

AN EVALUATION OF ACADEMIC WRITING CONTENTS OF ELT TEXT BOOKS OF PTB (PUNJAB TEXT BOOK BOARD) OF HIGHER SECONDARY LEVEL

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Abstract

This research paper focuses on evaluation of academic writing contents that included: Definition, Exemplification, Comparison & Contrast and Cause-Effect, in ELT textbooks syllabus of Punjab textbook board of higher secondary level. Academic writing contents of ELT textbooks of higher secondary level of the study are based on National Curriculum (2006) of English Language. The study has quantitative research approach with descriptive research design. In order to accomplish the research questions and objectives of the study, data was collected through a survey based questionnaire. Convenience sampling technique was used to draw a representative sample of ELT textbooks male and female teachers of higher secondary level of district Bahawalpur. Furthermore, study was delimited to the public sector institutions of district Bahawalpur. The findings of the study stated that academic writing contents of ELT textbooks of PTB are entirely in sequence with National Curriculum (2006) of English Language.

Keywords: ELT (English Language Teaching), Evaluation, Syllabus, Academic writing contents, National Curriculum, PTB (Punjab textbook board)

INTRODUCTION

It is quite important to identify and focus on the aspect that English language textbooks are sufficiently and effectively fulfilling the requirements of English language learning on behalf of English language learners. English language provides opportunities in different aspects of life and particularly in academic subjects. There is dominance of English language in the education system of Pakistan. English language teaching refers to the teaching of English as foreign language or as second language. Phillipson (1993) used a term of "Linguistic Imperialism" for the hegemony of English language. That actually refers to the superiority of the English language. As a result, it is far from enhancing the dominating party and instead is to blame for maintaining its current inferior, impoverished state, as Pennycook (1990) stated. The current study focused upon the English language syllabus of higher secondary level of Punjab textbook board. The higher secondary level's academic writing contents of PTB (Punjab Textbook Board) are evaluated with National Curriculum of English Language (2006). National Curriculum (2006) has been presented by Federal Ministry of the state; that provides base for all four provinces and territories of Pakistan to design the text books accordingly. In Pakistan's educational framework, English is there as compulsory subject and as well it is having status of second language.

Present study focused on academic writing contents of higher secondary level syllabus of Punjab textbook board. As Dr. Ahmed, M. N (2018) stated for textbooks designing in order to encourage critical thinking in language learners, there should be an effort to include a variety of thinking exercises in textbooks, but what exactly are these exercises? The instructional goals and the age of the students influence the decision regarding the thinking exercises. Whereas, according to Richards (2005), there are three different categories of linguistic patterns that should be taken into consideration when designing language textbooks: 1- Mechanical, 2- Purposeful, and 3- Collaborative. In the context of language learning, each of these strategies promotes interactive language learning (p 15). Moreover, Richards and Schmidt (2002) argued that this is thought to increase student's involvement with resources in the target language, promote cognitive processing, and demonstrate respect for the students' capacity for autonomous thought (p 135). According to one definition of curriculum, as Tanner & Tanner (1980) has argued it is the organized and instructed learning lessons and performance objectives, postulated through the standardized restoration of skills and knowledge underneath the guidance of the school, for the student learning' constant and intentional development of their own social competence.

National Curriculum (2006) of English Language provides theoretical framework for the study. Academic writing contents include: Definition, Exemplification, Cause-Effect and Comparison & Contrast. These sub components of academic writing contents are in first competency of National Curriculum of English Language (2006). The purpose of present study was to evaluate the academic writing contents that includes definition, exemplification, cause & effect and comparison & contrast of PTB English language textbooks, through National Curriculum (2006).

Research Objectives

- To identify the academic writing contents in National Curriculum 2006 of English language of higher secondary level.
- To evaluate the English language textbook's academic writing contents of Punjab textbook board of higher secondary level.

Research Questions

- Which academic writing contents are illustrated in National Curriculum 2006 of English language of higher secondary level?
- To what extent academic writing contents are described in English language textbooks of Punjab Textbook board of higher secondary level?

Delimitations of the study

The current study is delimited to the English language syllabus of public sector's higher secondary level; Punjab textbook board and furthermore the study is focused on academic writing contents of Definition, Exemplification, Cause-Effect and Comparison &

Contrast that have been taken from National Curriculum (2006) of English Language. Moreover, study is delimited to the District Bahawalpur, Punjab province.

