



Analysis of Pakistani TESOL Textbooks through Syllabus Design and Evaluation Models

Imran Hussain¹

¹ Department of English Language & Literature, The University of Lahore, Pakistan

Email: imranhussain.uol@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5950-843X>

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Received:

December 30, 2025

Revised:

January 22, 2026

Accepted:

February 14, 2026

Available Online:

February 24, 2026

Keywords:

TESOL textbooks,
pedagogical transferal,
syllabus design,
multiliteracies,
instructional balance,
evaluation model

The study is destined to appraise the TEOL textbooks of Pakistan through the syllabus design and evaluation lens models. It is anticipated to uncover the pedagogical practices that contour language instruction. It exploits a qualitative descriptive approach to synthesise the findings of the studies to interpret the plus and constraints of existing textbook practices through an evaluation lens, i.e., content analysis, checklist, and readability assessment. The study evaluates how syllabus design and assessment metrics replicate learners' cultural engagement with pedagogical coherence. The interpretive conclusions of the study are reminiscent of the notion that some textbooks are aligned, but many falls short in terms of fostering multiliteracies and culturally responsive practices. The study is substantial in terms of on-going textbooks reformed discourse by offering learners' specific and inclusive TESOL textbooks development in Pakistani context.

Corresponding author:

imranhussain.uol@gmail.com

Introduction

Globally textbook act as a medium to revitalize curriculum goals at one hand to steer instruction on the other hand, but in Pakistan, textbooks, especially at the secondary level are predominantly text centric (Khan & Shah, 2024). Numerous studies like (Khan & Shah 2024; Khan & Ali, 2023) heightened the fact that instead of equipping English language learners to thrive in an interconnected world, textbooks favour to sponsor rote learning with over emphasis on grammar instruction. This has made it practically difficult to familiarize to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Furthermore, it is recurrently recounted in research studies through teachers' opinion that English textbooks do not endorse critical thinking and communicative competencies. Rather, these are inflexible and do not even nurture objectives anticipated in the curriculum. Likewise, teaching TESOL in Pakistan is an out-dated, text centric and teacher led which consequences in disengagement and deprived learning on the part of English language learners (Fazal et al., 2024).

Conversely, the notion of multiliteracies has asserted upon operative and active learning as a counterpart to conventional read-write literacy (Liang, 2023). In the opinion of Liang (2023), multiliteracies have positioned stress on "increasing complexity and interrelationships of different modes of learning – linguistics, visual, auditory, gestural and digital." Hence, modern practices have stimulated multimodal modes, creative abilities and critical competencies among language learners. In the specified situation, if Pakistani TESOL textbooks and pedagogical practices linger to conventional mode, the English language learners will endure to suffer to get them equipped to move assertively in a digitally interconnected world (Fazal et al., 2024). In the given context, an appraisal of the TESOL textbooks is a timely endeavour to evaluate how far recently

updated textbooks of TESOL for the session 2025-26 aligned with the concept of dynamic, protective and communicative instructional pattern based on the concept of multiliteracies.

TESOL Textbooks in Pakistan

Textbooks play a substantial part as far as TESOL instruction is concerned globally. In Pakistan, textbooks, specifically in public sector schools, consist of not only the primary source but also the only source of instruction. Textbooks in Pakistan are intended in such a fashion that they target to augment the quality of education by refining the value of textbooks, which are being provided free of cost (Bhatti & Abdullah, 2024). Practically National Textbooks and Learning Material Policy (2006) support the above-cited argument by saying, “improve the quality of education by use of better textbooks” (Government of Pakistan), Bhatti and Abdullah (2024). On practical ground, the majority of Pakistani TESOL classrooms count on exclusively on resources, i.e. textbooks. They are of the view that schools and classrooms with inadequate resources operate textbooks “often stand-alone for language instruction”.

