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Documentary Review of the Revised English Language Textbook's Effectiveness in Enhancing Oral Communicative Competence among High School Students

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Abstract

This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the revised English textbook, "Comprehensive English Book One for Class XI", prescribed by the Sindh Textbook Board, in meeting the language needs of ESL students in Pakistan, particularly in developing oral communicative competence (OCC) among high school students. Adopting an interpretivist approach, the research employed a qualitative methodology, specifically documentary review. Data were collected using a qualitative checklist and analyzed through thematic analysis. The findings revealed that the revised textbook is highly effective in enhancing students' OCC, with one of its notable strengths being the inclusion of a dedicated section for oral communication in each unit. However, the textbook lacks exercises specifically focused on pronunciation, stress, and intonation, omitting essential aspects of phonetics. Furthermore, the textbook does not adequately address listening skills, which are critical to language learning. The absence of clear assessment criteria for OCC is another significant shortcoming. Overall, while the textbook serves as a strong educational resource, addressing these gaps—particularly by incorporating phonetics and listening exercises—would further enhance its effectiveness in developing students' OCC. The study recommends that the national curriculum be revised to include explicit listening skill development, which is currently underrepresented, by incorporating these elements into both the curriculum and textbooks.

Keywords: Oral communicative competence, English textbook development, ESL teaching and learning.

1. Introduction

Enhancing students' ability to communicate effectively in spoken English is a vital goal in language education, particularly for high school students. The concept of communicative competence, as outlined by (Bakar et al., 2019), extends beyond grammatical knowledge to include the capacity to effectively use language in real-world situations. In recent times, there has been a growing emphasis on verbal communication skills, as both employers and educators acknowledge their significance in academic and career success (Zainuddin et al., 2019). This shift in focus is evident in the changes made to educational programs and textbook content, which now aims to create more opportunities for students to engage in meaningful verbal exchanges.

The global recognition of English has led to an increased demand for mastering English-speaking skills (Adriansen et al., 2023). In today's global community, communicative competence has become a crucial ability for individuals to seek active participation. The primary objective for English learners is to achieve fluency in spoken English, as verbal communication is often considered the benchmark for English proficiency (Prawiro et al., 2022). Moreover, students' communicative competence will significantly impact their professional communication in the future. In the current challenging environment, students must develop both academic expertise and oral communicative skills to enhance their learning and future employability prospects. Given the present economic climate, new graduates require more than just academic knowledge. They also require oral proficiency to maximize employment opportunities. Consequently, the ability to communicate effectively in English is widely regarded as a key factor for upward social mobility (Abbas et al., 2021).

In the realm of English as a Second Language (ESL) education, the quality of teaching materials is crucial for enhancing students' language skills (Polat & Erişti, 2019). Textbooks, being fundamental elements of the curriculum, greatly impact the growth of various linguistic abilities, including oral communicative competence (OCC). The challenge of developing proficient English communication skills is particularly significant in Pakistan, where English is not the primary language (Alfadda et al., 2020). From the researcher's viewpoint, Pakistani educators heavily depend on textbooks as their primary teaching resource ((Amir et al., 2020; Mahmood & Kausar, 2019; Manan, 2019). Likewise, the utilization of textbooks is a common approach in teaching English as a second language (Rambe et al., 2020). Dependence on the textbook is commonly found to address the extensive syllabus and meet examination requirements (Bhutto & Rind, 2022).

Research by Bashir et al., (2021) indicates that Pakistani teachers view textbooks as a vital tool in English language instruction, relying on them to cover the curriculum and prepare students for exams. An additional study by Ahmad et al., (2021)) show in Pakistan, textbooks are preferred due to their accessibility and

convenience. However, despite its significance in language instruction, some argue that relying solely on textbooks for language learning has certain limitations. These include the potential for outdated content, cultural bias, and inability to address individual student needs. This situation necessitates the integration of alternative teaching methods, such as multimedia resources, interactive exercises, and real-world scenarios to enhance language acquisition ((Pathan et al., 2024). Consequently, there is an urgent requirement for developing textbooks that not only cater to students' comprehensive language skill needs, particularly OCC, but also create an enjoyable learning experience for both students and educators. Textbooks, which serve as crucial instructional tools, significantly influence students' language learning journeys. Studies have demonstrated that well-crafted textbooks can promote the development of communicative competence by incorporating tasks that simulate authentic language use (Boediman, 2024; da Mota Lopes, 2020; Timalsina, 2023).

