



Analysis of the National Curriculum 2006 in the Light of Learner Centered Ideology

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ABSTRACT

Education is a provincial matter after the 18th amendment in Pakistan. Enjoying these powers, every province including Balochistan has developed its Education sector Plan to fulfill their contextual needs. Now-a-days Balochistan is preparing its second education sector plan (2020-2025) after the analysis of Balochistan education sector Plan (2013-2018). Significant to mention that Balochistan has also adopted standards-based curriculum which is a reflection of National Curriculum 2006. Current paper is an attempt to analyze the National Curriculum of English Language 2006 of Pakistan to make it learner centered since learner is the sole beneficiary of all the educational activities. Content analysis methodology has been employed to serve the purpose of the study. Moreover, the National Curriculum has been analyzed from seven standpoints. These are aim of the Curriculum, Knowledge, teacher, teaching, learner, learning, assessment, assessor and assessee. Findings reveal that National Curriculum 2006 is a blend of two ideologies i.e. Social efficiency and learner centered and recommendation are given with implications to make it fully learner centered. 21st century requires Balochistan to draw out inherent capabilities of learner, fulfilling individual needs and interests and providing learners a natural environment to grow through education so that our society may have experts of all field to serve.

National Curriculum 2006 in the Light of Learner Centered Ideology

Introduction and background

The National Curriculum 2006 was developed with the mutual consensus of all the provinces to set common standards for the learners of Pakistan (Jamil, 2009). The basic purpose was to prepare learners to compete in the new era to fulfill the country's different needs as economy and so on (ASCD, 2012). It seems that it is based on social efficiency theory with a semi approach of learner centered ideology as Bromley (1990) defines that individuals are given instructions to create certain type of behavior with justification in social efficiency. However, Association of teachers and lecturers (2005) favors learner centered curriculum to fulfill the individual needs of learners and to change the role of learner from passive to active learner. So, an it was attempted to view the National curriculum 2006 of English from grade I-XII through learner centered ideology (Schiro, 2013).

Methodology

For the said purpose content analysis methodology was adopted. Actually, it is a tool used to determine themes/concepts/words within a text through analysis the meanings and relationship of word/text and then inferences are made (Writing @ CSU: Writing Guide, 2004).

Table#1 highlights provides a comparison between learner centered ideology and National curriculum 2006 of English from grade I-XII, gap analyzed in NC,2006 and then recommendations are given to change some sentences to make NC , 2006 Learner entered.

	LCI	NC 2006	Gap Analysis	Recommendations
Aim	Individual's need is focused by stimulating learner to draw inherent capabilities to grow naturally (Schiro, 2013)	To develop learner to be autonomous and lifelong learner by providing holistic opportunities to be communicative in academic and social context ^{vii} .	Learners are allowed to develop themselves in social and cultural Contexts.	The curriculum should aims to provide language learning and teaching experiences while encouraging the learners to be autonomous, developer of personal capabilities and lifelong learners (NC, P.2)
	Related people would help the learner to fulfill interests. (Schiro, 2013)	Related people are considered to get guidance ^{viii} , especially teachers from teacher guide ^{ix} to help learners to Create their own meanings.	It is not mentioned that teacher's guide would guide the teacher to fulfill Individual Needs.	Attached Teachers' guide would serve to educate teachers and thus, could be seen as a means of helping teachers develop professionally (NC, P.162)
	Trained teacher (Schiro, 2013)	Training of English language teachers ^x	NC aims to train teachers whenever needs.	Teacher training programs are compulsory and NC also aims at providing compulsory training in English language skills to improve the English language proficiency and skills to implement LCI to fulfil learners need (NC, P.165).
Knowledge	Subjective	Progressive	Excluding	Details of