Khan et al. (2023) sponsored the identical notion by considering textbooks as structured contents from a teaching perspective. In Pakistan, the TESOL textbooks operate as a vehicle “to add, review and motivate” both English language learners and teachers in terms of engagement and lesson planning as organised input to impart various skills, i.e. listening, reading, speaking and writing. Alternatively, incompatible and misfit textbooks contents are fashioning a major barrier in language acquisition and in pleasing English language learners' needs. Hussain et al. (2023) evaluated Intermediate English textbooks of grade XII by means of automatic readability scales and concluded that the actual text of textbooks is “fairly difficult” keeping in view, the anticipated grade for which it is designed. That is why English language learners, who are speakers of other languages, have a 39% score on the comprehension test of that textbook.

Likewise, Bhatti and Abdullah (2024) conducted a survey study grounded on the opinions of English language learners and teachers about grade VIII English textbooks and came across that respondents desired more topics entailing of “daily use and creative activities” to keep in line with actual use and level of learners. It recommends that if the text of the textbooks is not aligned with learners’ needs, proficiency and comprehension level language acquisition agonizes. And if it is aligned with learners’ age, proficiency and comprehension, it upshots in enhanced engagement, stimulus and accelerates skill development (Heydarnejad et al., 2022). Recent advances and the rise of multi-modality and digitalization underline textbooks to be much more than sheer textbooks. It accentuates that operational TESOL textbooks must encompass varied modes, i.e. interactive media, visual, audio, etc., to advance real-life communication, i.e. functional communication. Khan et al. (2023) not only underlined the essentiality of learners’ context and style in view but also assimilated that “multimedia like audio and visual is now more popular, for more interactive language learning.”

However, in Pakistan, where digital disparities are in full swing, printed material, i.e. textbooks, persist dominant to the instruction of the TESOL (Khan et al., 2023). However, keeping in view all the confines in terms of resources and the digital divide in Pakistan, it is imperious at least to enable charts, images, visuals, and info-graphics to the probable level to preserve and stimulate English language learners at one hand and to initiate the integration of multiliteracies dynamics on the other. In addition, cultural relevance, technological know-how, critical thinking and creative exercises can also be incorporated into TESOL textbooks to align them with global standards and to revitalise TESOL practises in Pakistan so that English language learners are better equipped to navigate the challenges of the 21st century (Hussein et al., 2022).

To recapitulate, there is no denying the fact that the TESOL textbooks have a deep-seated imprints and influence as far as language acquisition of English language learners of Pakistan is concerned. It climaxes the need to align TESOL textbooks with English language Learners’ needs, context, and culture to make the most of English language Learners’ engagement and pedagogical alignment (Khan et al., 2023; Khan & Shah, 2024).

Syllabus Design and Pedagogical Practices

Over the years, the Pakistani TESOL curriculum has evolved towards an exclusive, outcome-based, communicative, interactive and learner-centred. In the light of the National Curriculum of Pakistan (English Curriculum, 2006) has specified SLOs for each grade and “places a strong emphasis on communicative language instruction (CLT) which eschews memorization of grammar rules in favour of using language as a tool for authentic communication” (Khan & Shah, 2024). This shift is destined to involve English language learners through real-life communication as Khan and Shah (2024) condensed this paradigmatic shift as “the primary goal of language teaching is to improve student real-life communication skills... in the past grammar translation method was widely used...as a result, learners mastered grammar rule but were unable to speak, a few words in English.”

At present, the TESOL curriculum not only refines language skills but, to some extent, advances critical thinking and problem-solving skills employing discussion and role play. To accomplish this curriculum-based objective, it is inferred that textbooks must surround a profusion of oral or aural skills, task cycles, role plays, debates and discussion. However, in Pakistan, there is a wide gulf and gap between curriculum goals and actual textbooks state. Practically as a historic tradition, the TESOL textbooks in Pakistan are intended for passive learning. It is reinforced by numerous research studies conducted in the Pakistani context. Khan and Shah (2020) are of the view that despite curriculum stress upon CLT actually, “the traditional textbooks format in Pakistan has made it difficult to adopt CLT in part because rote learning and grammar translation, method are frequently given precedence over conversation and engagement.”

