

# An Evaluative Study of English Textbook Entitled "Raintree English" of Class 6 of CBSE Schools

Mrs. Priyanka Parmar<sup>1</sup> and Asst. Prof. Anish Korla<sup>2</sup>

Research Scholar M.Ed<sup>1</sup> and Research Supervisor<sup>2</sup>

Dronacharya PG College of Education, Rait, India

**Abstract:** *The current study examined the "Raintree" English that is taught in non-government schools to CBSE sixth-graders. When the positive and negative aspects of the textbook were examined, it was discovered that the former greatly outweighed the latter. This textbook can be suggested for use in teaching and learning situations, and with the right modifications, it can be a useful tool for qualified educators. Language professionals are expected to learn something from this textbook analysis. Using suitable checklists and questionnaires, textbook authors can incorporate more universal elements into their EFL/ESL textbooks while also customizing and adapting them to the needs of the students. Textbooks that seem good at first glance frequently don't meet many of the standards of a really good book. For this reason, those who are making these decisions must carefully read the text in its entirety and evaluate it using an evaluation tool. Whether the researcher created it or used one from another author, an evaluation checklist or questionnaire helps to keep this investigation on track and guarantees that important details are not overlooked.*

**Keywords:** Language professions, evaluative study

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Gurukula system of education was practiced in ancient India, where anyone who wanted to learn went to a teacher's (Guru) home and asked to be taught. Everything the child wished to learn was covered by the guru, including mathematics, metaphysics, Sanskrit, and the Holy Scriptures. The pupil stayed for as long as he wanted to or until the teacher thought he had covered everything. All education was not limited to memorization of facts; rather, it was intimately tied to life and the natural world. The new government of the Republic of India had a long-held goal of providing universal and mandatory education for all children between the ages of 6 and 14. This is clear from the fact that Article 45 of the Constitution incorporates it as a directive policy. However, even after more than 50 years, this goal is still very far off. The National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT), a national organization that creates a national curriculum framework, is a major player in policy and program development. The State Council for Educational Research and Training (SCERT) is the equivalent for each state. These organizations essentially advise state education departments on educational strategies, curricula, pedagogical schemes, and evolution methodologies. In general, the SCERTs adhere to the rules set forth by the NCERT. However, the states have a great deal of latitude in how they carry out the educational system. A document is a syllabus or specification.

Jeremy Harmer put seven perspectives or principles to evaluate any materials of EFL/ESL, which need more clarification and explanations. "Practical consideration" is followed by some questions such as: The price of Textbook and its availability. Some other of the integral parts of the course book is factors such as work book, tape, cassette, teacher's book ...etc. In the findings, the price is little high and the integral parts are not available. And regarding the "layout and design" principle, it's good and attractive too. Under the "language type" the language used is appropriate. According to "subject and content" the topics are appropriate and content material is related to learners' background, personalities and needs. In the rest of perspectives, the right skills are included in the materials. And the balance between the different skills is appropriate - Finally, the evaluative model/form asks questions only for teachers. However, learners are also given sufficient guidance in order to have clear objectives that both teachers and learners understand.

### Meaning of Education

Proper and good education is very important for all of us. It facilitates quality learning all through the life among people of any age group, cast, creed, religion and region. It is the process of achieving knowledge, values, skills, beliefs, and moral habits. Education is about learning skills and knowledge. It also means helping people to learn how to do things and support them to think about what they learn. Through education, the knowledge of society, country, and of the world is passed on from generation to generation.

Education is a process of learning through which we acquire knowledge. It enlightens, empowers, and creates a positive development. Education gives an individual the knowledge and skills to work with virtue. It aids the all-round mental, physical, and intellectual growth and development of an individual.

In Short, education is the development of individual according to his needs and demands of society, of which he is an integral part. The above remarks of different educators highlight the following special features of education. Education is both unilateral as well as bi-polar in nature.

### Meaning of Textbook

The textbook definition is “a book used as a standard work for the study of a particular subject”. As such, textbooks come in a variety of guises and formats, depending on the subject and age range. Most textbooks are printed on paper, which remains an excellent medium, but an increasing number of publishing houses and, notably, self-publishing practitioners are using digital media (e.g. e-pub, e-Books, web pages) to deliver content and contribute to effective instruction and successful learning.

According to [Wikipedia](#), “A textbook is a manual of instruction or a standard book in any branch of study. They are produced according to the demand of the educational institutions. Textbooks are usually published by one of the four major publishing companies. Although most textbooks are only published in printed format, some can now be viewed online.”

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, a textbook is defined as “a book that teaches a particular subject and that is used especially in schools and colleges”. Textbooks usually combine contemporary and traditional approaches to language teaching.