	(Personal meaning making by assimilation and accommodation)	(Ongoingxi) According to the level of the learnersxii	ECD section all Benchmarks and SLO's are not as learner centered ideology. Few examples, 1. (reading) Class Ixxviii 2. (writing) Class Ixxix 3. (oral communication skill) Class Ilex 4. (Formal and Lexical Aspectslxxxii of Language) Class Ixxxii. 5. (Appropriate Ethical and Social Developmentlxxxiii) higher classes on listening and speaking skills.	language thinking skills should be provided. Approach of Benchmarks and SLO's should be changed to learner centered as, 1. Learners joyfully have the experience of understanding the words and sentences as meaningful unit of expression and paragraphs as graphical units of expressions relating to their own contexts and chosen by them with the help of teacher. 2. attachedlxxxvi 3. attachedlxxxvi i 4.Attachedlxxviii 5. Attachedlxxxix		facilitatorxxxiii and instructional strategy designerxxiv, teaching language through teaching other subjectsxxxv, theme based-teacherxxvi, independent writing teacherxxvii		extend students' interest in it (p.151) teacher should also show enthusiasm for professional growth to enhance their professional skills. Moreover teacher should be provided technology to enhance all language skills as listening and speaking with reading and writing. Attached	
Teacher	Individuals' needs identifier, Supportive environment creator. Good intervenerii.	critical reading and thinking designerxv, students encourager and interest builderxvi, reading comprehension constructor xvii , collaborative environment creatorxviii, collaborator proof readerxix, conventioneer xx teacherxxi, of languagexxii, learning		It is the teacher's responsibility to encourage students to experience the joy and satisfaction of contextual, spiritual and glorious parts of the Muslim culture, Current required skills through stories, listening, speaking and devise ways to	Teaching	Individual's need identification ii, . Supportive environment ii creation and interventioni v.	Learning and developingxxvii, planningxxxix, critical reading and thinking designingxxx, students encouragement and interest buildingxxxii, reading comprehension construction xxxii , collaborative environment creationxxxiii, collaboration in proof readingxxxiv, conventioningxxxv teachingxxxvi of languagexxxvii, Theme based teachingxxxviii formativexxxix and summative assessmentxl learning facilitationxli and instructional strategy designingxlii, teaching	No recorded Cassettes and new resources are provided to for listening and speaking skillslxxxiv.	Curriculum provides recorded cassettes and other audio-visual aids to enhance and to test listening and speaking skills in all educational settings.

		language through teaching other subjects ^{xl} , communicative situation ^{xli} , independent writing ^{xlii}					Independent writing ^{xliii} .		
Learner	Personal meaning maker (Accommodator and Assimilator of knowledge)	Holistic opportunity user ^{xli} , integrator of knowledge with previous ^{xlii} , autonomous and lifelong learner ^{xliii} , Second language learner in instructional settings ^{xliiv} , curriculum guidance users ^{xli} , Curriculum standards and competencies roadmap user ^{xli} , information and ideas acquirer and then their ideas communicator ^{xli} , theme based learner ^{xliii} , learning experienter ^{xliiv} , reached at a stable stage, self-interests fulfiller ^{xli} , comprehenser ^{xli} , communicator learner ^{xliiii} , independent writer ^{xli} . From lower cognitive level to higher order skills ^{xli} , theme based learning ^{xli} , learning through communication ^{xli} ,	Just formal opportunities are provided to learn English Language	Therefore, learners have to be provided with formal and informal opportunities to learn language in an instructional setting and in open environment Outside the classroom, through language. a well thought-out and organized curriculum. 2.it is hoped that the competencies and standards defined in this curriculum will provide a roadmap for development of both human and financial resources in schools for quality and also joyful teaching and learning of English to all children in Pakistan 1.Attached ^{xci} 2. Attached ^{xcii}			Personal meaning making (Accommodation and assimilation), interaction in a collaborative environment, Fulfilling own needs, to grow naturally according to own developmental level by choice making.	Enjoyable, interesting and engaging is not used with the word activities ^{lxv} which shows that activities are not in line with learner centered ideology. Meanwhile no emphasis on attractive, engaging and interesting opportunities.	
						Assessment for learning.	Assessment of learning ^{lxiv} . Overall Standardized assessment as Formative ^{lxv} and summative ^{lxvi} , SLO,s are given to gauge learning ^{lxvii}	Assessment purpose is to check knowledge level or skills acquires/develop instead of assessment for learning. Only written exam is designed to test understanding of language. Standardized assessment is focused instead of individual growth. No test is designed to check listening and speaking skills.	The focus of the curriculum is to prepare students for/of an assessment of their acquisition and use of language skills (NC, P.153)
							To assess the		Attached ^{xciii} .