While efforts have been made to assess English textbooks used at various grade levels in Pakistan, the English language textbook for grade eleven in public schools and colleges has not been evaluated since its update by the Sindh Textbook Board (STBB) in 2022, following a gap of nearly five decades. The updated English language textbooks, utilized in high schools, are anticipated to mirror the pedagogical transition towards communicative language teaching (CLT), which prioritizes oral skills and interactive learning approaches (Ataboyev & Tursunovich, 2023). Nevertheless, the impact of these textbooks on enhancing oral communicative proficiency remains largely unexplored, particularly in environments where English is not the native language, such as Pakistan. The revised high school English language textbooks are expected to embody this shift towards CLT, emphasizing speaking abilities and interactive learning methods (Malikovna et al., 2022). However, the efficacy of these textbooks in fostering oral communicative competence has not been thoroughly investigated, especially in non-native English-speaking settings, such as Pakistan.

Therefore, the study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the revised English language textbook "*Comprehensive English Book One for Class XI*" (Test Edition), with a particular focus on English as a second language and the development of OCC. In Pakistan, as in many developing countries, teachers rely heavily on textbooks as primary instructional tools. Consequently, it is essential to assess the quality of the prescribed textbook in fostering OCC, given its potential impact on a vast number of Grade XI students. Evaluating the effectiveness of this textbook is therefore crucial to ensuring it supports the development of OCC among learners.

1.1 Research objective and question

The objective of the study was to review the revised English textbook in terms of its effectiveness in developing oral communicative competence. Therefore, the study attempted to answer the question "How is the revised English language

textbook effective in developing oral communicative competence of high school students"

1.2 Significance of the Study

The significance of the research study stems from its potential to improve English language teaching and learning in Pakistan and other similar contexts. The findings presented practical recommendations for refining English language textbooks to better support the development of oral communicative competence among second language learners. Additionally, the results offered valuable insights for teacher training institutions and inform policymakers, while making a significant contribution to the wider field of language acquisition and pedagogy. Ultimately, this study aimed to positively influence language education practices and expanded the global understanding of effective teaching methodologies.

1.3 Limitations of the study

This study focused specifically on the English language textbook prescribed by STBB in Pakistan and its effectiveness in developing oral communicative competence. The findings may not be applicable to other educational contexts or textbooks due to differences in curricula and teaching methods. Additionally, the evaluation primarily examined the impact of textbook on speaking skills, without thoroughly addressing other language skills like reading, writing, and grammar. As a result, the study provides a limited view of the textbook's overall effectiveness. Despite these limitations, it offers valuable insights into improving oral communicative competence within the Pakistani context.

2. Literature Review

Oral communicative competence (OCC) is recognized as a crucial element in second language acquisition, particularly within the realm of English language education (Cruz-Ramos & Herrera-Díaz, 2022). OCC refers to the learner's ability to engage in effective spoken communication across diverse social and academic settings, integrating both grammatical knowledge and pragmatic skills (Mumtaz & Quraishi, 2020; Zainuddin et al., 2019). Historically, language learning focused on reading and writing; however, in recent years, there has been a paradigm shift towards prioritizing speaking abilities. This shift is largely driven by globalization, which has positioned English as a global lingua franca, essential for international communication in business, education, and other fields (Madhavi et al., 2023). As English becomes increasingly important for communication across borders, the demand for enhanced speaking skills has grown substantially (Meinawati et al., 2020). In response, language educators and researchers have advocated for pedagogical strategies that prioritize OCC in language curricula (Rao, 2019). This has led to a rethinking of textbook design, particularly with the rise of communicative language teaching (CLT), which emphasizes real-life communication over rote memorization (Izquierdo et al., 2021). Research suggests that textbooks incorporating CLT principles, such as interactive dialogues, role-playing, and task-based learning, are more effective in promoting OCC by

allowing learners to practice speaking in realistic contexts ((Izquierdo et al., 2021; van der Wilt et al., 2023; Zhangli et al., 2024).

In Pakistan, English as a Second Language (ESL) remains a major challenge, with low proficiency levels persisting despite English being the official language for commerce and education (A. Ahmad et al., 2023). The educational system has not provided sufficient opportunities for English learning, resulting in a language barrier that impedes social and economic advancement (Naseem et al., 2021). Pakistan's ranking of 64 out of 113 countries in the English Proficiency Index (2023) indicates low proficiency. Obstacles to ESL acquisition in Pakistan include subpar learning environments, insufficient audio-visual resources, inadequate libraries, and unqualified language instructors (Kalyar et al., 2019). Other hurdles comprise ineffective teaching strategies, low student motivation, irregular class attendance, and family-related problems(Ali et al., 2020). While complete immersion in the target culture is crucial for effective language acquisition, this proves challenging for Pakistani learners (Akram et al., 2021).

