

CONTEXTUALIZING THE ‘ROLE OF WOMEN IN PAKISTAN MOVEMENT’ A LESSON OF CLASS 9TH ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEXTBOOK: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract:

This study focuses on how the role of women in Pakistan movement is presented in the 9th class English language textbook, published by the Sindh Textbook Board Jamshoro, is contextualized. This paper proposes to contextualize the underlined study by adopting the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). It is used as an instrument for data analysis. However, this article focuses particularly the three language skills, i.e. 1. Vocabulary Learning, 2. Reading Comprehension and 3. Writing Skills. This study showed that at vocabulary learning level, specific words are scrutinized as encompassing the mere replica and restoration of the gender prejudiced, xenophobic, factually misleading knowledge. In this, individual words are broken down as containing the insignificant multiplication and diversion of the gender inequality, bigot, and verifiable contorted information. On the other hand, this paper identified that the level of reading comprehension, the sentences as a whole are analyzed as giving the messages

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of gender stereotypes and marginalization, and false information. Further, it investigated that at the level of writing skills, the exercises are analyzed as containing the exact reflection of the lesson and no requirement of creative writing from the students' part. The activities are investigated as containing the accurate impression of the lesson and no prerequisite of experimental writing from the student's part.

Keywords: *Critical Role, Discourse, Gender prejudice, Gender Stereotypes, Marginalization*

Introduction

There is a general rationale thought and consideration that our textbooks are ripe with blunders, inaccuracies and contain lots of factual and historical errors. These mistakes are then indoctrinated by the young and impressionable minds and inevitably close the room for critical understanding of past history. There are a number of other issues as well that have been discussed and diagnosed so as to bring certain changes with respect to the form, skills used and the type of vocabulary used in the English language textbook for the ninth class of Sindh textbook board Jamshoro, Pakistan.

The incumbent research is carried on one lesson of ninth class English language textbook. The name of the lesson is captioned as 'THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE PAKISTAN MOVEMENT'. The lesson contains lots of mistakes and is abundant with gender stereotypes and the woman rolls have hugely been mutilated and distorted in order to maintain masculine power though the lesson visibly is related to women and their role. First of all, the very basic problem with the lesson is that it has discussed a historical account, whereas the subject of language skills cannot be turned into history. The three skills, i.e. vocabulary, writing and reading is ascertained in order to see the appropriate and whether or not the content and skills are up to the levels of learners.

Keeping in view the educational standard and student's level of rural areas of Sindh province, the vocabulary used in the lesson is not fulfilling the needs of learners. The ongoing study highlights how realities are underrated in our overall public educational setup that aids in larger support for the endorsement of state owned ideologies and system. More importantly, it aims to investigate the ways in which the concepts like patriotism, chauvinism, and particular aspect of religion is glorified. It reflects on the enhancement of apartness among the gender roles

through analyzing the existing literature in the lesson. It doesn't accurately impart light on the issues faced by women in the overall history of movement of Pakistan. Pakistan is a country where the official printing and publishing of textbooks started with the period of General Ayub Khan (Ahmad, I.2004). Generally, the textbooks of English usually include the significant amount of historical units and events that are quite contrary to the language textbooks (Hoodboy.p 2008).

For example, there are certain English language textbooks of Pakistan's variegated textbook boards where the introduction starts with the lessons of Islam and its personalities and the material akin to an ideology, and doesn't include a number of important topics related with English language skills that could easily shape the character and sociocultural perception and lacks the material through which learners could gain a commendable level of competence in the target language. Condition of textbooks as such has greatly resulted in creating a larger gap between what constitutes religious education and that of the citizenship education and English language skills. Our curriculum designed and national language policies have hitherto continued creating and enforcing such type of distinction (Ahmad. I, 2004).

Literature Review

In order to understand social problems, the critical discourse analysis is very important (Van Dijk (2006:252). While arguing about critical discourse analysis, Wodak and Mayer (2009:7) believe that there is an urgent need to apply an interdisciplinary approach in order to decipher properly about how languages work in transforming knowledge in shaping social institutions.

Similarly, the same views were echoed by Rogers et al (2005:368). He explains that the critical theories are specifically linked with power, justice in society, religion, class, economy, gender issues. Lucke (1996) opines that textual meanings are important in understanding how social interactions and their relations in daily life and their position in the world (Lucke 1996:12). In addition to this, McGregor (2010:2) argues that critical discourse analysis demands from human beings to avoid looking at words as mere language abstracts, but rather important meanings which direct bearing on the historical, social and political condition.

