

## Representation of Target Culture in the ELT Textbooks in Pakistan: Evaluation of “OXFORD PROGRESSIVE ENGLISH” for Cultural Relevance

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### Abstract

In the guise of inseparable relationship between language and culture the ELT textbooks writers and publishers of the native speaker countries produce such textbooks in which a great cultural gap is found between the contents of the textbooks and the needs and objectives of the ESL learners in Pakistan. In the present research the evaluation of “Oxford Progressive English” (OPE) was carried out through an evaluation model for the content analysis of the aspect of sociological sense culture; the second aspect of culture posited by Adaskou, Britten and Fashi (1990) in the foreign language teaching. The detailed analyses of the contents and the findings of the research highlight that there are such social, cultural, religious and pedagogical contents in these textbooks that do not match with the cultural values and pedagogical needs and objectives set for the ESL learners in Pakistan. The research concludes that course contents of OPE textbooks are not culturally relevant to the learner. These are heavily imbued with the target culture as compared to the learner’s culture. These OPE textbooks impart foreign colonial agenda in the guise of hidden curriculum which is a great hindrance in learning English. There is a dire need to replace these foreign cultural contents in the ESL/EFL textbooks written by the foreign authors with the local and indigenous culture so that the ELT objectives may fully be achieved.

**Key words:** Culture, ELT, Sociological sense culture or culture with a small ‘c’, content analysis

### 1. Introduction

There is no denying in the fact that English has established itself as a global lingua franca, it is most commonly spoken foreign language, language of media, technology, science and has penetrated into the daily lives of people all over the world from an abundance of areas, ranging from politics to entertainment and has been used by many due to its spread and current situation (Devrim & Bayyurt, 2010, p. 4-5). In his *Three Circles Model of World Englishes*, Kachru (1985; 1992) “attempts to explain the use of English around the world in three concentric circles which represent the changing distribution and functions of the English language” (Devrim & Bayyurt, 2010, p. 5). This model is explained as *the inner circle*, *the outer circle*, and *the expanding circle*.

1. *The inner circle* includes the geographical location of countries where English is used as native language. In these countries include England, the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.
2. *The outer circle* includes the countries with colonial past where English is an institutional variety. Examples of these countries are India, Pakistan, Nigeria, Singapore, Malaysia, etc.
3. *The expanding circle* refers to the countries where English is used for instrumental purposes; for international communication and has no official status. The countries belonging to this circle are Japan, China, Turkey, and Brazil (Kachru, 1992).

This model highlights the importance of English in the wider sphere of the world and also points out that English is not confined to the native speakers only (Devrim & Bayyurt, 2010). According to this model, Pakistan falls in the outer circle of World Englishes where English is taught as a second language (ESL). Shamim (2008) points out that English language is used in Pakistan in civil administration at provincial and federal level, electronic and print media. It is language of communication in trade and commerce, and in political and official communication in Pakistan. “English, the primary vehicle of international communication even among non-native speakers is a passport to international, cultural and metropolitan citizenship” (Haque, 2000, p.15). Ahmed and Shah (2013) points out that “... [as] over fifty years after the end of British rule in South Asia, the English language flourishes and now it is considered a passport for entry into government offices” (p.150). This situation highlights the fact that as English language does not belong to the native speakers only, there is no need to teach it in the context of native speaker culture.

The English language was introduced officially in the areas comprising Pakistan during the British colonization period, replacing Persian that was the language of contact for the inhabitants of different areas of the Indo-Pak sub-continent. The purpose of this replacement was extra-linguistic, with the so-called aim to ‘civilize’ the Indians and it was also an indication of shift of power from the local Indians to foreigners, the British (Mehboob, 2002, p.15). Ahmed (2012) has briefly surveyed this historical establishment and progress of English in the pre-partition and post-partition scenario of the Indo-Pak sub-continent with special reference to Pakistan and has