Shahid et al. (2021) encompassed that despite well-designed grade X textbooks, it is found restricted in glossary and grammar sustenance, which is suggestive of the outcome that it is essentially in line with traditional grammar instruction. This argument is supplementary reinforced by Baig et al. (2021) when they encircled that grade VIII textbook in Punjab chiefly centres on reading comprehension and are noticed to disregard speaking, writing, and vocabulary building. Khan et al. (2023) pinpointed that inter-level textbooks in Pakistan are “having deficiencies in writing activity” and “due to limited speaking activities.”

To sum up, updated syllabus design across the globe in connection with TESOL sponsors integrated and communicative competencies to be integrated and Pakistani curricula endorses the idea of learners-centred and integrated skill expansion to be encompassed in the curriculum goal (Khan & Shah, 2024). However, studies cited above and others established that current TESOL textbooks in Pakistan are deficient to accomplish that goal. So, the current study will be intended to highpoint the current gaps in “theory and practice” and will stress the requisite to integrate the multimode competencies in the TESOL textbooks to endow as outline for multiliteracies integration.

Textbook Evaluation Models

Evaluating the TESOL textbooks is essential to ensure their alignment with the curriculum on one hand and to consider their applicability to English language learners’ necessities on the other hand. For textbook analysis, two foremost models are widely acknowledged, which are also known as document analysis for in-depth study and readability analysis. These are also accompanied by the analytical method grounded on the checklist or questionnaire-based analysis.

Content Analysis

In this method, textbooks are analysed keeping in view well-defined criteria to evaluate substantive contents of textbooks. Often, criteria of evaluation comprise the organisation of contents, content coverage, hands-on activities, thematic patterns, and methodology of the textbook. In the contemporary context, textbook analysis is centred on rubrics, matrix or checklists to quantify the contents of textbooks. For instance, Wiyuago (2020) applied the criteria set forth by Cunninghamworth (1995) to grade VIII textbook with rating facets such as skill, design and purpose. Bag et al. (2021) inferred a semi-structured checklist on the grade VIII TESOL textbook to appraise SLOs. Such rubrics or checklists often showcase both the strengths and flaws of textbooks to designate their alignment or otherwise with the language educational goals.

Review studies take advantage of the contents’ checklist practice just like Shak et al. (2022), who systemically reviewed major 30 research studies and sketched out common checklists with them, such as content topics, cultural relevance, skill coverage, layout and design, supplementary aids and alignment with curriculum objective (Shak et al., 2023). This study derived that checklists are a good idea to evaluate whether TESOL textbooks contain all language skills or not and whether they have alignment with syllable goals or not. In this way, content analysis considered both macro factors, i.e. theme, relevance, curriculum alignment and learners’ demand and micro factors, i.e. task diversity, cultural biases and language proficiency.

Readability Analysis

This approach is grounded on the linguistic complexity of the text or contents of the textbooks to assess whether these are in line with learners’ proficiency and age or not. For that, stability formulas are applied to calculate words and sentence matrix. For that software’s and online tools for calculation are exploited by researchers. For instance, Hussein et al. (2022) applied readability analysis on selected passages of texts of TESOL textbooks of the Federal board at an intermediate level. Studies conducted through the readability approach are intended to evaluate whether the text or contents of the textbooks are challenging, easy or of the appropriate level keeping in view the age, grade and expertise level of the learners for which they are destined.

For readability analysis, apart from formulaic calculation, lexical density and sentence and words complexity are also calculated. Practically, this type of analysis assists curriculum designers and content creators in adjusting various linguistic parameters in check to preserve the textbooks in line with age appropriateness. In Pakistan, the contents of TESOL textbooks

frequently has extraordinary scores or readability criteria, but English language learners suffer, which highpoints the gulf and gaps in textbooks' content suitability with age, grade and proficiency level.