Moreover, it is quite pertinent to mention here that discourse analysis focuses primarily on how social interactions are just like linguistic form (Blommaert & Bulcaen 2000:448). However, the text as well as talk are considered as structures

in the theory and practice of critical discourse analysis. In the words of McGregor (2003:2), the power of words either text or oral are so overwhelming that it fully reflects the social life. In fact, our social life is interpreted and analysed in different aspects. Through the text, one can be critiqued for some one's life.

Rogers et al (2005:371), informs about the three important objectives in learning and understanding more about how the given text plays the role in social interaction. His second objective was to know about how discourse practices are configured and reformulated, its third objective was to offer an explanation that aims at further explanation and interpretation of how the social interaction and its practices are conducted. By applying these goals, one can understand and give meanings in a variety of ways to the text which we apply in our daily routine conversation.

Consequently, empirical studies also suggest various procedures and ways to achieve different goals and choices by applying critical discourse analysis (Van Dijk 2006:253). In contrary to this, Lucke (1996:20) the argument presented, suggests that "critical discourse analysis can make transparent asymmetries in relations, revealing the textual techniques by which texts attempt to position, locate, define, and, in some instances, enable and regulate readers and addresses".

In fact, the issue is very common in almost all the countries of the world where English is taught as a lingua Franca. However, it is worth noting that the information conveyed in the English textbooks largely includes the irrelevance or in appropriation of content with the students, exclusion of important items, imbalanced variety of tasks-types, demotivating or outdated activities and unrealistic proposed exercises (Graves, K. 2000). The critical evaluation of textbooks in general, according to Cunnings Worth (1995), would encompass the vigilant assortment of materials examining whether they reflect the needs of the learners, the aims, skills, methods and values of a specific learning program.

Textbook evaluation constantly benefits the teachers and learners in furthering and facilitating to acquire valuable, correct, methodical and appropriate comprehensions into the overall nature of textbook materials (Cunnings Worth, 1995; Ellis, 1997). Through the evaluation of textbooks in general and a lesson in particular, teachers and students would be able to know the content, its strengths and faults which will greatly benefit them to acclimate it to suit the course objectives, learners' wants and teachers' beliefs. As Littlejohn (1998) perceives, critical discourse evaluation serves the purpose of scrutinizing whether the practice, methodology, skills used and content of the materials are suitable for a

specific language teaching framework. The assessment would experiment about the claims materials make for themselves: whether they have strictly improved self-sufficiency and autonomy, whether they accurately include problem solving and if they undeniably are learner positioned and centered. Littlejohn (1998) proposes a different levels of analysis and a brief introduction of them is written below: 1. At the initial level of scrutiny, the main focus is deemed to be on the physical aspects of materials used in the lessons of the textbook, 2. This level studies the inclusive goals of the materials, content, task selection and sequencing, teachers and learners' roles, demands of learner knowledge, effects, language skills and abilities and the role of materials as a whole.

One study steered by Azizifar, Koosha and Lotfi (2009) endeavored to make an evaluation analytically of locally produced Iranian high school ELT Textbooks from 1970 to the present. The study sought to investigate how speaking skills, content, and grammar were dealt with the second books in "Graded English" (GE) series published by the Iranian Ministry of Education in 1984 and in "Right Path to English" (RPE) by Birjandi, Nowrozi, and Mahmodi in (2002). Conclusively, there is a plethora of literature that aims to find out what is important for learners and what are the areas in the textbooks that could pave the way for the indoctrination of materials and then exploiting the masses with state sponsored knowledge and skills.

The critical discourse analysis is the type of research tool. Its main focus is on the study of researching the way the dominant elite keeps power legitimate and intact by marginalizing the less dominant groups through the text. The focus can vary based on the type of text that is analyzed but the exposure of social inequality, from the part of the researcher remains constant. The social inequality can be based on the minority rights, women's status, class based marginalisation, ideological dominance etc.

CDA's centre of argument is that the discourse, whether scientific or scholarly, is intrinsically the part of and gets affected by social structure and the production of social interaction. Keeping in view this argument, CDA studies the relationship between the text and society.

The primary focus of CDA is "social problems" and political issues. In order to make the research better than many researches, CDA does not only aim at "describing" the discourse structure, but also tries to "explain" it in terms of properties of social interaction and structure. It challenges the reproduction of the

relationship between power and dominance in society legitimized through the text.