Instructional materials play a crucial role in English as a Second Language (ESL) education, serving as the primary tools for fostering language development (Mahzan et al., 2020). Among these materials, textbooks are particularly important as they provide structured and sequenced content that guides learners through language acquisition (Alkhaldi, 2021). According to Chalabian (2020), textbooks are integral in offering systematic practice opportunities, helping students develop essential language skills in a coherent and organized manner. Textbooks are crucial in language instruction, functioning as the main resource for both educators and learners, especially in contexts with limited access to diverse teaching materials.

In ESL contexts, textbooks are typically designed to target multiple language competencies, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Vitta, 2023). Chalabian (2020) argues that well-designed textbooks can significantly enhance language learning by providing structured, scaffolded content aligned with pedagogical goals. This balanced approach ensures that learners are exposed to various aspects of the language, facilitating well-rounded linguistic growth (Baleghizadeh & Amiri Shayesteh, 2020). Chan and Cheuk (2020) emphasize that carefully constructed textbooks not only build foundational knowledge but also offer exercises that promote communicative competence, particularly in real-world contexts. In many developing nations, including Pakistan, textbooks often form the core around which language instruction is built (M. Ahmad et al., 2021). Consequently, the quality and content of these textbooks directly influence learners' language development, particularly their speaking skills (Ulum, 2022). In non-English speaking contexts like Pakistan, textbooks become even more essential. They provide a consistent and reliable framework for language learning that students might not otherwise encounter in their daily environment (Baleghizadeh et al., 2020). In these settings, textbooks often represent the primary

exposure students have to standardize English, making them indispensable tools for both teachers and learners (Alkhaldi, 2021). Therefore, instructional materials, especially textbooks, play a pivotal role in shaping ESL learners' overall language proficiency, significantly influencing their ability to communicate effectively.

Similarly, textbook design has evolved in response to the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach, which emphasizes the importance of real-life communication over rote memorization of language rules (C. T. Nguyen & Le, 2020). CLT encourages interaction, collaboration, and the use of authentic language tasks that mirror real-world communication (Ramadhanty & Hidayanto, 2022). Studies have shown that textbooks following CLT principles are more likely to enhance learners' OCC, as they incorporate speaking activities that promote spontaneous language use, problem-solving, and negotiation of meaning (Hassan et al., 2021).However, research also highlights several challenges in developing textbooks that effectively foster OCC. Nguyen (2021)found that many English language textbooks, particularly in South Asia, tend to prioritize reading and writing skills over speaking. This imbalance limits students' opportunities to practice and develop oral communicative abilities.

In Pakistan, English language textbooks play a fundamental role in language acquisition, emphasizing the necessity for learning materials that address diverse student requirements and provide them with enduring skills, particularly OCC (Ayu & Inderawati, 2019; Liu et al., 2021; Rambe et al., 2020). Nevertheless, existing textbooks have certain shortcomings that impede comprehensive language skill development, especially in OCC. Vitta (2023) asserts that textbooks are essential elements of language instruction and warrant careful examination. In Pakistan, textbooks face criticism for outdated teaching methods, subpar language quality, and an excessive focus on examinations, which hinders critical thinking and deeper comprehension (Alfadda et al., 2020; Syed et al., 2019). Consequently, the choice of textbooks is critical as they function as dependable teaching and learning resources. Textbooks should incorporate diverse exercises including pronunciation, reading, grammar activities, speaking, listening, and writing(Arshad et al., 2020). Thus, meticulous selection and assessment of textbooks are crucial to foster second language acquisition and OCC development. In the past, provincial government publishing houses were primarily tasked with supplying textbooks to public schools.

However, in 2001, the Federal government implemented a 'deregulation policy' to engage the private sector in school book development. This policy aimed to offer users choices and stimulate competition among providers, ultimately promoting knowledge, empowerment, and participation (Suhag & Khan, 2020). Despite this, in Pakistan, English language textbooks are often criticized for lacking sufficient interactive speaking tasks, which are essential for building OCC (Baig et al., 2021). As the revised English language textbooks used in Pakistani

high schools have aimed to address this gap, it is crucial to assess whether they effectively support the development of speaking skills.