According to L.J.Lewis, Textbook is a tool both for the pupil and the teacher.

According to Lagne, It is a standard book for any particular branch of study.”

### Characteristics of Textbook

A textbook serves as a guide for a teacher and student as well. Its content decides the destination of the both. To my mind, a textbook provides foundation for the instructional process. This also motivates the teachers and the students for instruction and learning. Here are some established and acknowledged definitions of a textbook. A textbook is a basic book used in a particular course of study.

- A textbook is a book that is developed keeping in view particular curricular objectives, particular level of education and students possessing specific cognitive abilities.
- The textbook plays an important role in teaching and learning. It represents a useful resource for both teachers as a course designers and learners as persons who are acquiring the English language.
- The educational philosophy of the textbook influences the class and the learning progress. Therefore, in many cases, materials are the centre of instruction and one of the most important influences on what goes on in the classroom.
- Textbooks give a great contribution in the teaching learning process both to the teachers and to learners. They offer a framework of guidance and orientation. However, apart from numerous advantages a single textbook frequently does not meet diverse needs of the learners. This generates a need for textbook adaptation at the activity, unit and syllabus levels. Adapting provides teachers with an opportunity to make a greater use of their professional skills and for learners to be involved in the learning process.

A textbook can be conceived as a working tool either for the teacher or for the pupil. Decisions as to choice in this respect will determine the nature of the textbook as a tool for communication: language used, quantity and level of information, text, illustrations and links between the latter two elements.

Many teachers are required to use textbooks and are bound to the textbook in its existing form. Since this simplifies class preparation for teachers, this is acceptable for some teachers who eventually begin to over-rely on textbooks and decide to follow the textbook closely, making no or only small essential changes and additions. On the other hand, some teachers reject the textbook approach to learning and wish to make substantial changes to the textbook they need to use.

### **Characteristics of Textbook Evaluation**

Textbook evaluation is very important because it not only provides useful information for teachers, but also plans learning settings for students. The evaluation of the textbook serves as an indicator to select strengths and weaknesses of any textbook. It helps to choose the most appropriate materials available for a specific lesson.

According to Carter and Nunan (2001:221) evaluation refers to:

A purposeful, Cyclical process of collecting, Analyzing an interpreting relevant information in order to make educational decisions. Evaluation may focus on the quality, appropriateness, or relevance of teachers, students, classroom instruction, in addition to the instructional materials and activities: or, the whole syllabuses or programs of instruction. In other words, evaluation in the educational field involves the teacher and his methods of teaching, the learner and his strategies, style of learning .

In addition, for Tomlinson et al. (2001) textbook evaluation is an activity in the field of applied linguistics that enables teachers, supervisors, administrators and material developers to make judgments about the effect the materials have on the people who use them. Thanks to textbook evaluation teachers have insight into the content and materials present in it.

Sheldon (1988) suggested two important reasons to evaluate textbooks. First of all, the evaluation helps teachers in their decision for selecting the most useful textbook. Second, the evaluations which make teachers identify weaknesses and strength of the textbook. Then, they make a suitable modification in their future instruction. Therefore, it is of great importance to take into account learners' needs and interests and also teaching materials used in any textbook while evaluating and examining the content of a given textbook.

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), textbook evaluation is basically a straight forward, analytical matching process i.e. matching needs to available solutions. They divide the evaluation process into four major steps:

- Defining criteria
- Subjective analysis
- Objective analysis
- Matching

Sheldon (1987), on the other hand, argues that evaluation is rather more emotive and controversial for teachers. He defines evaluation of textbook as a matter of judging the fitness of something (textbooks/materials) for a particular purpose (teaching in an EL situation for example). Tomlinson (1998) states that the term "materials evaluation" refers to attempts to measure the value of materials.

Lynch (1997) defines evaluation as a systematic attempt to gather information in order to make judgments or decisions. In this concern, evaluative information can be both qualitative and quantitative in form and can be gathered through different methods such as observation or the administration of pencil-and-paper test.

Cunningsworth (1995) and Ellis (1997) suggest that textbook evaluation helps teachers move beyond impressionistic assessments and it helps them to acquire useful, accurate, systematic and contextual insights into the overall nature of textbook. Litz (2005), on the other hand, states that "evaluation textbooks" assists educators in identifying the particular strengths and weaknesses in textbooks already in use.

In the researcher's point of view, textbook evaluation is a matter of examining and checking the ready-written in hand material/textbook to know the appropriateness or otherwise of this textbook for a particular context. In this concern, the process of evaluation can take four stages:

- Defining the principles/criteria of designing materials in addition to the features of the situation it is applied in and of students it is applied for
- Defining the criteria on which the evaluation will be based on: a checklist, a framework, etc

- Matching both criteria using a valid, reliable, practical instrument of collecting data such as a questionnaire
- Analyzing the findings that will help the evaluator decide to what extent the course book/material is suitable for the user.