Fairclough and Wodak (1997: 271-80) summarize the main tenets of CDA as follows: 1. CDA addresses social issues, 2. Discourse comprises society and culture, 3. Discourse does ideological work, 4. Discourse is historical, 5. Discourse is a form of social action.

Critical Analysis

Analysis of three skills used in the lesson is mentioned as under:

1. Vocabulary

This level deals with vocabulary on the basis of lexicology. In this lesson there is a specific religious vocabulary that seems to be remote from everyday conversation of members of other faith. These items are transferred from Islamic studies to a compulsory subject English and in a lesson that has nothing to do with the analyzed lesson. Words that are religious in its essence are: Muslims, Muslim leaders, Independent Muslim State, Purdah, Muslim girls, Muslim independence, Burqah.

Apart from religious words, the lesson contains words which are quite contrary to the established facts and figures. There are some words used in the lesson which are not taught in the previous grades and as they pose huge difficulty for new learners. I have tried my level best to problematise the vocabulary used. The list of such vocabulary items excerpted from the said lesson is placed under the following expressions and excerpts:

ALREADY, SOUTH ASIA, 14TH AUGUST, RULE, INDEPENDENCE, PURDAH, NOBLE CAUSE, MUSLIM INDEPENDENCE, AGED, DRESSED, PUBLIC MEETINGS, and WOMEN'S MEETINGS.

The reasons of being discontent with vocabulary noted above are discussed here:

1. Already: Already is a word that is heavily used for two purposes. One of its main functions is that it is used in terms of its grammar position. The fact to be asserted here is that the usage of already as a grammar notion has never been taught before in any of the classes. Therefore, it poses a lot of trouble for new learners about the positioning of this word.

2. South Asia: it is the serious mockery of the South Asians nations that they are being named as the old colonies of the British. The author of the lesson should

have been possessed with the historical knowledge that all of the South Asia was not under the mighty imperialism of the British but merely a few countries were so. The author should have used the name of sub-continent instead of south Asia. The fact we should acknowledge is that in the poor cultural background areas where education is a far cry, students of matric hardly know about the countries of South Asia, therefore it can readily pose huge conundrum for the learners.

3. 14th August: History is witnessed that Pakistan's separation announcement was made by Lord Mountbatten and the time at that time was exactly 12 am 15th August 1947 (K.K. Aziz, 1998). Leaving the fact, there is no consensus hitherto regarding the exact date of independence, therefore, students are left to puzzle and confusion as to what exactly is the date of separation and remain answerless why the two countries celebrated their independence on different dates.

It is ironical to note here that the history books never make explanation to this question. Thus, this lesson too is staying the deaf and dumb.

4. Rule: This word in the lesson is deliberately italicized without being explained. There is no reason as to give this word the essence and the stress. British rule was oppressive and sometimes mild as well. But, the history of imperialism reflects the fact that the colonizers have always been cruel and vanquishing. Therefore, students remain utterly fail to understand why the word 'RULE' is stressed here.

5. Independence: Learners at this stage don't understand the meaning and essence of independence. They are not provided what constitutes the real independence. Despite being independent we have remained a failed state is a vigilant fact. Still, we indoctrinate our children with the ideas we are independent, whereas physically we are not! The author should have used the definition of this word and then should have explained how everyone was struggling to get independence and of what type. Therefore the inclusion of independence here simply means get rid of Hindus and not the real independence; that people could enjoy even staying with Hindus. Arshad Mahmood in his book 'cultural suffocation and Pakistani society' perfectly ventilated what constitutes independence and showed that we are never independent by any means (Arshad Mahmood).

6. Purdah: it is even the insanity of an author who used this term in the incumbent lesson. There is no point to refer women wearing purdah or staying in the curtain. Whereas the reality is all the women discussed in the lesson were leaders of the women parties and wings and did a great many public meetings. There is no denying the fact that all the ladies under discussion are Muslims by birth, but

casting them with this remark will lessen their importance mainly from the public sphere.

7. Noble Cause: students are not told before and in the lesson even about the 'single noble cause'. I wonder if getting isolated land for politics is the upright cause. History shows this noble cause instigated vast annihilation both human and infrastructural. If to get separation from Hindus is the noble cause then it is the uppermost form of obliviousness and absurdity revealed by the author.

8. Aged: there is no being the point of referring a lady with this term. This is literally ridiculous. It is a fact the Bi Amaan encouraged her sons, when she was still in her younger days. This is exactly the foolishness of the author who has used this word for lady of motivation and upright character. The word would instill in children's minds that Bi Amaan remained older and aged always.