LITERATURE REVIEW

English is the language of choice for authoring scholarly or scientific research articles or compositions. English is considered as preferred language for number of worldwide research journals. One that is used in broad contexts and everyday settings and the English that is there in academic writing is considerably different. In order to read and comprehend the course content and to write about it, academic English is required. It is the official language of the corporate and scientific worlds, English is seen as the most crucial language to master for the expanding global population (Schütz, 2005). English is used in academic settings worldwide, that enables scholars' worldwide interconnection (Graddol, D, 2006). Academic writing aims for lucidity, wisdom, and formality; that should maintain a balance with assertiveness and ambivalence. A writer should employ numerous short sentences and compose clear, developed sentences with the primary concept in the preceding sentence (Glatthorn, A. 1998). Text-books are considered by majority of teachers as the individual teaching source. Tornroos (2004) used to refer it as potentially implemented curriculum (p. 2) in the light of curriculum development to define the role of the textbook and other curriculum materials in a classroom. A better textbook occasionally may simply have been taught as the curriculum in the classrooms (Lamie, 1999). In the Pakistani context, both learners and educators believe textbooks to be the only and authentic source of information (Bano 2005, p 05). According to McGrath (2002), textbooks can serve a variety of purposes that include to provide numerous ways for anything to be taught utilizing its contents. Moreover, the process of focusing on the requirements to assess how effectively the proposed curriculum is matched with the learner's needs is known as "needs analysis." The term "needs analysis" was first used in the field of English for specific purposes in particular by Munby in 1978. Therefore, the needs of the educational community should be incorporated into the curriculum framework and resources (Graves, 2000).

According to Jordan (1999), it is crucial in academic writing to state the well-constructed introduction with the coherent structure (82). Similarly, Bailey (2006) described that usually definitions are required at levels in research writing; to define a word or term in introduction or research claim for clarity. At second level, definitions interpret any word or term that may be used in an operational way, according to the purpose of the study (p 79). Furthermore, Mc Mahan & Day (1984) has argued, comparison and contrast in academic writing refers to highlighting the contrasts and similarities between the study's subject matter. Typically, both are referred to as comparisons. It is the technique that is employed in order to convince the reader, interpret a concept, notion, or theory, and explain to the study's reader how two seemingly unrelated subjects differ from one another and how they are actually similar (p168-169). On behalf of other component of academic writing; cause-effect is described as in argument of Bailey (2006) that entities seem to have causes or reasons, and they are anticipated by repercussions or effects. One may use conjunctions to demonstrate a cause-effect relation (Bailey 2006, p 70).

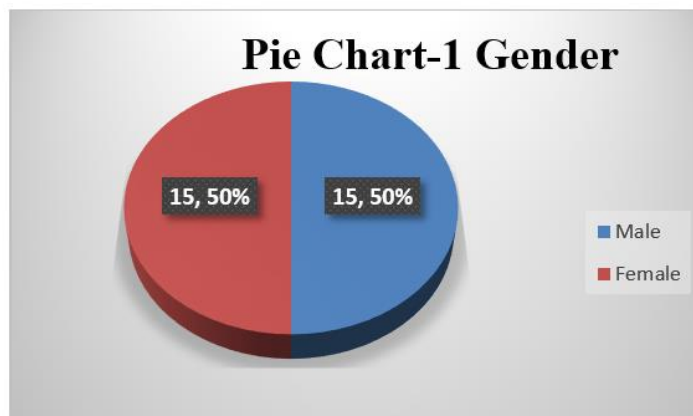
Determining the circumstance, whether general or particular, for which the cause-effect relationship is crucial to apply (Bailey 2006, p 72). Moreover; Mc Mahan & Day (1984) stated that there are four sub types of cause-effect relation that are: 1- single cause-multi effect, 2- multi cause- single effect, 3- casual chain and 4- single cause-single effect (180-184). So, another important component of academic writing content is exemplification that adds more detail to a general notion by using precise, evocative instances to illustrate, justify, clarify, or exemplify it. Similar to how exemplification offers significant support and substantiation for the writer's core claim, a writing task can be made more significant by using textual evidence. Academic writing typically requires illustrating theoretical structures and their component pieces, their links to other distinct structures, as well as their placement in relation to a broader scope (Bowker, 2007). This is due to the nature of academic work, which necessitates the author to delve under the surface in search of core assumptions, speculations, and concepts that may provide guidelines and optional justifications for recurring motifs, techniques, and methods.