		<p>learner's interests and growth. Developers' need to assess curriculum to fulfill the individuals' needs and interests. Written examination is designed to test language skills and its usage^{lxviii}</p>		<p>Attached^{xciv} ... teacher and learners can use to gauge their progress towards the benchmarks at the end of two or three years of study by peer assessment and self-assessment and by summative assessment, each followed by feedback for learning It will encourage the teachers to undertake the teaching and formative assessment followed by feedback of these skills at the classroom level. (p.14).</p>	Assesse	Student /learner individual growth/ Problem solver, explorer	Formative ^{xxvi} and summative assessee ^{xxvii}		
	Detail feedback is provided.	<p>Marks and grades are provided^{lxix}. Student self^{lxx} and peer^{lxxi} assessment. Formative^{lxxii} and summative assessor^{lxxiii} Performance and learning assessor^{lxxiv} and feedback provider.^{lxxv}</p>							
Assessor	Student/Teacher/peer Performance and learning assessor Helper, rectifier and supporter.		Learner knowledge and skills are assessed but learner does not receive feedback after summative assessment.						

Analysis

National curriculum 2006 aims at holistic development of students to make them autonomous and life-long learners by providing opportunities for development and to enable them to use English in academic and social contexts (NC, 2006) within national and cultural boundaries which is not as described by learner centered ideology because in LCI learner is not bound to learn within specific boundaries. NC, 2006 aim seems to be social efficiency based to prepare the learner for societal needs. So it is a dire need to remove the national and cultural boundaries from the given aim sentence to make the learner an autonomous, life-long learner and personal inherited capabilities builders.

Moreover, National curriculum itself aims to provide help to English language teacher along with a teaching guide to help teacher to educate learners. But neither National curriculum itself is completely learner centered nor it mentions that teacher guide would have all necessary information to help the teacher. So it is specific need to make curriculum learner centered by changing its all aspects as recommended. Moreover, teacher guide should have all aspects to identify and fulfill individuals' needs which is the aim of learner centered ideology like detailed different teaching activities to be chosen, supplementary material, different teaching methods, prepared lesson plans, different formative and assessment strategies, alternatives in assessment, follow up, self-

reflection, suggested readings, developing rubrics with learners, how to keenly observe learner, identify specific need and to help learner to fulfill that need and so on.

National curriculum also aims to train the English language teacher to help the learners to fulfill their individual needs wherever possible. It means that training is not compulsory to all the teachers which can lead towards great loss of learner's interests for holistic development. So National curriculum should aim to provide compulsory training to every English language teacher to better fulfill the individual needs of learner. Perhaps this could also be a step forward to make National curriculum more learner centered.

Knowledge

Additionally, Progression of cognitive development of child is discussed in NC 2006 but how it is possible when details are not provided to enhance language thinking skills. For example, four steps are provided by Wash, Murphy and Dunbar in 2009 which are "turning in" "development stage" "creative phase" and "reflective phase". Similarly, Langer (2002) identified "stances or envisionments" while dealing with text. So it is most important to provide details as these details would enable teacher to develop and assess language thinking skills of learners to help them in creating their own meanings.

Moreover, in National curriculum's ECD section, different activities are introduced to engage learners to develop meanings for themselves. But in higher classes we cannot see such practices. It seems that knowledge is something that learners have to acquire and not to experience. It could indicate that learners are not assume to experience knowledge to create their own meanings by assimilation and accommodation.

Another aspect of NC 2006 may also show the social efficiency approach towards knowledge as competencies, standards, benchmarks and SLO's are narrated straight away without stating learner centered ideology approach. So the basic need is to change the whole approach into learner centered ideology by modifying whole knowledge section as mentioned in the table.1 by changing the benchmarks of class-1 in knowledge section. Moreover, it is suggested to provide language thinking skills in details to all related people to improve learning process from lower cognitive level to high order thinking.

Teacher

Additionally, in National curriculum 2006, teacher role is very important as highlighted in its different parts. But teacher is supposed to develop all language skills through fiction literature. How it is possible that learners can develop their own meanings from fictional literature which is not related to learners contexts and personal lives of the learners. Another aspect is that language is taught to create all language skills as well as other skills. So, how it would be possible to create language and other skills in learners through fiction literature. Additionally, perhaps we cannot enhance all language skills just by reading because it may cover only one area of reading. Moreover, teacher is not facilitated to use technology to fulfill learners' individual needs as technology is playing a key role in teaching and learning and is providing opportunities to reach all possible teaching/learning resources (Shyamlee, 2012). These possibilities are hindering teachers to play their roles as teachers in their classes. As teachers are considered as participants in learning process in learner centered ideology (Jones, 2007).