9. Dressed: The incumbent lesson is hundred percent related to the history. The curse in our country is that, all subject matters are Islamified (Arshad Mahmood in education and our national troubles). Therefore, what is the point of discussing what was worn by upright ladies discussed in the lesson? This is simply done to Islamize the lesson and the content used here.

10. Pubic Meeting: The author has tried to make a gender based differences. He has used public meeting in order to show men in the meetings. Therefore, this tells the impressionable minds that only men would attend the meetings in public and there was no any place for women in such public meetings.

11. Women's Meeting: This is of the same sort of compound word explained earlier. This has caused a gap between place of woman and man in public areas and capacities. The author is helping enlarging this sort of wild separation. The separate inclusion of this compound word helped to show the difference in capacities and abilities of the women and men at that time.

The solution of the problem is: the authors should use vocabulary free from historical error, it shouldn't help creating a gap between gender roles, grammatical and functional words be separated, and the context of the word be referenced in order to get the fine idea of what can be the exact meaning of the word. Vocabulary be used up to the level of learners.

Reading Skill

For the purpose of understanding what is given in the content or material of the lesson, it is mandatory that whatsoever is put in should be bereft of any error

whether grammatical or historical. Therefore the lines which, in my opinion are contrary to the established facts, sentences which are greatly distorted and mutilated are extensively debated and diagnosed here. The detail of which are given as under.

1. Before this (independence) the British ruled South Asia:

This line is completely out of historical manifestation. It says that the British colonized all of the South Asia, whereas there were only a few colonized countries. And if the lesson is regarding the sub-continent then there is no reason of the inclusion of word south Asia. First of all, learners at this grade don't know what the countries are coming in the south Asia. Secondly, students be taught the geography of South Asia before talking informally about it. Therefore, the usage of this line is likely to induce negative impact on the minds of young and impressionable minds.

2. In the beginning, both the Hindus and the Muslims worked together to drive the British from India: what is beginning? Which sort of beginning the author is talking about and what was that era when both the nations worked hard to get rid of British from Indian communities? No reference is given. The content lacks further explanation. Historically, there were bitter realities and even both the Hindus and Muslims were at daggers drawn to each other. There were lots of enmity and odds between them. There was (is) no any particular time period when these both nations worked together against getting themselves politically and economically free from the cruel claws of the British.

3. At that time, our women were in strict purdah: an effort is made to Islamize all women regardless of their class and culture. This can readily and easily bring in a young child's mind that all the time our women remained in purdah. Basically, there was a very scanty number of women who stayed in purdah before the era of Zia (K.K Aziz, 1998). There was a very handful number of families who did strict burqah and didn't participate in public events. However, there are no inch and iota of axiom in that assertion.

4. Bi Amaan was the mother of Maulana Mohammad Ali and Maulana Johar Ali: it is very much visibly the sexist approach of an author in the sentence given just above. Instead of making a brief introduction of personal, political, social, religious, national and cultural role of bi Amaan, the author went on to identify her with her sons. This is insane and gender stereotyped line. The line depicts that the role played by Bi Amaan herself is equal to zero. If the lesson is on women's role and their political participation, then why tying her role in comparison and

relation to her sons? This is a million dollar question which the author is utterly failing to answer.

5. She (Fatima Jinnah) helped her brother in the struggle for the establishment of Pakistan: we, after 68th years of Pakistan existence still are unaware of the actual role Fatima Jinnah played before and after the creation of Pakistan. One of the greatest tasks in order to corrupt the minds of youth is played by our textbooks and lessons like this. Fatima Jinnah was a brave lady and played a greater political role in the aftermath of the creation of Pakistan. Her role in helping her brother is no doubt very much commendable. However, her political participation and facing the cruelty of president Ayub and establishment is never highlighted. This is the serious injustice done to the nation that they are kept completely in darkness as to what establishment did to the sister of the father of the nation. The given line is gender biased and should have not been here. Instead of this, her role after the establishment of Pakistan be given in order to know the essence of her struggle and correct history be taught so that youth remain aware of who did wrong to whom.