Besides, the effectiveness of textbooks in improving oral communicative competence has been documented in various contexts. For instance, A study by Kausar et al., (2016) revealed that textbooks incorporating genuine communicative exercises resulted in improved speaking abilities among students. In contrast, Baig et al.,(2021) evaluated the "English for Class 8" textbook prescribed by the Punjab Textbook Board and found it inadequate in meeting learners' needs for acquiring English as a foreign language for communication purposes. The textbook's tasks lacked emphasis on sociolinguistic aspects and extended verbal expression in the target language. Incorporating exercises that prompt learners to produce meaningful utterances could significantly boost the textbook's efficacy in developing speech proficiency. The revision of the English language textbook for grade XI necessitated an evaluation to enhance language acquisition and oral communicative competence (OCC) development. Consequently, this study aimed to assess the revised English textbook for class XI in terms of its effectiveness in fostering oral communicative competence.

3. Research Methodology

This research study is grounded in an interpretivist philosophical framework, which posits that reality is socially constructed through human interactions and perceptions, rather than existing as an objective, independent entity (Clark et al., 2021). Within this paradigm, the study adopts a qualitative approach to examine the intricate relationship between English language textbooks and the development of OCC among high school students in Sindh, Pakistan. The interpretivist perspective guided the methodological choices, allowing for an in-depth exploration of language learning processes within this particular educational context (Scauso, 2020). To achieve this, a thorough review of the revised English textbook "Comprehensive English for Class XI" was conducted using a structured book review checklist. Special attention was given to the oral communication section of the textbook, which had been recently updated, to assess its relevance and potential for fostering OCC among students. Likewise, in line with the study's objectives, a case study approach was employed since this method allowed for a detailed examination of a specific case—the selected textbook—to uncover rich, holistic insights (Alam, 2021). A case study is particularly well-suited for studies seeking to evaluate the effectiveness of educational materials in real-world contexts, as it enables researchers to collect documentary evidence and analyze complex themes (Mishra & Dey, 2022). The unit of analysis in this research was the oral communication section of the textbook, which was critically assessed to evaluate its capacity to develop students' OCC. Through this approach, the study aims to provide meaningful insights into how effectively textbooks support language development.

3.1 Data collection method

The study utilized the document review method, a valuable approach in educational research that allows for the systematic examination of relevant materials (Morgan, 2022). In evaluating an English textbook designed to improve OCC of high school students, this method provided a structured way to assess a variety of documents, including educational reports, curriculum syllabi, student work, and pedagogical policies (Mackieson et al., 2019). Review of these materials enabled the researcher to draw on existing knowledge to refine the textbook, ensuring that it incorporated evidence-based practices, clear instructional objectives, and effective pedagogical strategies (Busetto et al., 2020). The approach allowed the textbook to be based on solid research while offering practical tools for enhancing students' oral communicative competence. To ensure systematic data collection, a textbook review checklist was utilized, comprising eight distinct indicators. Additionally, six open-ended questions were included to elicit more in-depth responses from the researcher. This approach aligns with the recommendations of various researchers and linguists (Busetto et al., 2020; Loraine et al., 2020; Munthe-Kaas et al., 2019), who advocate the use of checklists for evaluation purposes. The checklist employed in this study was specifically developed by the researcher to address the research problem effectively.

It was adapted from the study conducted by Syed et al., (2019) and further modified after a comprehensive review of relevant literature and in response to the study's objectives, ensuring it was well-suited to evaluate the target textbook and validate the findings. Likewise, thematic analysis, a widely-used technique for examining qualitative data, enabled researchers to identify, analyze, and interpret patterns within the data (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). In fact, this method promotes a deeper engagement with the data, allowing themes to emerge organically rather than being imposed based on predefined categories (Christou, 2022). Through coding and analysis, key themes and sub-themes were extracted from the codebook. The researcher then finalized and named each theme, providing descriptive narratives to explain their significance, while integrating selected quotations from the original text to illustrate key points. According to Lochmiller (2021) this approach enhances the clarity and depth of the analysis, offering readers a thorough understanding of the data and its broader implications.

4. Data Analysis and Interpretations

The study developed a documentary review checklist containing eight indicators to evaluate the effectiveness of the revised English language textbook in enhancing oral communicative competence among high school students. The interpretation and analysis of the findings are presented as follows.