outlined the role and status of English in Pakistan in general and ELT in particular. In Pakistan, the learners from religious and rural cultural backgrounds are already suspicious towards English. They have stock negative responses and a historical hostility against it. When they find a representation of English culture through English textbooks and course contents, they become more hostile towards it and begin to hate the language (Ahmed, 2012). The learners of English as a second language (ESL) have no integrative motives to know about the culture, society or literature of the native speakers. The writers of the course of “*Oxford Progressive English*” (OPE) textbook series which is being currently taught at the schools in the primary, elementary and secondary / O level have tried to localize and contextualize the teaching material (Redford, 2005a) and apparently the contents of the books show, in part, a local colour. However, when the material was thoroughly studied it was found that it is not only Western in nature but also sometimes totally opposite to the learners’ social and religious values. The writers have incorporated their thoughts, social values and worldviews despite their claims that they prepared the material according to the needs, values and social background of the learners. The study shows that the writers have incorporated their own views and ideology through the course contents as a hidden curriculum to westernize the minds of the young learners. There is a lack of research for understanding the learners’ culture among the foreign writers of ELT course books (Ahmed, 2012).

To meet the different challenges posited by the English textbook writers there is a dire need to check these textbooks against the cultural and pedagogical needs of the learners. For this purpose the textbooks evaluation is strongly recommended by several theorists to meet the contextual needs of the students. In this situation, there is a dire need to establish a wide and contextually relevant criteria to evaluate the textbooks to check their appropriacy or otherwise in a given context.

The present study proposes indigenous culture to replace foreign culture in English course contents of *Oxford Progressive English* (OPE) textbook series as well as the other books taught as core textbooks for teaching and learning of English. The reason behind this proposal is to restore the confidence of the learners in English language and to make them less hostile towards it. It would be like replacing the stranger with the familiar.

## 2. Theoretical Background

The inseparable relationship between language and culture has been established by many theorists and the term culture has been used widely by different people for different purposes. The working definition of culture used in foreign language education posited by Adaskou, Britten and Fashi (1990) suits best for our purpose. According to this definition culture has four meanings:

- i. The aesthetic sense culture or culture with a capital “C”. It includes media, cinema, music and literature.
- ii. The sociological sense culture or culture with a small “c”. It includes the nature and organization of family, home life, interpersonal relations, material conditions, customs and institutions.
- iii. The semantic sense culture (conception and thought processes).
- iv. The pragmatic sense culture (social skills, communication functions, appropriacy, etc.) (Adaskou, Britten & Fashi, 1990, p. 3-4).

Traditionally the concept of culture in the foreign/second language education has been understood differently. Often three major objectives are linked with the question of culture in the foreign language classes (Risager, 1989). First objective is students’ cognitive development and the focus is always on providing information about the countries in which the language is spoken. The development of the students’ foreign language skills is another objective in the foreign language classes and the main focus is to enhance the students’ insight into the foreign culture in order to communicate properly in that cultural context. The third objective is to develop the students’ attitude towards the other countries and the cultures.

In this regard the inclusion of cultural elements in the EFL/ESL is considered mandatory to understand the language in context. But it has been seen that textbooks often focus on the elitist aspects of the target culture (Risager, 1987; Nelson, 1995) and high culture or culture with capital ‘C’ (Tomalin and Stempleski, 1993; Sercu, 2002), that’s why the focus was on culture with a capital ‘C’ in the foreign language classes (Hadley, 1993).

Inclusion of the target language culture in the foreign/second language textbooks is considered essential to learn language in its real context, but in the case of English language teaching (ELT) there have been many voices against the cultural imperialism of the native English speaking countries especially the United States and the United Kingdom; inclusion of cultural elements are considered as a colonial agenda to impart Christian beliefs and values to the young learners (Nelson, 1995; McKay, 2002). It is the reason that the use of target language culture in the foreign/second language pedagogy was strictly criticized. The use of learner culture in the foreign language classes on the other hand increases the confidence of the learners. They can apply background knowledge or ‘schematic knowledge’ in learning a foreign language in their own cultural context (Ariffin, 2006). There are many countries which use learner language culture in their teaching material. Turkman and Celik (2007) giving examples from Venezuela, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey, describes various course books which are

used in the language classes. For instance EFL textbook for Venezuela, *El Libro de ingles*, describes the countries chief geographical features. Another example is *English for Saudi Arabia*, by Al-Qureshi, Watson, and Hickman. In this book every setting is in the learner culture and each and every act of the characters in the book reflects their Saudi outlook (ibid). Talking about Turkey they refer to a textbook named '*Spotlight on English*' which is primarily Turkish in its activities. The main themes in this book include food, history, and weather which are all discussed in English. Whenever the characters travel they travel within Turkey irrespective of the fact that there are some visitors there from outside. But all the communication is done in the Turkish cultural context.