Checklist or Questionnaire Analysis

It is nonetheless an additional approach to scrutinizing the contents of the textbooks, which is beyond pure contents count. It is grounded on survey method, which is either conducted through a questionnaire or a checklist. It is an opinion or perception-based analysis. For that, either a questionnaire is developed by the researcher, or it is adopted from previously established studies. For instance, Shahid et al. (2021) adopted a questionnaire from Litz's (2005) study, which constitutes analysis parameters such as usability, cultural relevancy, content diversity, linguistic content coverage and layout, etc. For that, textbook Evaluation Inventories (TEQI) is established, which are also labelled Textbook Evaluation Scales (TEQS). Such tools have an inclusive range of defined criteria to analyse the contents of the textbooks. In recent research studies, such models are dynamic and wide-ranging, which embrace both quantitative and qualitative content counts to assess the suitability of textbooks pedagogically.

Pakistani TESOL Textbooks Analysis

Baig et al. (2021) analysed grade VIII English textbook of the Punjab Textbook Board through the lens of contents analysis by consuming the checklist method, which was derived from the National Curriculum SLOs. The study was intended to evaluate whether textbooks are aligned with the competencies i.e. reading – thinking, writing, lexical and oral competencies. The finding of the study designates that textbook is destined only for reading proficiencies or capabilities while other competencies are neglected. Hence, the study specifies serious misalignment of the said textbook with the curriculum objectives and consequently provides inadequate resources for the language instruction of grade VIII English language learners.

Conversely, Shahid et al. (2021) conducted a study of grade X English textbook through a survey method. Opinions were sought out from 10 English teachers and 60 students from both public and private sector schools. A Likert scale-based questionnaire was exploited to accumulate the data regarding visual outlook, contents quality, and organisation of contents. The outcomes of the study showcase that the textbooks are “visually pleasing, well, organised, consistent and orderly” with a majority of affirmative feedback, it was concluded that the said textbook for grade X is accessible, intelligible, and serviceable.

Bhatti and Shah (2024) operated a mixed method approach to scrutinise English textbook of grade VIII in Punjab. They interviewed 24 teachers and collected data from 240 students through the survey. Numerous participants appreciated the features such as the quality of reading comprehension and the vibrant objective of the said textbook, but there was a robust urge among participants for contents relevancy and engagement with contents to be incorporated. Topics on the substance of “daily use” and “creative writing” were also recommended by the respondents to be encompassed, which are aligned with the multi-literacy approach.

Khan and Ud Din (2023) appraised textbooks of grades XI and XII of KPK boards. They expended a mixed method by consuming a checklist for content analysis and interviewed teachers to collect data. The conclusions designate that writing tasks are sparse, speaking skills are inadequate and creative and open-ended tasks are deficient. Group discussions and creative writing-based activities are not adequately assimilated. Khan and Shah (2024) steered a survey-based study to obtain the opinions of 375 participants to measure how far textbooks of grades XI and X aligned with the curriculum objectives. The quantitative results specify that “textbooks fall short in addressing the communicative aim of the curriculum.” Interview-based outcomes also pointed out that more interactive and critical thinking tasks requisite to be integrated into the textbooks.

To sum up, Pakistani research studies in connection with TESOL textbooks analysis, specifically in Punjab Textbook Boards recommend that textbooks accomplish certain curriculum goals, i.e. grammatical and vocabulary building and reading comprehension-based tasks. But supplementary features or objectives of the curriculum, like creative writing tasks, oral communication and integrated activities, are consistently missing across grades. Both English language learners and teachers appreciate the clarity, precision and consistency of the TESOL textbook. However, they demand that textbooks must incorporate more inclusive, engaging, level-specific tasks for functional literacies to be nurtured among ELLs of Pakistan.