i. Content and structure

The revised English textbook consists of ten units, each designed to offer a balanced approach to language learning, with sections dedicated to reading comprehension, writing, oral communication, and grammar. A notable addition in

this edition is the focus on oral communicative competence (OCC), a key component of the national curriculum (Competency 3). Each unit includes activities like group discussions, presentations, debates, and role-playing exercises to enhance students' speaking skills, fostering confidence, improving pronunciation, and developing active listening and appropriate response abilities, crucial for real-world interactions. The textbook's approach to oral communication is carefully aligned with national curriculum benchmarks; ensuring students practice a variety of language functions such as enquiry, persuasion, and comparison. Unit 1 focuses on student self-introductions and presentations, while Unit 2 engages students in group discussions on relevant topics, such as examination results and job loss during the pandemic; encouraging critical thinking. Unit 3 teaches students to acknowledge contributions and work collaboratively, using real-world scenarios to practice oral skills. Units 4 to 7 concentrate on debate, negotiation, presentation, and teamwork. These units help students articulate their viewpoints, negotiate politely, and deliver presentations effectively. Exercises in these units are designed to improve students' critical thinking, teamwork, and communication, preparing them for various social, academic, and professional situations. Unit 8 emphasizes the evaluation of presentations, providing rubrics and checklists to assess clarity, cohesion, and other key communication elements. This section encourages peer assessment and constructive feedback, helping students refine their presentation skills. Unit 9 focuses on preparing students for job interviews through role-play and mock interviews, covering essential aspects such as dress code, behavior, and communication skills. Finally, Unit 10 shifts the focus to active listening and appropriate responding in discussions, promoting meaningful conversations on social issues like social media and legal equality.

ii. Content relevance and context

The textbook content is evaluated for its engagement, cultural relevance, and effectiveness in incorporating real-life language scenarios. Each unit is reviewed based on these criteria. The first unit introduces students to Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah-The founding father, focusing on his vision for Pakistan, making the content both meaningful and historically significant. The second unit, although based on a foreign narrative, effectively teaches students how to express personal experiences. Unit 3, featuring Guy de Maupassant's "The Necklace," emphasizes universal values like integrity, and its simple language allows students to connect with the text. A later unit explores contemporary technological issues, which are highly relevant, while Stephen Leacock's humorous story about the banking system resonates with Pakistani students. An adapted essay by Ralph Waldo Emerson highlights social values, such as self-reliance, which align well with local cultural values. Similarly, Booker T. Washington's narrative on education, despite its foreign origin, conveys themes of perseverance that are universally relevant. Another unit provides a travelogue of Malaysia and

Singapore, offering cultural exposure while teaching narrative techniques. The unit on career guidance offers practical advice; helping students plan their futures. The final unit imparts ethical lessons through the maxims of Shaikh Saadi, using simple yet profound language. The poetry section includes both English and local literature, enhancing students' literary appreciation, while a play from English literature ties foreign themes to local contexts. Although much of the content comes from English literature, it is adapted to real-life scenarios and linked to Pakistani culture, helping students develop language skills, cultural awareness, and critical thinking. The textbook covers a broad range of genres and themes, preparing students for both academic and real-world challenges. Its blend of local and international content ensures a rich, educational, and culturally enriching learning experience.

iii. Skill integration

The revised textbook integrates reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills, while promoting the simultaneous use of multiple language abilities. The reading section includes ten units, each featuring reading comprehension exercises on diverse topics such as history, technology, ethics, and culture. These comprehensions enhance reading and thinking skills, addressing contemporary issues and incorporating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills. The inclusion of a play and a poetry section adds depth, exposing students to dramatic literature and poetry, fostering an appreciation for literary devices like hyperbole, rhyme, and meter. This diverse approach cultivates students' comprehension and critical thinking skills while engaging them with a broad range of literary genres. The writing component covers various styles and purposes, including narrative writing, business letters, emails, and resumes. Students are guided through the writing process, from brainstorming to proofreading, with collaborative tasks encouraging peer feedback. The focus on academic and professional writing equips students with essential skills for real-world communication, enhancing their ability to navigate writing tasks in both academic and professional settings. Speaking skills are developed through oral communication tasks in each unit, focusing on individual presentations, group discussions, and job interview simulations. These exercises promote effective communication in both formal and informal contexts, preparing students for real-life speaking scenarios. However, there is a noted deficiency in exercises targeting pronunciation, intonation, and phonetic skills.

The most significant oversight is the absence of listening exercises. This gap reflects a broader issue within the national curriculum, which does not emphasize listening skills. Given the importance of listening in language acquisition, this omission limits students' ability to fully develop their language proficiency, particularly in understanding pronunciation and intonation in real-life communication. The lack of listening exercises suggests that the curriculum may

not fully address the comprehensive needs of language learners, impacting the overall quality of language education.

iv. Teaching methodology

The revised English textbook adopts a student-centered approach, emphasizing collaborative learning and inquiry-based exploration to foster the development of language skills such as reading, writing, oral communication, and grammar. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are presented at the beginning of each unit to guide students and teachers in achieving specific learning objectives, aligning with higher-order thinking skills based on Bloom's taxonomy. This methodology encourages critical thinking, active engagement, and ownership of the learning process. In this framework, teachers serve as facilitators, guiding students through pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading stages. Writing exercises are scaffolded with prewriting activities like brainstorming, and peer feedback is emphasized to promote independent learning and collaboration. The oral communication section includes discussions and debates, helping students practice real-world communication skills. Grammar learning is also student-driven, with minimal teacher intervention, fostering collaborative problem-solving. A key feature of the textbook is the inclusion of a "Note for teachers" at the end of each section, providing practical guidance on classroom management, assessment strategies, and effective teaching methodologies.

