

## **EXTENDED ABSTARCT**

Textbooks are an integral part of any language teaching program. Hutchinson and Torres (1994), Tomlinson (2003), and Abdelwahab (2013), among many others, confirm the practicality and indispensability of textbooks in a language classroom. A textbook serves as a valuable instrument for students to acquire knowledge not only about the linguistic aspects of a language but also about the cultural and social influences deeply embedded in that language. To assess the importance of textbooks in improving language proficiency among learners, the researcher undertook an evaluative study on the existing National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) English textbooks used in Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) schools for students in grades I, II, and III. NCERT is an autonomous institute established by the Government of India for educational research, and CBSE prescribes the textbooks developed by NCERT. The present study aims to assess the NCERT English textbooks designed for students in grades I, II, and III. The textbooks have been extensively used for several years, and therefore, an evaluation is mandatory.

To achieve the desired objective of the research, the researcher used three different approaches, namely, the Checklist approach to textbook evaluation, the Corpus approach, and the Cognitive approach. The Checklist approach to textbook evaluation is based on a well-defined instrument widely used in the evaluation process, i.e., a checklist. The Corpus approach is based on the fact that frequency of occurrence has a significant role to play in vocabulary learning primarily because it enhances fluency or communicative efficiency by exposing students to the most frequent words used in a language. Also, as human cognition has an integral part to play in knowledge acquisition, repetitive exposure creates an environment for such vocabulary consolidation to take place. The Cognitive approach is

based on the idea that the concept of space in early stages is tightly tied to the functions of objects, namely those that involve confinement and support. Other conceptions of space, such as closeness, separation, surroundings, and order, arise in later stages of life.

The first study aims to elicit responses from 14 teachers using a checklist developed by Ertas and Denir (2014). The checklist consisted of 54 questions derived from a comprehensive systematic analysis of 23 checklists. The proposed checklist is divided into four sections, namely: Subjects and Contents with 9 items; Skills & Subskills with 24 items; Layout and Physical Make-up with 7 items; and finally, Practical Consideration with 14 items. The input obtained from the teachers using the created checklist provides necessary perspectives on the practical implementation of the textbook, therefore emphasising both its advantages and disadvantages. Based on several criteria, our analysis showed that 78% of the questions in the checklist were answered positively, suggesting that the textbooks being evaluated were appropriately designed and appropriate for the learners. However, some modifications are needed, particularly in the Skills and Sub-skills section. These include Reading, Pronunciation, Listening, and Speaking skills, which are given more importance while designing the textbooks, as is evident from the teachers' responses (all these skills received an affirmation of less than 80%).

In the second study, the aim was to determine how English prepositions are represented in English Language textbooks designed by NCERT for grades I-III in India. For a comparison of the frequency of prepositions in English, we have selected the British National Corpus. We also studied the different image schemas related to two of the most frequent prepositions *in* and *on*. The distribution was also categorized into spatial, temporal, and metaphorical senses. The results of the corpus-based comparison showed that six prepositions in the textbooks i.e. *in*, *of*, *on*, *to*, *at*, and *from*, are represented in the BNC at the 2nd, 1st, 4th, 3rd, 6th, and 7th positions. Only four prepositions i.e. *with*, *for*, *about*,

and *into*, do not find a spot in the BNC in the 10 most frequent prepositions in the BNC. This indicates a 60% match in the 10 most frequent prepositions in the NCERT English textbooks and BNC. The results of image schema representation of *in* and its various sense representation reveal that the spatial sense, which is proto-typically attested with the preposition *in*, has the maximum representation across the three grades in the NCERT English textbooks (accounting for 83% of the total representation). The CONTAINMENT image schema is represented in all three domains i.e. spatial, temporal, and metaphorical. Surprisingly, the temporal senses are not only introduced in the second grade but also have significantly lower representation (accounting for a little over 1%) than the metaphorical sense, which is 16%. CONTAINMENT, PATH, and SUPPORT exhibit metaphorical extensions. results of image schema representation of the preposition *on* and its various sense representations reveal a similar finding. Just like the representation of the preposition *in*, we find that the proto-typically attested sense, i.e. the spatial sense, is pre-dominant for the preposition *on* across the three grades in the NCERT English textbooks (accounting for 90% of the total representation). The SUPPORT image schema is represented across all the three senses i.e. spatial, temporal, and metaphorical. The temporal senses do not find representation in the 1st grade and have comparatively lower representation (accounting for 4%) than the metaphorical sense, which has a representation of 6%. In all three grades, we can see that the spatial sense is more frequent than the temporal and metaphorical senses. However, the metaphorical sense is much higher than the temporal sense. *In* has 16% metaphorical uses while *on* has 14% metaphorical uses, which is much more than the temporal usage (*in* has 4% while *on* has 1% representation respectively).

The third study dealt with the representation of phrasal verbs (PVs) across the three grades in the NCERT English textbooks. A comparative frequency analysis of lexical verbs, particles, and phrasal verbs was done with the NCERT English textbooks and the

British National Corpus (BNC). We also seek to uncover the semantic and syntactic representation of these phrasal verbs across the three grades. We touched upon the cognitive complexities associated with these phrasal verb constructions as well. An analysis of the comparison of phrasal verbs in the BNC and the NCERT English textbooks showed that *look at* is the most frequent phrasal verb found across the three grades. Surprisingly, if we look at the phrasal verb in the second position (*wake up*), we would see a huge frequency gap. 10 of the PVs found in the textbooks are absent in the BNC, indicating that the most frequent phrasal verbs used in British English are not represented in the textbooks. It is also noteworthy that the most frequent phrasal verb in the textbook *look at* does not appear in the list of 100 most frequent phrasal verbs in the BNC. Only three phrasal verbs in the textbooks, i.e. *go on*, *come back*, and *go out*, are in the top 10 list of most frequent phrasal verbs in the BNC. The remaining two phrasal verbs found in the textbooks, i.e. *take off* and *get off*, occupy the 42nd and 66th positions, respectively. The results of the semantic analysis of the phrasal verbs found in the said textbooks point out the predominance of literal phrasal verbs (91%) over aspectual (2%) and idiomatic phrasal verbs (7%). This implies that semantic complexities have been taken care of while representing them in the textbooks. However, the dominance of idiomatic phrasal verbs over aspectual phrasal verbs raises concern. The analysis of the syntactic findings reveals that most occurrences are transitive constructions (accounting for 72% of total occurrences). However, certain instances of intransitive constructions were also observed, and it accounts for 28% of the total occurrences.

The study will have implications for curriculum developers, textbook writers, teachers, and future researchers. Curriculum designers can determine the content to include by assessing the cognitive development and the usage of authentic language of the students. Furthermore, they can verify if the current curriculum is suitable for the requirements of

the students. Textbook writers can get guidance on the attributes of an effective textbook and how to incorporate suitable material that aligns with the learners' requirements and level of development. Teachers might derive advantages from being provided with prior knowledge of the merits and limitations of the textbook, therefore enabling them to offset its shortcomings through the creation of activities or extra materials. Researchers can assess textbooks using various criteria and checklists implemented in different educational institutions and classrooms, to facilitate the best possible production, design, and usage of textbooks by the stakeholders mentioned.