6. Sometimes, the police would use tear-gas and would lathi-charge the women's meetings and even arrest their leaders: perhaps the author doesn't know when and how the very first use of tear gas was made. According to the book named as science and subcontinent by brigadier Majid Khan, the first use of tear gas and lathi charge was used during the period of Second World War. Therefore, it is safe to assume that in the era of women discussed in detail here in the lesson, nowhere these gases were shed. This is self-explanatory that though the role of women was extremely important and praiseworthy, but describing their role with false justification is also a serious injustice with the departed souls of these ladies who took active part in the politics of sub-continent and then the Pakistan.

Writing Skills

Writing skills and composing abilities mean outfitting the learners with methods of utilizing syntactically correct sentences with exact spellings and accentuation. At the end of the day, written work abilities allude to making learners mindful of the composition, arrangement of the language so that they may utilize it in their day by day life or if nothing else in the formal settings. Lamentably, the activities which are made for making the learners mindful of writing skills depend on the propagation of the officially learned lesson.

Following are some of the acute blunders followed in the composition and exercise section.

Comprehension

This implies the profound and careful comprehension of anything that is taught. In this area of activities, all the "WH" inquiries are given. These questions do not mirror and test the comprehension and understanding level of learners. In fact, these sorts of questions simply make the learners remember the answers through repetition learning. The answers of the considerable number of inquiries can precisely be found in the lesson.

1. Who was Bi Amaan? Why is she remembered till today?
2. How did the Muslim women work for independence?
3. Why is Miss FatimaJinnah called Madr-i-Millat?
4. What is the meaning of Madr-i-Millat?
5. In Sindh, where did the first meeting of women took place?

All the questions mentioned above are grounded on the particular imitation of the lesson with involvement from the side of the learners. None of the question is based on the opinions which can reflect learners own thinking. Learners borrow the exact answers and memorize. This can greatly emphasize the value of rote learning. This is the problem we need to understand and this is the area we need to apply our energies on. If this kind of area is correctly problematised then students will no longer be easily indoctrinated. In fact, they will think upon what is being asked in the exercises of the lesson.

Conclusion

The lesson "The Role of Women in Pakistan Movement" presented in the 9th English language textbook, published by the Sindh Textbook Board Jamshoro is filled with conundrums based on social marginalization, provincial inequality, gender stereotypes and misogynistic texts, factual inaccuracies and unreal knowledge. At the vocabulary level, it was analyzed that learners are given abstruse terms which apparently seem less problematic, but are implicitly conveying the negative messages. These messages are biased based on gender, society, ethnicities, provinces and religion. Similarly, at the level of reading comprehension, the same issues were analyzed in a more nuanced manner. Sentences convey the messages of marginalization and gender stereotypes explicitly as is given in the above data analysis. At the level of writing skills analysis, it was found that the exercises are merely based on reproductive knowledge without any focus on creative skills and contextual use of language.

Since the lesson specifically deals with the role of women in Pakistan movement, it needs to be specific to women and not to the men who were attached to those

women. The role of women should be elucidated in their own right, not as the daughters, wives or sisters of some male leaders. The lesson on women should encourage women to work with full liberation for the welfare of their homeland and not just as the sexual objects who first of all need to sanctify their modesty. The words used in the above analysis, should be grammatically well entrenched in the minds of the learners. Since the majority of the words used might create problems for the learners. Therefore, it is suggested that those words be used which could make the learners understand their usage and meaning without much difficulty.

The compulsory language subject is taught to all learners belonging to all regions and sects. Hence, only the neutral vocabulary on the basis of faith should be used. The vocabulary that is specific to a certain faith is equal to marginalizing the learners from other sects and faiths. The words which are italicized or made bold in the lesson should be explained beforehand. Factual inaccuracies need to be eliminated completely and the learners should be provided with the knowledge that is historically and factually correct. The question at the end of the lesson should invoke critical thinking and understanding in their own way. The questions need not be the mere reproduction of the given lesson.

It is trusted that the idea of defining identity through the culture or religious convictions is a reactionary marvel and individuals adjust it to watch themselves from the abuse and barbarities practiced by the intense oppressor. They look for salvation in being faithful to their religious and social belief system. The Kalash individuals have kept up their hundreds of years old customary society, regardless of the actuality of current globalization, and modernization. Media is attacking their protection, regard and societal standards by presenting new thoughts, and motivations of the young. Though the general population have oppressed to the most recent patterns of globalization and modernization, but on the other hand, are endeavoring to keep pace with their socio-social and religious conventions transmitted to them by their ancestors. As of now the general public is going from the period of move and transculturation because of the effect of modernization, and change, yet at the same time the general population are making a decent attempt to save and keep up their hundreds of years old cultural identity.

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