This note is adaptable to teachers with various levels of experience, including those without formal professional training, making it accessible and valuable for a wide range of educators. It empowers teachers to make informed instructional decisions and supports the development of students' OCC. The textbook's approach, with a focus on collaborative learning and SLOs, aims to develop students' critical thinking and communication skills. The guidelines provided to teachers are instrumental in structuring lessons to achieve these learning outcomes, particularly in fostering OCC. The textbook's methodology promotes a holistic approach to language education, enhancing both teaching practices and student learning experiences.

v. Learners' engagement

The study examines how activities in the revised English textbook engage students, and accommodates diverse learning styles, with a particular focus on developing OCC. The exercises are largely activity-based, requiring students to work individually, in pairs, or in groups, promoting collaboration, interaction, and teamwork. In Unit 1, students independently prepare and deliver presentations, fostering self-reliance and confidence. Unit 2 introduces pair and group discussions for analyzing dialogues, encouraging participation and critical thinking. Unit 3 builds on this, with students working in groups to expand dialogues and acknowledge personalities, further enhancing critical thinking and OCC. Throughout the textbook, dialogue activities mirror real-life situations and are simple enough to enable all students to actively participate and develop

communication skills. In Unit 5, students practice and develop group dialogues, reinforcing teamwork and OCC. Unit 6 incorporates both collaborative and independent learning through group and individual presentations, promoting full student involvement and engagement. Students can choose their own topics, fostering motivation and self-directed learning. Units 7 and 8 introduce peer evaluation, enhancing both OCC and critical thinking. Unit 7 focuses on collaborative idea-sharing and refining presentations, while Unit 8 emphasizes independent research and peer feedback, promoting self-reliance and evaluative skills. In Unit 9, role-playing activities simulate interview scenarios, providing practical communication experience that prepares students for real-world situations like job interviews. Unit 10 focuses on active listening and effective communication, encouraging students to analyze conversation examples and participate in respectful dialogue through pair discussions. Overall, the study concludes that the textbook's activities are designed to actively engage students and ensure 100% participation, fostering an inclusive environment that enhances OCC and prepares students for real-world communication.

vi. Assessment and evaluation

The findings revealed that the revised English textbook lacks effective criteria for assessing oral communicative competence (OCC). Although most oral communication exercises are outcome-based, and focus on student participation, the book does not provide a comprehensive assessment framework for either formative or summative evaluations. Formative assessment is briefly addressed in Unit 7, which includes a table on effective presentation delivery, and in Unit 8.3, where students use a rubric to evaluate peers' presentations. However, these criteria are limited to only two units, offering insufficient coverage for a proper evaluation system. The absence of consistent assessment guidelines throughout the textbook leaves teachers without a reliable method to measure students' progress in oral communication. This lack of continuous assessment makes it difficult to track improvements or identify areas needing further development. Additionally, the textbook provides no clear criteria for summative assessment, resulting in students not receiving a fair or complete evaluation of their OCC. A significant concern is that the Examination Board excludes speaking skills from final exams, instead focusing on writing and grammar. This exclusion diminishes the importance of oral communication exercises, leading students to not take them seriously. Teachers, in response, may prioritize areas that are tested, potentially neglecting the oral communication sections during instruction. This undermines the language learning process, as students lose opportunities to practice and enhance their speaking abilities, which are essential for real-world communication. The study concludes that the lack of assessment for speaking skills negatively impacts students' language proficiency and confidence in communication. It emphasizes the need to include speaking skills in both formative and summative assessments to ensure that students and teachers value oral communication,

dedicating the necessary time and effort to develop these skills and improve overall language outcomes.