Teaching

Teaching does not seem as defined by LCI. Perhaps the reason behind is lack of motivation of teachers which ultimately influences teaching processes. There could be many other reasons too. For example, technology is not provided to the teacher to enhance all language skills. Additionally, just emphasis on reading skill could be a hurdle to create learning friendly environment by teacher. Moreover, presence of fiction literature could also keep away learners from collaborative learning as learners are not fully aware of the fiction literature. On the other hand literature says that contextual literature highlights culture, history, architecture, music fine arts, folklore and even religion and so on of that context (What is American literature? An overview, 2014) and it creates better understanding being related to learner's life. Perhaps the teachers are not supported by the school teachers to do so. Moreover, another reason could be that teachers do not have the necessary knowledge or skills to implement the curriculum.

Learner

Role of learner is described as active learner who fulfill their individual interests as an autonomous learner. But National Curriculum bounds learner to learn in instructional setting, which is like limiting the opportunities for experiencing and constructing meanings for themselves. However literature demands for a change in traditional classroom settings as Blackboard K-12 (2010) describes that today learner is demanding change in classroom settings due to fast access to variety of data through technology. Moreover, outside class

environment can also be used to make learner an active learner.

Learning

National curriculum 2006 narrates that learning environment would be provided for theme based learning through communication and from simple cognitive level to higher level of thinking. But detail is not provided to enhance language thinking skills. So teacher would not fully aware to create language thinking skills and would not be able to create learning friendly environment. Moreover how theme based learning is possible only in instructional settings. Perhaps outside instructional setting could also play a vital role in learning (Department for education and skills, 2006). In this way use of outside instructional settings and providing language thinking skills might play an important role in creation of learning environment.

Assessment

National curriculum describes the purpose of assessment as assessment of learning as indicated by SLO's and benchmarks. Which is directly contradicting with learner centered ideology which aims assessment for learning. Moreover, no feedback is provided after summative assessment as purpose of summative assessment is to assess learning and grading in this era where even e-feedback is also being provided (Iahad, Dafoulas, Kalaitzakis & Macaulay, 2004) . It seems that summative assessment is a kind of traditional assessment which is not in line with the current era. Furthermore, National curriculum 2006 aims to check knowledge acquired instead of individual natural growth which could indicate ignoring the individual need of learner. Additionally, only written test is designed to check all language skills which could indicate

weakness of assessment. In the same way we could not find any assessment of/for listening and speaking skills. Powers (2010) is also of the view that that assessing only one skill do not provide a complete estimate, what a person knows or can do in real life. Perhaps we are not focusing on all language skills due to lack of resources. But it is unbelievable in this era of technology. Where every second person use mobile and every fourth person use other technological instruments. Additionally, using alternatives in assessment could replace only written test and also could enhance the validity and reliability of assessment. So it could be a dire need to change the purpose of assessment of learning to assessment for learning, by providing detailed feedback after summative assessment, using alternatives of assessment and focusing listening and speaking skills too, to develop learner holistically.

Assessor

National curriculum 2006 assign learner and teacher role of assessor who gauge their learning and provide formative feedback as Gehringer, Ehresman, Conger and Wagle (2007) favor that peer assessment of learners improves their learning. But in summative assessment no feedback is provided by teacher to learners and even students are not involved in summative assessment. Assessor role in summative assessment is just to check learning as if a doctor checks body temperature of a patient using thermometer but then no remedy does to save the patient. To resolve this assessor should provide detail feedback and even learners should be involve to assess and provide feedback to enhance the learner's individual growth and to make learner autonomous learner.

Assesse

In National curriculum 2006 Assesses role is passive in summative assessment as well as in self-assessment. Perhaps it may hinder the natural growth of learners and could deprive them from being autonomous and life-long learners because self-assessment or reflection provides you a great chance to know what have you learnt, how you would apply that knowledge or skill in your context and what you want to know more (Wood, 1997) . So assesse role needs to be activated by engaging learner in self-assessment/reflection and providing assesse detailed feedback after summative assessment.