### 2.1 Pakistani scenario

English language was introduced in this region of Pakistan during the British rule by replacing Persian and made official language of the government (Rehman, 1991, 1998; Mahboob, 2002; Arshad, 2009). The extra-linguistic purpose of colonization and imparting christian values was the main task of English with the so called purpose to 'civilize' the masses. It proved so valuable that even after passing sixty years English "remains a passport for entry into high governmental, beaucocratic, military and social positions" (Mahboob, 2002, p. 16). It has developed itself firmly in every sphere of life and is taught as a second language (ESL) now from primary to graduation level as a compulsory subject. In Pakistan the basic materials used in ELT are textbooks. The textbooks are used widely in ESL/EFL classrooms and their popularity is still unquestioned, particularly in Pakistan. "[T]he textbook is the only available Learning Material in most schools. Additional materials like teaching aids, supplementary reading materials and school libraries are virtually non-existent" (Govt. of Pakistan, 2006, p.2). Majeed (2012) points out that "[F]or English language teaching, teachers rely only on printed material in the form of textbooks. Textbooks are the only material that is being used in Pakistani language teaching class rooms at primary, secondary and tertiary level" (p. vii). Since 1970s the learner centered approach is centre to ELT and textbooks are aimed at achieving those goals and objectives that have been set keeping in view the learners' needs. But the textbooks should not become the aim themselves but should help the teachers and learners to get the aims (Brown, 1995). In Pakistan, "[t]extbooks being taught at all levels, especially schools, are generally of poor quality" (Govt. of Pakistan, 2007, p.18). In this situation there is a dire need to establish a wide and contextually relevant criteria to evaluate the textbooks to check their appropriacy or otherwise in a given context. It should be ensured "that careful selection is made and that the materials selected closely reflect the aims, objectives, methods and values of the teaching program" (Cunningswoth, 1995, p. 7).

### 2.2 Importance of Textbook Evaluation

Sheldon (1988) presents many other reasons for textbook evaluation like administrative, financial and political reasons. So the evaluation of the textbooks, either by the institution or by the teaching staff, will enable them to restrain from any discrimination. Moreover, it enables the teachers to identify the potential strengths and weaknesses of the specific textbook for a particular context and program. This will help the teachers to use the maximum strengths of the textbooks and recognizing the shortcomings and potential hindrance in the learning process.

Adaskou, Britten, and Fahsi (1990) in the study of teaching materials in Moroccan secondary schools found nothing beneficial and motivating in including Western culture. By introducing Western culture there is a tendency for cultural comparison which in turn will breed discontent among learners with their own culture. Besides, certain patterns of behaviour in English-speaking social contexts are not desirable, being incompatible with local values. Finally, the teachers in the study believe that motivation in learning English will improve if the language is presented in contexts relevant to learners' lives as young adults rather than in the context of an English-speaking country. Adaskou et al (1990) also maintains that the inclusion of a cultural component in language teaching can improve international understanding, enhance appreciation of one's own culture, facilitate learners' visits to foreign countries and contacts with their people, and motivate learners.

Cunningsworth (1995) and Ellis (1997) have put the views that textbook evaluation is very useful in teacher development and professional growth. According to them textbook evaluation is a way forward than the impressionistic assessments that helps the teachers to acquire accurate, systematic and contextual insights into the textbook materials. In this way, the textbook evaluation is a potentially a worthwhile means of conducting action research as well as professional empowerment. The textbook evaluation may also helpful in teacher training program to help the student teachers to develop certain professional skills.