vii. Supplementary material

The study found that the revised English textbook lacked essential supplementary materials necessary for enhancing students' Oral Communicative Competence (OCC). Key resources such as audio-visual aids, pronunciation guides, dialogues, and listening comprehension exercises are missing. Additionally, the textbook does not include modern tools like interactive software, apps for pronunciation practice, speech recognition feedback, or online resources such as language learning websites, podcasts, or pronunciation dictionaries. This deficiency hinders students' ability to develop crucial speaking and listening skills, as these supplementary materials are vital for practicing accurate pronunciation, self-assessment, and improving fluency. The absence of such tools represents a missed opportunity to provide students with diverse and effective resources for enhancing their oral communication abilities. As a result, the textbook's potential to improve OCC is significantly undermined, and its alignment with contemporary language learning practices is questioned. To improve its effectiveness, the inclusion of comprehensive supplementary materials is essential to support students in developing their oral communication skills more effectively.

viii. Teachers' support

The study evaluates the resources and support provided for teachers in the revised English textbook, particularly through Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and teacher guidelines. Each unit begins with SLOs under the title "What will I learn?" that guides both teachers and students. These SLOs outline specific objectives across language skills, such as reading, writing, oral communication, and grammar, ensuring that teachers focus on measurable goals. This clear structure helps teachers create effective lesson plans, fostering student-centered learning, collaboration, and inquiry-based exploration. A key feature supporting teachers is the "Note for teachers" at the bottom of sections covering reading, writing, listening, and grammar. These notes offer practical insights, strategies, and tips on classroom management, student progress monitoring, and effective teaching methodologies. They are designed to be accessible and adaptable for teachers with varying levels of experience, making them useful even for those without formal professional training. This inclusivity ensures that all educators can utilize the textbook's resources effectively to develop students' language skills. While the embedded resources, such as the SLOs and the notes, are valuable for supporting instructional practices and enhancing students' language development, the absence of a dedicated teachers' manual is notable. This missing component could offer additional guidance and support for educators, especially in fostering oral communicative competence (OCC).

5. Discussion

The textbook showcases several strengths but also reveals critical gaps that need attention. A key strength lies in its enhancement of students' reading comprehension through diverse texts that reflect real-life contexts. This aligns with studies emphasizing the need for diverse reading strategies like prediction and skimming, as well as exposure to various text genres, which is crucial for student motivation and skill development. Additionally, the inclusion of a drama section and a dedicated poetry section offers students a rich literary experience, helping them engage with more challenging texts and fulfilling curriculum standards for literary exposure, since Kenjali and Abduramanova (2022) found that intensive reading successfully helps develop speaking skills. Similarly, the textbook also excels in writing instruction, with each unit featuring sections on pre-writing, collaborative learning, and essay writing, which prepare students for real-world communication. Techniques such as pre-, while-, and post-writing activities reinforce the process approach to writing. Peer feedback and essay writing are emphasized, aligning with national competency standards for writing. This a positive sign since Zainal (2017) found a strong correlation between writing skills and communicative competence.

Most importantly, a significant addition to the textbook is the section on oral communication in each unit, which includes group discussions, presentations, debates, and role-playing. These activities are essential for developing OCC, as they simulate real-life conversational scenarios (Bhutto & Kazmi, 2024). However, the textbook's OCC approach is incomplete as it neglects key aspects such as pronunciation, stress, and intonation, which are vital for building confidence and proficiency in oral communication. This gap prevents full alignment with competency standards and undermines students' ability to communicate effectively in real-life situations (Kobilova, 2022). Additionally, despite its strong focus on reading, writing, and grammar, the textbook's most glaring flaw is the absence of listening skills exercises. This omission reflects a broader issue with the curriculum's limited emphasis on listening, which contradicts research that highlights the importance of listening in daily communication (Rustamov & Mirza ogli, 2023). Listening skills are crucial for language learners as they help in understanding spoken language and engaging in meaningful dialogues (Alzamil, 2021). The lack of attention to this skill undermines students' overall language proficiency and hampers their ability to participate fully in conversations (Newton & Nation, 2020).

Moreover, so far the teaching methods are concerned to develop OCC, the revised English textbook marks a progressive shift toward a student-centered pedagogical approach, focusing on active student participation and self-directed learning. This methodology enhances the learning experience by encouraging deeper student involvement, aligning with modern educational theories (Alrajafi et al., 2022). The integration of collaborative learning and inquiry-based methods supports the development of comprehensive language skills, accommodating

diverse learners and promoting holistic growth; complementing the study by Baten et al., (2019). Likewise, clear guidelines and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) provided to teachers help structure lessons, ensuring that instructional activities meet well-defined educational objectives. The "Note for teachers" section is particularly useful in refining teaching practices and fostering essential oral communication skills. The exercises are engaging, actively involving students in the learning process, which is a key to capturing their interest and promoting inclusivity (Oga-Baldwin, 2019). The emphasis on full participation ensures that every student contributes to and benefits from classroom activities, enhancing individual language proficiency and preparing students for real-world communication challenges. However, while the textbook excels in providing structured guidance through its Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and practical teaching notes, which are invaluable for educators in maximizing student potential, it lacks a dedicated teachers' manual. Such a manual could offer strategies for integrating supplementary materials and using modern tools to improve OCC instruction. Without it, teachers may struggle to implement effective practices for teaching oral communication.