### **Need and Significance of the Study**

The researcher has employed content analysis of textbook. Teachers need to analyse the book used to make sure that whether the book is suitable for teaching or not. Teacher also can make some preparations before teaching their students by analyzing the book that will be used because teacher has known the contents of the book very well. So, teacher can make some changes for materials if there are some mistakes or unsuitability on the textbook. According to the research study, the writer could provide an information on the content of the textbook and the criteria of a good English textbook. Further, the researcher analysis an English textbook to know the quality of the English textbook. This study will be beneficial for teacher who do not know how to know whether textbook that they use in teaching is good or not. Also, this study will provide a simple and an easy analysis in analyze a textbook, so every teacher can easily make a textbook analysis without any difficulties and mistakes.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Statement of the problem is given below:-

**“An Evaluative Study of English Textbook entitled "*Raintree English*" of Class 6 of CBSE Schools”**

### **Objectives of the Study**

Before start of any purposeful work, it is necessary to fix the aims and objectives. Objectives are like the foundation stone of salacious building on which the part can stand. After completion of research work evaluation takes place and certifies that the work developed on sight times on pre-fixed objectives.

Keeping in view the following objectives are laid down:

- To examine the appropriateness of English Textbook (The Raintree English)of class 6 on the criteria of good English textbooks and in what way the book is appropriate on the criteria of good English Textbook.
- To discover whether English textbook (The Raintree) has fulfilled the criteria of good English Textbook.
- The present study on the evaluation of English textbook (The Raintree) intend
- to evaluate skills (LSRW) so that effective strategies can be formulated.
- To provide future recommendations to English teachers regarding the appropriate and optimum utilization of English textbook in the classroom.

### **Criteria/ Research tool used for the Evaluation**

Jeremy Harmer’s criterion has been used here for the textbook evaluation. This research was descriptive qualitative research due to the fact that the aim of the research was to analyze English textbook used for grade VI in order to figure out the strengths and weaknesses of each textbook. To collect the data, this study used document analysis as the main instrument. There was one textbook intended to be analyzed and evaluated. The book was “*Raintree English Coursebook 6*” for class 6 students published in 2018, consisted of 12 units and 144 pages.

Harmer established his own” materials evaluation form” in seven perspectives as following:

- Practical consideration
- Layout and Design
- Subject and content
- Language type
- Skills
- Activities
- Guidance

**The Textbook Evaluation Instrument Adopted from J. Harmer (2007)**

**Price and availability**

- How much does the book cost?
- Will students have to buy an extra material (workbook, course book, etc?)
- Are all the components (workbook, course book etc) available?
- What about the levels?
- Is this good value for money?
- How much does the whole package cost?

**Add -ons and extras**

- Apart from a workbook, what other extras are offered with the course?
- Are the internet sites with extra Materials (ex texts, etc)?
- What value should we place on the extras that available?

**Layout and design**

- Is the book attractive?
- Is its design appropriate for the students and for the teacher?
- Does the design of the book make it easy to flow?

**Instructions**

- Are the instructions clear and ambiguous?
- Are they written in the language that students will understand?

**Methodology**

- What kind of teaching and learning does the course book promote?
- Is there a good balance between study and activation?

**Syllabus**

- Is the syllabus appropriate for our students?
- Does it cover the language areas that we would expect?
- Does the course book build in a feeling of progress?

**Language skills**

Does the course book have the appropriate balance of skills?

**Topics**

- Does the book contain a variety of topics?
- On balance, are the topics appropriate for the kind of students who will use the course book?

**Cultural appropriacy**

- Is the material appropriate for the cultural situation that the students are in?
- Do the texts contain culturally insensitive material?
- Are the activities appropriate for the learning culture?
- Is the course book unprejudiced in the way it deals with different customs, ethnicities, races, and sexes?

**Teacher's guide**

- Does the course book have an accompanying teacher's guide?
- Is it easy to use?
- Does it explain things clearly?
- Does it offer alternatives to the course book activities?