Argungu (1996) has evaluated some English textbook in a Malaysian context with the help of nine categories including alcoholism or drunkenness, sexual perversion, cigarettes and smoking, crime and violence, Christian imagery, imperialism and racial superiority, pro-Western social habits, beliefs and attitudes and author reader socio-cultural distance. The findings of the results show that the foreign language textbooks are replete with various instances of foreign culture that counter the indigenous cultural values and morals. He has criticized the use of such textbooks, which represent Western culture, and has suggested the idea of Islamic English.

Asraf (2002) has evaluated some textbooks available in the market for teaching English. His research does not focus on a particular group of learners rather it focuses overall Muslim community. He has stressed upon only on the Semantic aspects of the contents of textbooks. He concludes thus:

The role of English in the Islamic world must be seriously debated and Islamic aims on this issue be articulated so that our younger generations may be trained to be selective in borrowing, so that they accept only universally beneficial and reject specific elements of the borrowed concepts, ideas and institutions (Asraf, 2002, p.19).

Shah et al (2012) points out in the evaluation of course contents of *Advance with English 5* which is being currently taught at the International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan, that “[T]he overall analyses of the contents expose that the authors of the book are totally unaware from the learners’ social, geographical and educational needs. They have depicted their own social world in the book and have neglected the learners’ world.” They have concluded that the foreign language textbooks in Pakistan present an unfamiliar world and suggest the inclusion of local culture in the textbooks. It will encourage and motivate the students to learn English language in a better way.

The study proves that the themes, setting, characters and worldview, presented in the contents of the book represent a foreign and unfamiliar world for the learners. The study suggests that the learners would be more motivated to learn English if language were presented in the context with which the learners could identify themselves (Shah et al, 2012, p. 177).

Mahmood, Asghar and Hussain (2012) in a case study of *Step Ahead 1* for the cultural representation in ESL textbooks in Pakistan highlights the issue of representation of foreign culture in the ESL/EFL textbooks. Using the evaluation model by Byram et al (1994), while carrying out the content analysis and evaluation of the book, the study has explained the culture related items as social identity, beliefs and behaviours, sociopolitical institutes, socialization and life style, national history, geography and stereotypes. “The results reveal that the major focus of textbook *Step Ahead 1* is non-native culture, inadequate, inefficient inter-cultural harmony is found in it and the least consideration has been given to the source culture, which is likely to alienate the learners from their own culture” (Mahmood et al, 2012, p.35-36).

Ahmed and Shah (2013) highlights in the evaluation and content analysis of *Oxford Progressive English (OPE)* for cultural relevance with special reference to the aesthetic sense culture or culture with a capital “C” using a model adopted by Adaskou, Britten and Fashi (1990) that the course contents of *Oxford Progressive English* in the domain of aesthetic sense culture are heavily imbued with the representation of foreign and target culture. “[C]ourse contents of English course books are heavily imbued with the colours of Western culture and society. The cultural contents of course books directly or indirectly communicate sets of social and cultural values, which are inherited in their make-up” (Ahmed & Shah, 2013, p.157).

The above mentioned background study in the related field highlights that generally in the ESL/EFL textbooks in Pakistan, the Western characters are used to introduce stereotypes presenting differences between Western culture and local cultures. They also portray issues of gender roles and all of them appear in textbooks approved by the local Ministry of Education. Along the same line, it is the intention of the present study to explore the cultural dimensions and describe the cultural contexts in “Oxford Progressive English” (OPE) textbook series.