METHODOLOGY

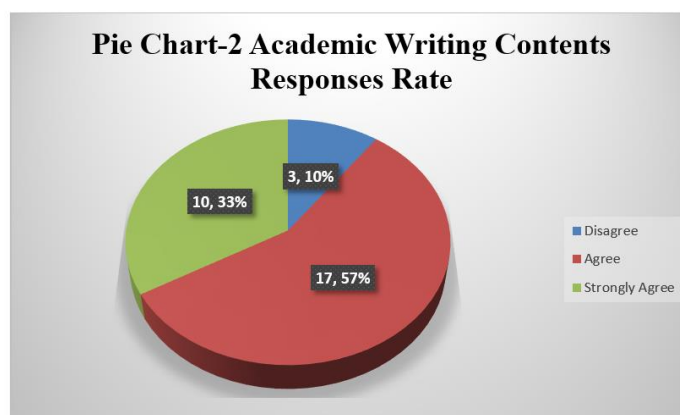
This study was based on quantitative approach and descriptive research design. To depict an existing state of the subject is the primary goal of a descriptive design (Kothari 2004, p 02). Purpose of descriptive research design is to examine a current situation or phenomena and this study was aimed to evaluate the academic writing contents of higher secondary level's English language textbooks of PTB (Punjab Textbook Board). The aspect of the subject that has occurred and is occurring currently, is depicted by descriptive design (Kothari 2004, p 03). The population of this research study was based on English language teachers of higher secondary level English textbooks of PTB (Punjab Textbook Board). According to Gay, Mills & Airasian (2010), the total number of research participants was referred to as the population of study. In general, study participants should be widely accessible (p 130). Convenience sampling technique was applied to draw out the representative sample from the whole population. Moreover, the sample of thirty (30) higher secondary teachers of English language were taken out from district Bahawalpur of Punjab province. That sample contained fifteen (15) male and fifteen (15) female teachers. A questionnaire based survey was conducted to collect data. Questionnaire contained fifteen (15) question statements with five-point scale; Agree, Strongly Agree, No Opinion, Disagree, Strongly Disagree. Cronbach's Alpha value of Questionnaire was .723% that refers to a strong reliability value of questionnaire. Research ethics were also considered while data was collected. Name of institutions and respondents were kept confidential according to the research ethics.

DATA ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

Data had been analyzed through statistical analysis to draw out the results. It is an appropriate way to find out the response percentage for a quantitative study.



The above mentioned pie chart-1 Gender illustrates the respondents of questionnaire. It described that both male and female teachers were selected with equal percentage that is 50%. Fifteen (15) male and fifteen (15) female teachers of English language were selected that contributed 50% male teachers and 50% female teachers.



The above mentioned Pie chart-2 Academic writing Contents Responses Rate indicates the overall responses of respondents. It describes that out of thirty respondents; three (03) respondents are disagreed that is 10%, seventeen (17) respondents are agreed that is 57% and ten (10) respondents are strongly agreed that is 33%. Respondents percentage of disagreed response is quite less although and agreed response percentage is substantially optimal whereas response percentage of strongly agreed response is also considerably good as compared to disagreed response.

FINDINGS & CONCLUSION

The findings of the present study focused on the academic writing contents of higher secondary's English language of Punjab textbook board. In Academic Writing contents: it includes Definition, Exemplification, Comparison & Contrast and Cause-Effect according to the National Curriculum (2006) of English Language. The findings of the study described that disagreed response rate for overall academic writing contents is although less but it indicated that Higher secondary level's English language academic writing

contents of PTB textbooks require to be slightly focused in Higher secondary level's English textbooks of PTB in order to be entirely in sequence with National Curriculum (2006) of English language. While, findings of agreed and strongly agreed responses illustrated that academic writing contents are optimally and fairly good respectively. It referred that academic writing contents of higher secondary level's English Language textbooks of PTB (Punjab textbook board) are solely in sequence with the National Curriculum (2006) of English Language.

National Curriculum (2006) presented the competencies of English Language that are based on four language skills; Speaking, Listening, Writing and Reading. However, the current study focused on one sub component of the writing competency that is Academic Writing; it contains sub components of Definition, Exemplification, Comparison & Contrast and Cause-Effect. Although contents of academic writing are stated adequately in ELT textbooks of higher secondary level of PTB. And it is evident from the findings of the study as well. In spite of that it is essentially important that ELT teachers should emphasize on academic writing contents in English textbooks of higher secondary level of PTB (Punjab textbook board).

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