**Quantitative Checklist of *Raintree English* Course book 6**

<b>Impressionistic view</b>	<b>Total</b>		
Units in the book	12		
No. of activities in the book	166		
lessons per unit	2		
Activities per unit	19		
Cultural units	3		
<b>In- Depth view</b>	<b>Total activities</b>	<b>Per unit</b>	<b>Percentage%</b>
Activities for Listening skills	11	1	6.6%
Activities for Speaking skills	13	1	7.83%
Activities for Reading skills	11	....	6.62%
Activities for Writing skills	15	5	9.03%
Activities for Thinking strategies	16	1	9.63%
Activities for vocabulary	12	1	7.22%
Activities for grammar	12	2	7.22%
Chapters for Culture study	3	....	1.80%

**Delimitations of the Problem**

Keeping in view the limited resources, limited finances, time, capacity and energies the investigator has delimited the present problem as follows:

- The present study is delimited to the content analysis (document analysis) of English textbook.
- The present study is delimited to the evaluation of English textbook "*Raintree*" English course book 6 published by Orient Black Swan.
- The present study is delimited to the evaluation the English textbook of class 6.
- The present study is delimited to the evaluation of English textbook of CBSE.

**Findings**

The findings of the study as stated below:-

**Price and availability**

In terms of price and availability, book is very much accessible. The book "*Raintree English*" is affordable for students. The book is also available in bookstores. Meanwhile, the curriculum of the book is available in digital version which can be downloaded free from the internet. Students who face difficulty in finding the book online may request the digital version from their teachers at their schools.

**Ad-ons and extras**

Book does not have separated extra materials such as workbook, but instead include various activities and exercises inside. , the "*Raintree English*" textbook is providing add-ons and extra materials. There are internet sites to be used as additional learning source. Raintree Digital Companion can be accessed through the Orient BlackSwan app.

**Layout and design**

In the aspect of layout and design, the "*Raintree English*" reflects its title. With the good pick of colors, the book looks even more attractive and energetic and gives cheerful atmosphere. The content of the book, especially the text within "*Raintree English*", is very clean and well-ordered. A variety of interesting and fun formats to motivate students. Furthermore, the activities and materials are not too wordy and they are available with some related pictures and

illustrations. The “*Raintree English*” textbook mostly provides realistic pictures such as people from different countries.

### Instructions

Instructions on book are very clear with simple and understandable language. By reading the instructions, students would know what they should do in each unit and exercise, which skill they need to use except few exercise where it's not clear like which students need to use; whether it is listening, speaking, reading, or writing, and whether the tasks should be done individually or not.

### Methodology

In an essence, the textbooks consist of appropriate methodology they cover the syllabus; and have clear instructions.

### Syllabus

Based on the analysis on the books' syllabus and curriculum are suitable for Grade VI's learning.

### Language skills

Textbook of “*Raintree English*” demand students to use the four language skills: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. The course book has the appropriate balance of skills.

### Topics

In the aspect of topics, it is clearly analyzed that the book has various range of topics. In book, there are different kinds of expressions being introduced on each unit. The topics in textbook are culturally appropriate for the students.

### Teacher's guide

There is teacher's guide also provided in these textbooks.

### Cultural appropriacy

The contents found in the book such as names, places, and traditions are based on facts about India and other countries as well.

## II. CONCLUSION

The present study investigated “*Raintree English*” which is taught in some of the non-government institutions. It investigated the positive and negative characteristics of the textbook and it was found that the positive attributes far outweighed the negative characteristics.

It can be said that this textbook can be recommended for teaching and learning situation and it can be an effective textbook in the hand of good teachers if it is accompanied by some adaptations. Through this textbook analysis, it is hoped that language professionals will gain some knowledge. Implications suggest that textbook developers, by using appropriate checklists and questionnaire can include more universal characteristics in their EFL/ESL textbooks which, at the same time, are tailored and adapted to the needs of the learners. Textbooks that appear sound on the surface often lack many of the criteria of a truly superior book. Therefore, it is necessary for individuals who are making these choices to carefully examine all aspects of the text and compare it against an assessment tool. An evaluation checklist or questionnaire, whether adopted from another author or created by the researcher, serves to focus this examination and ensures that significant factors will not be missed.

### Educational Implications

Based on the results of the study, the following suggestions are made.

- First of all, teachers who are currently involved in the process of English language learning and teaching should be trained to be more conscious and critical of what goes on in the materials they teach. Although the teachers manage to use the textbooks as their core materials, they are supposed to make adaptation and supplement them with other materials according to learners' needs and their teaching context.
- Second, the writers of the textbooks should conduct a regularly retrospective evaluation of their books and make the necessary adjustment to constantly update and improve them.

- Third, as this study only focuses on the analysis merely based on the perception of the outsider evaluator, further research can be conducted to reveal more objective and in-depth analysis by combining the evaluation with the interview with teachers and student users.

#### Suggestions for Further Studies

- A comparative study should be conducted between two textbooks of same class.
- A study may be conducted on the textbook evaluation of higher class.
- A study may be conducted on the evaluation of English textbook of other boards like ICSE or NCERT.
- The present study is conducted on English textbook of class 6 which is used by non-government and authorized by CBSE. A similar study can be conducted with other class textbook.

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