### 3. Present Research

Pakistan is an Islamic Republic where English is taught as a second language (ESL). It seems that English language textbooks designed by the foreign authors for the Pakistani learners are culturally irrelevant and unsuitable for the young learners. As these authors do not understand the true cultural and religious background of the learners and they have stock negative propaganda and ulterior political agenda and they produce such textbooks that are far away from the cultural and educational needs of the students. In Pakistan the basic materials used in ELT are textbooks. The textbooks are used widely in ESL/EFL classrooms and their popularity is still unquestioned, particularly in Pakistan. “[T]he textbook is the only available Learning Material in most schools. Additional materials like teaching aids, supplementary reading materials and school libraries are virtually non-existent” (Govt. of Pakistan, 2006, p.2). Majeed (2012) points out that “[F]or English language teaching, teachers rely only on printed material in the form of textbooks. Textbooks are the only material that is being used in Pakistani language teaching class rooms at primary, secondary and tertiary level” (p. vii). In Pakistan, “[t]extbooks being taught at all levels, especially schools, are generally of poor quality” (Govt. of Pakistan, 2007, p.18). There is a wide gap between the needs of the students and what they are learning from these existing textbooks. So it is need of the hour to evaluate these textbooks for the cultural issues, to check appropriacy and relevance or otherwise of these textbooks against the Pakistani religious, cultural and social background. The present study aims to evaluate the Oxford Progressive English (OPE) textbook series for cultural relevance, designed for Pakistani learners of English as a second language (ESL). Through this evaluation the researcher wants to investigate that how much OPE textbook series designed for Pakistani learners of English is culturally irrelevant, to identify that due to cultural irrelevance of these textbooks, the students are

de-motivated to learn English properly and to explore that the concept of hidden curriculum is true about OPE textbook series. For this purpose the study addresses the following questions.

1. How much “Oxford Progressive English” (OPE) textbook series designed for the Pakistani learners of English is culturally relevant?
2. Which culture---- the target language culture or the learner language culture --- is promoted in the OPE series?
3. Which aspect of the foreign or local culture is most dominant in OPE textbook series?
4. Is the concept of hidden curriculum true about the OPE textbooks?
5. Does the representation of a particular aspect of the culture can be associated with a particular political agenda about local culture or it is the product of unawareness on the writer’s part?

#### 4. Research Methodology

The study used primarily qualitative research approach in which the content analysis of *Oxford Progressive English* (OPE) textbooks was carried out for the cultural relevance. Content analysis “defines a strict and systematic set of procedures for the rigorous analysis, examination and verification of the contents of written data” (Cohen et al, 2007, p.475). The major purpose of content analysis is to locate certain concepts within the texts of OPE textbooks, to identify pattern in the texts, to quantify and analyze the presence, meanings and relationships between such words and concepts and then make inferences about messages in the texts. This method was adopted as it suits best in the content analysis for the evaluative purposes of any teaching material. In this way it is an evaluative research which examines and evaluates the contents of *Oxford Progressive English* for the cultural relevance. The quantitative method was also used in the form of graphs, frequencies and percentages. So, the present study may be called mixed method research in which some elements of both qualitative and quantitative research methods have been applied to analyze the data.

*Oxford Progressive English* textbooks by Redford (2005a, 2005b, and 2005c) and Jacques (2006) were used as samples for this study. The textbooks are taught in Pakistan in different English Medium schools from grade 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> levels. Working definition of culture used in foreign language teaching posited by Adaskou, Britten and Fashi (1990) was taken as a main source to evaluate the cultural contents of the OPE textbooks by Redford (2005a, 2005b, and 2005c) and Jacques (2006). According to this definition culture involves four different aspects in the foreign language education. These four different aspects are ‘aesthetic sense’ or ‘culture with capital C’, ‘sociological sense culture’ or ‘culture with small c’, ‘semantic sense culture’, and ‘pragmatic or sociolinguistic sense culture’. The present study mainly focuses on the sociological sense or small ‘c’ culture. An evaluation checklist was established on the basis of definition of sociological sense culture which served as an evaluation model. The course contents of OPE textbooks were evaluated for cultural relevance, through this evaluation model.

The data collected through the above-mentioned method were analyzed and discussed. The data were coded manually and were examined on the basis of aspect of sociological sense culture posited by Adaskou, Britten and Fashi (1990). The coded data were put in the evaluation model according to the frequency of occurrence in the texts as well as the category defined in the evaluation model. After needful data collection in this way, the data were transferred to Microsoft Excel 2007 for further analysis. This was done by using frequency distributions, percentages and where necessary graphs. The data were cleaned and double checked for any entry errors. After the completion of the data coding, the frequencies of certain levels were checked and the conclusions were drawn.