Implication for Pakistani TESOL Textbooks Development

Effective TESOL textbooks are the prerequisite of the hour to advance instructive goals, to revitalise TESOL practises and to equip English language learners to thrive effectively in an interconnected world. The above review of the literature advocates that the TESOL textbooks in Pakistan requisite to be aligned with the curriculum goals of Pakistan. English language curriculum objectives accentuated the inculcation of CLT and 21st century skills (Khan & Shah 2024). It is indicative of the

fact that TESOL textbooks should incorporate prompts regarding discussion, tasks pertinent to communication, critical thinking and problem-solving competencies. Instead of merely sticking to drills relevant to grammatical competence, the components of the textbooks should have debates and role plays to advance the spoken skills of the English language learners. Writing skills should be cultured through creative and functional prompts such as report writing, letters and real-life communicative tasks.

The TESOL textbooks should cover all the SLOs i.e. listening, reading, speaking, writing, vocabulary, grammar, cultural relevance, creativity and critical persona of the English language learners to be aligned and to accomplish curriculum objectives. TESOL textbooks should be such that they excite engagement and are associated to the daily life of English language learners. Studies such as (Bhatti & Abdullah, 2024; Khan & Shah, 2024) instituted English language learners and teachers demand topics relevant to “daily use” and “creative contents.” In addition, textbooks should be augmented by aligning them with indigenous culture and global concerns and by means of igniting curiosity. Collaboration should be advanced through instructional tasks. Using multimedia can be an upright indication to align textbooks with the digital persona of the age. Besides, applicable and level-specific text readability should be incorporated, and scaffolding should be supplied to evade complex reading passages in the textbooks, as was concluded by Hussein et al. (2022).

Likewise, TESOL textbooks in Pakistan should monitor comprehensive evaluation criteria, which should be espoused from a standardised toolkit based on certain established framework. For example, these could be grounded on the criteria laid down by Mukundan (2010), which foster “includes online supplement”, “reflects diverse local cultures”, and “fosters independent learning.” For that, readability analysis of the TESOL textbooks should be a consistent fragment of the evaluation. Teachers’ involvement in TESOL textbooks evaluation can be a handy tool for that. Teachers’ feedback should be sorted out to resolve practical issues, i.e., pedagogical feasibility and glossary development.

To sum up, the role and function of TESOL textbooks ensure the alignment and quality that are closely interrelated with language instruction. It means that insights based on review of literature such as assimilation of critical prompts, problem-solving tasks, creative and real-life skill enhancement can maximise the impact of TESOL textbooks. It can also be destined to align them with curriculum objectives and with the needs of the digital age and equip English language learners of Pakistan to cultivate proficiency and critical engagement with language instruction. It will further facilitate English language learners of Pakistan to be proficient in navigating the challenges of the 21st century, which is also branded as the era of globalisation and digitalization.

Conclusion

The findings of the study accentuate the requisite to bring about a pedagogical transferral, as far as the TESOL textbooks of Pakistan are concerned. It advocates transforming textbooks by moving from conventional read-write and printed instruction to complement critical thinking, creativity, inclusivity, and diversity. The conclusions are suggestive of the fact that current TESOL books devoid of multimodality, contextual, and cultural applicability. Hence, the study submits that TESOL textbooks can be upgraded through pedagogical sequencing, cultural and learner-specific approaches, and through instructional balance. Above all, the syllabus design and evaluation models can turn as a potential agent to offer equitable and inclusive classroom experiences.