Additionally, the study found that the textbook has significant shortcomings in assessing oral communication skills. While the exercises focus on participation and performance, they lack a solid framework for comprehensive assessment. The absence of clear criteria for evaluating oral communicative competence, especially in summative assessment, is a critical flaw. The oral communication exercises are outcome-based but do not provide thorough assessment methods. Furthermore, the Examination Board's focus on writing and grammar in final exams diminishes the importance of speaking exercises, leading students and teachers to deprioritize them, complementing the study conducted by Bhutto and Rind (2022). This undermines students' development in speaking abilities, negatively affecting their confidence and proficiency in real-life communication.

Similarly, the findings also highlighted a major limitation is the absence of essential supplementary materials such as audio-visual aids, pronunciation guides, and listening comprehension exercises. These resources are vital for practicing oral communication, as they offer students models of correct pronunciation, context-rich dialogues, and opportunities for listening practice, which are key for language acquisition (Perez, 2022). The lack of modern language learning tools, including interactive software, speech recognition apps, and visual demonstrations of conversations, further restricts students' ability to practice speaking in a guided and interactive manner. These technologies provide immediate feedback, helping students assess and improve their pronunciation and fluency, but without them, students miss out on crucial opportunities to build confidence and competence (Al Aqad et al., 2021). Moreover, the absence of online resources like language learning websites, podcasts, and pronunciation dictionaries also limits the

textbook's effectiveness. These resources expose students to authentic language use, helping them develop listening skills and understand different accents and contexts, which are essential for comprehensive language learning (Shadiev & Yang, 2020)

6. Conclusion

The review of the revised English textbook from the Sindh Textbook Board highlighted its strengths and areas for improvement. One of its key strengths is the inclusion of a dedicated section for OCC in each unit, aligning with Competency 3 of the National Curriculum. This helps meet educational objectives by emphasizing oral communication through group discussions, presentations, role-playing, and example dialogues that enhance linguistic functions and interpersonal skills. The textbook effectively balances literature and real-life language use, integrates cultural contexts, and promotes critical thinking. Additionally, its structured progression from pre-writing to post-writing stages, along with a focus on collaborative learning and peer feedback, supports the development of writing proficiency. Teachers are supported with clear guidelines, Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), and a "Note for teachers" section, helping them optimize lesson plans. The inclusion of a variety of genres and themes enhances students' reading, critical thinking, and real-world preparedness. However, the review identifies significant gaps. The textbook lacks dedicated exercises on pronunciation, stress, and intonation, failing to cover essential phonetics, phoneme exercises, and content on vowel and consonant sounds. This omission limits students' ability to develop clear pronunciation skills. Additionally, the textbook neglects listening skills, a crucial component of language learning. The absence of clear assessment criteria for OCC, and the lack of supplementary materials, such as audio-visual aids and interactive software, further restricts students' ability to practice and improve their oral communication. The absence of a dedicated teachers' manual is also noted as a limitation, making it harder for educators to effectively teach and assess OCC.

Despite these shortcomings, the textbook's emphasis on practical exercises, group work, and real-life topics ensures active student involvement and engagement, preparing students to use spoken English in social and academic contexts. Overall, while the textbook provides a strong educational resource, addressing these gaps would enhance its effectiveness in developing high school students' OCC.

7. Recommendations

The study recommends revising the English textbook to include exercises that focus on pronunciation, stress, and intonation skills, which are crucial for improving students' spoken English. This should involve phonetic features like vowel and consonant sounds, phonemes, and diphthongs, along with symbols for stress and intonation, in line with the National Curriculum for English. It also advocates integrating speaking skills into summative assessments, encouraging exam boards to give equal weight to speaking alongside reading, writing, and

grammar. This would emphasize the importance of OCC and motivate teachers to incorporate oral communication activities regularly. Additionally, the curriculum needs to address the development of listening skills, which are currently underrepresented, by revising both the curriculum and textbooks to include explicit listening exercises. A more balanced approach, giving equal importance to reading, writing, speaking, and listening, is necessary. The inclusion of interactive activities like discussions and presentations is also recommended to improve students' verbal communication skills and confidence in using English.

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