Conclusion

From the whole analysis, it was known that National Curriculum 2006 is a blend of two ideologies (Social efficiency and learner centered). Different recommendations with implications were made to make National Curriculum 2006 a learner centered curriculum. But it is a fact that teacher plays a key role in the approach of curriculum implementation because teacher implements curriculum in real classroom situations. Even social efficiency based curriculum can be made just by changing pedagogy of teaching into learner centered ideology and vice versa (Labaree, 2005). In this regard, teacher should be trained enough to create different engaging activities, to identify individual needs and then probe learners to fulfill their interests with the help of teacher. Furthermore, all aspects of curriculum are interlinked with one another if we would change just the knowledge section into learner centered, ultimately it changes rest of the aspects like role of teacher, teaching, learner, learning so on.

In short, curriculum should be learner centered so that every learner could nourish/grow

naturally and to be autonomous and life-long learner.

Implications

By removing the hurdles of cultural and national boundaries from National curriculum we could make our learners fully autonomous, lifelong and developer of their inherent capabilities and ultimately we would have experts of different fields.

By making our curriculum learner centered every learner would have the freedom to fulfill his/her individual needs and teacher guide could make a teacher a real learner centered teacher who is not just a narrator of lesson in the class but the one who keenly observes each individual, identifies learner individual needs, creates collaborative learning environment and intervenes to help learners.

Teacher compulsory training would help the teacher to develop language skills and get proficiency in the language, which would provide courage to teacher and enthusiasm to teach in an interactive environment, where teacher is not only responsible to read and dictate but a partner in the class who also learns and develops.

By providing details of language thinking skills in the curriculum, we could make a teacher a very good observer to identify individual needs of language and the ways to probe learners to fulfill their interests. Moreover, learner could also know at what stage they are and how they can reach towards their destination.

In the same way by changing the approach of knowledge towards learner centered we could

make the knowledge experiencing for learners and to help them to construct their own meanings.

Replacing the fictional literature by contextual, historical and learner interested like stories, dramas, poetry and so on teacher could help learners to easily accommodate or assimilate knowledge and build skills like language skills as well as other life skills (what to do in flood situation, drought or earthquake to save ourselves, family members and others).

Providing teacher technology we could enhance listening and speaking skills as well as reading and writing skills.

Provision of contextual literature, necessary training to teachers, collaborative working environment to teacher, technology and emphasis on all skills could lead us towards attractive teaching to engage learners in different activities to fulfill their needs.

By engaging learners instructional as well as outside instructional settings can yield enormous progress in learners' role from passive to active learner.

Use of outside classroom environment and provision of detailed language thinking skills may help us to create learning friendly environment and could enhance learning of learner.

Changing the purpose of assessment towards assessment for learning by providing detailed feedback and focusing listening and speaking skills and using alternatives of assessment could perhaps help us to identify the individual needs and to provide learner opportunity to grow naturally. By providing feedback after summative assessment assessor could enhance the natural

growth of learner. By providing assess feedback on summative assessment and providing learner opportunities to self-

assess/reflect, we could easily make learner autonomous and life-long learner.

Limitations

This review has certain limitations. First of all, modifications in National curriculum 2006 of English grade I-XII do not mean to leave the learner free to do anything to do. It means learners should be involved in selection of different text from different resources on the same theme or to those from a variety of text provided. Meanwhile interesting and engaging activities do not aim to just play and enjoy but learning by enjoying. Moreover, teacher role is to keenly observe and intervene does not keep teacher away from the whole class activities, in fact teacher has unique role in the whole learning process. Same, teaching means. Additionally, provision of feedback also does not mean to provide feedback and then let learner alone. Its basic aim is to help learner's learning by providing feedback and then probing learner

to fulfill specific needs. In the same way, modifying approach towards learner centered ideology is introducing new ways of teaching and learning with the same content. In addition to, providing language thinking skills to teachers and learners is with the aim to enhance higher order thinking and making assessment of/for learning easy. Hence, trying to make learner active is to enable learner to be aware of learner's own learning and how to improve that learning in collaboration with teacher, peer and environment and through different resources. Same, the leaning means.

To conclude, I would say that purpose behind to make National Curriculum 2006, a learner centered curriculum is to draw out inherent capabilities of learner, fulfilling individual needs and interests and providing learners a natural environment to grow through education so that our society may have experts of all field to serve.

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