References

1. Baig, S., Javed, F., Siddiquah, A., & Khanam, A. (2021). A content analysis of English textbook of Punjab Textbook Board of Grade 8 in Pakistan. *SAGE Open*, 11(2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211023159>
2. Bhatti, N., & Abdullah, N. A. (2024). Teachers’ and students’ perceptions of effectiveness of English textbook grade VIII in public schools in Pakistan in digital era. *Discover Education*, 3, Article 19. [https://doi.org/10.1007/s44217-024-00094-x:contentReference\[oaicite:42\]{index=42}:contentReference\[oaicite:43\]{index=43}](https://doi.org/10.1007/s44217-024-00094-x:contentReference[oaicite:42]{index=42}:contentReference[oaicite:43]{index=43})
3. Fazal, K., Sarwar, U., Nuralieva, N., AlQadri, A. H., & Zhan Yong, Q. (2024). Cultivating creative thinking in Pakistani public schools: a quasi-experimental study. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 11, 24. [https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-04009-x:contentReference\[oaicite:41\]{index=41}:contentReference\[oaicite:42\]{index=42}](https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-04009-x:contentReference[oaicite:41]{index=41}:contentReference[oaicite:42]{index=42}).
4. Heydarnejad, T., Tagavipour, F., Patra, I., & Farid Khafaga, A. (2022). The impacts of performance-based assessment on reading comprehension achievement, academic motivation, foreign language anxiety, and students’ self-efficacy. *Language Testing in Asia*, 12(1), 51. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40468-022-00202-4>

5. Hussain, A., Issa, M., & Abbas, G. (2022). Readability analysis of text in English textbooks of Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education for higher secondary level. *Linguistic Forum – A Journal of Linguistics*, 4(3), 47–53. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14795989>
6. Khan, G. Z., & Ud Din, M. N. (2023). Exploring the effectiveness of English language textbooks at intermediate level in developing productive language skills. *Annals of Human and Social Sciences*, 4(3), 299–308. [https://doi.org/10.35484/ahss.2023\(4-III\)27](https://doi.org/10.35484/ahss.2023(4-III)27)
7. Khan, I. U., & Shah, L. H. (2024). Role of English textbooks in language skills development: A case study of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. *Pakistan Languages and Humanities Review (PLHR)*, 8(3), 339–347. [https://doi.org/10.47205/plhr.2024\(8-III\)31](https://doi.org/10.47205/plhr.2024(8-III)31)
8. Khan, M. Y., & Ali, A. (2023). Exploring ideologies the educational function in primary English textbooks (SNC-2020): A multimodal analysis. *Qlantic Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(4), 297–305. [https://doi.org/10.55737/qjss.328076121:contentReference\[oaicite:45\]{index=45}](https://doi.org/10.55737/qjss.328076121:contentReference[oaicite:45]{index=45}).
9. Liang, D. (2023, April). Multimodal writing in the English language classroom. *TESOL Connections*. [https://tcnewsletter.s3.amazonaws.com/newsmanager.commpartners.com/tesolc/issues/2023-04-01/1.html:contentReference\[oaicite:46\]{index=46}](https://tcnewsletter.s3.amazonaws.com/newsmanager.commpartners.com/tesolc/issues/2023-04-01/1.html:contentReference[oaicite:46]{index=46}).
10. Mukundan, J., & Ahour, T. (2010). Does a checklist always measure up to the challenges of evaluating materials? *RELJ Journal*, 41(1), 47–64.
11. Shahid, M. I., Qasim, H., & Iqbal, M. J. (2021). Textbook evaluation: A case study of Punjab, Pakistan. *Rasheed Ghaznavi Trust Journal*, 14(2), 283–300. <https://doi.org/10.18326/rgt.v14i2.283-300>
12. Shak, M. S. Y., Albakri, I. S. M. A., Shukor, S. S., & Tahir, M. H. (2022). Criteria in English language textbook evaluation checklists: A systematic review. *iARTEM e-journal*, 14(1), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.21344/iartem.v14i1.978>
13. Wiyugo, A. (2022). Content analysis of “Headline English” textbook for 8th grade based on Cunningsworth theory. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 11(2), 208–220. (Excerpted from Edumaspul’s review summary.)



2026 by the authors; Journal of Global Social Transformation (JGST). This is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).