, M., & Yu, S. (2020). Textbooks and inclusive education. *Background paper prepared for the 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report: Inclusion and education*. Paris, France: UNESCO.
- Genesee, F. (2001). Evaluation In R. Carter, & D. Nunan (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages* (pp. 144-150). Cambridge University Press. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511667206.022>

- Grant, N. (1987). *Making the most of your textbook*. London: Longman.
- Gurmani, M. T. A., Yusoff, Z. S., & Shahid, C. (2021). An Evaluation of Vocabulary of English Textbooks of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia Through Cefr. *PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology*, 18(10), 3375-3387.
- Hall, G. (2011). *Exploring English language teaching: Language in action*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Hutchinson, T., & Torres, E. (1994). The textbook as agent of change. *ELT Journal*, 48(4), 315-328. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/elt/48.4.315>
- Jahan, K., Mukhtar, S., Yasmin, F., & Mushtaq, M. (2020). An evaluation of English textbook for grade 6: Application of communicative approach. *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation*, 24(7), 10203-10223.
- Kakar, Z. U. H., & Kaukab, S. R. (2023). An In-depth Analysis of Assessment Design: Alignment between Baluchistan English Language Textbooks and Pakistan National Curriculum. *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 11(4), 4396-4409.
- Karim, S., & Haq, N. (2014). Culture of language learning: A comparative study of English language textbooks used in Pakistan. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 10(2).
- Khan, A. (2024). An Evaluation of Middle English Textbooks of Punjab Textbook Board Using Multiple Intelligences Theory. *Pakistan Journal of Society, Education and Language (PJSEL)*, 10(2), 310-325.
- Littlejohn, A. (1998). *The analysis of language teaching materials: Inside the Trojan horse*. In B. Tomlinson (ed.) *Materials development in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press, 190-216.
- Mahmood, K. (2011). Conformity to quality characteristics of textbooks: The illusion of textbook evaluation in Pakistan. *Journal of research and Reflections in Education*, 5(2), 170-190.
- Mariam, S., Anwar, B., & Shoaib, M. (2022). English for Specific Purposes: An Evaluation of 8Th Class Textbook of English. *Jahan-e-Tahqeeq*, 5(2), 112-119.
- McGrath, I. (2002). *Materials evaluation and design for language teaching*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Miekley, J. (2005). ESL textbook evaluation checklist. *The reading matrix*, 5(2).
- Mukundan, J., R. Hajimohammadi and V. Nimehchisalem, (2011). Developing an English Language Textbook Evaluation Checklist. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research*. 4(6): 21-27.
- Nazeer, M., Shah, S. K., & Sarwat, Z. (2015). Evaluation of Oxon English textbook used in Pakistan public schools for 6th & 7th grade. *Journal for the Study of English Linguistics*, 3(1), 51-79.
- Rea-Dickins, P., & Germaine, K. (1994). *Evaluation*. Oxford University Press.
- Richards, J. (1998). *Beyond training*. Cambridge University press.
- Shah, S. K., Hassan, S., & Iqbal, W. (2015). Evaluation of Text-book as Curriculum: English for 6 and 7 Grades in Pakistan. *International Journal of English Language Education*, 3(2), 71-89.
- Sheldon, L. E. (1988). Evaluating ELT textbooks and materials. *English Language Teaching Journal*, 42, 237-246. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/elt/42.4.237>
- Skierso, A. (1991). Textbook selection and evaluation. *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*, 432-453.
- Tomlinson, B. (1998). *Materials development in language teaching*. Cambridge.
- UNESCO. (2016). Textbooks pave the way to sustainable development. *Global Education Monitoring Report: Policy paper 28*. Paris, France: UNESCO.
- Ur, P. (2015). *A Course in English Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press.