#### 5. Results, Findings and Discussion

##### 5.1 Description of *Oxford Progressive English*

*Oxford Progressive English* (OPE) textbook series comprise of ten books ranging from Prep to O level Class. The authors of OPE Prep to 5<sup>th</sup> class are Eleanor Watts and Chris Jacques. OPE books 6<sup>th</sup> to O level class have been written by Chris Jacques. Both the writers are from England and are considered experts in the field. The present research and evaluation of OPE has been conducted for the class level 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>. Each of the OPE 6, 7, and 8 comprises of 10 units. Every unit of OPE has a thematic title which consists of 4 to 8 different reading texts ranging from myth, fiction, poetry, drama, prose, biography, autobiography and media (newspapers, TV, internet, film). Each unit accompanies learning objectives and learning outcomes along with different skills like grammar, reading, speaking and writing. Each text and unit follows up exercises on meanings, sentences and comprehension besides the skills mentioned. These texts have been selected from different countries. Most of the target culture related reading texts (TCRT) have been chosen from the native speakers of English like Britain and USA which form 125 (47.52%) of the total texts (242) used in the all the books of OPE. International culture related reading texts (ICRT) are chosen from the countries where English is used for the instrumental purposes and has an important function to perform like China, India, Sri Lanka, Russia, Switzerland, Singapore, etc, and

total number of reading texts are 83 (34.30%), which forms the second highest in total after target culture. The learner culture related reading texts (LCRT) are chosen from the Pakistani writers, or where the setting of the texts is based on Pakistan. It is worth mentioning that most of these reading texts are taken from the authors who are now resided in either USA or UK. The total number of reading texts are 44 (18.18%) which is the smallest number as compared to the target culture and the internal culture reading texts (Table 1).

## 5.2 Culture-wise Representation of *Oxford Progressive English*

Table 1. Total no. of reading texts used in Oxford Progressive English (OPE)

Books ---> Representation of Culture	OPE 6	OPE 7	OPE 8	OPE 5	Total
LCRT	18	08	10	08	44 (18.18%)
TCRT	19	34	34	28	115 (34.30%)
ICRT	31	21	22	09	83 (47.52%)
Total	68	63	66	35	242 (100%)

Table 1 points out the representation of total number of reading texts used in the Oxford Progressive English for the class level 5, 6, 7, and 8 (OPE 5, OPE 6, OPE 7 and OPE 8). In this table LCRT stands for Learner Culture Reading Text, TCRT means Target Culture Reading Text and ICRT represents International Culture Reading Text.

The total number of reading texts in the OPE 6 is 68. The Figure 1 shows that the reading texts related to the learner's culture in the OPE 6 are 18 in number which form 26.47% of the total number of reading texts used in the OPE 6. The number of reading texts related to the target culture is 19, which form 27.94%. Similarly the International culture related reading texts are 31 in number that form 45.59% of all the reading texts used in the OPE 6. It clearly shows that the international culture related reading texts are higher (45.59%) while the learner culture related reading texts are minimum (26.47%) in number. The OPE 7 consists of 63 reading texts in total. The learner culture related reading texts in OPE 7 are 8 in number which is 12.7%. The texts related to target culture are 34; forming 53.97% of the total and the international culture texts are 21, which contain 33.33% of all the texts in this book. It means that the target culture related reading texts are greater (53.97%) while the learner culture related reading texts are minimum (33.33%). The number of reading texts in OPE 8 is 66. There are 10 texts related to the learner culture, which is 15.15% of the total number of reading texts in the OPE 8. The texts related to target culture are 34 forming 51.52%, and the international culture related reading texts are 22 which is 33.33% of the whole texts. It is clear that the target culture related reading texts in the OPE 8 are greater (51.52%) while the learner culture related reading texts are minimum (33.33%). The number of reading texts in OPE 5 is 45. There are 8 texts related to the learner culture, which is 17.78% of the total number of reading texts in the OPE 5. The texts related to the target culture are 28 forming 62.22%, and the international culture related reading texts are 9 which are 45% of the whole texts. It is clear that the target culture related reading texts in the OPE 5 are greater (62.22%) while the learner culture related reading texts are minimum (17.78%).

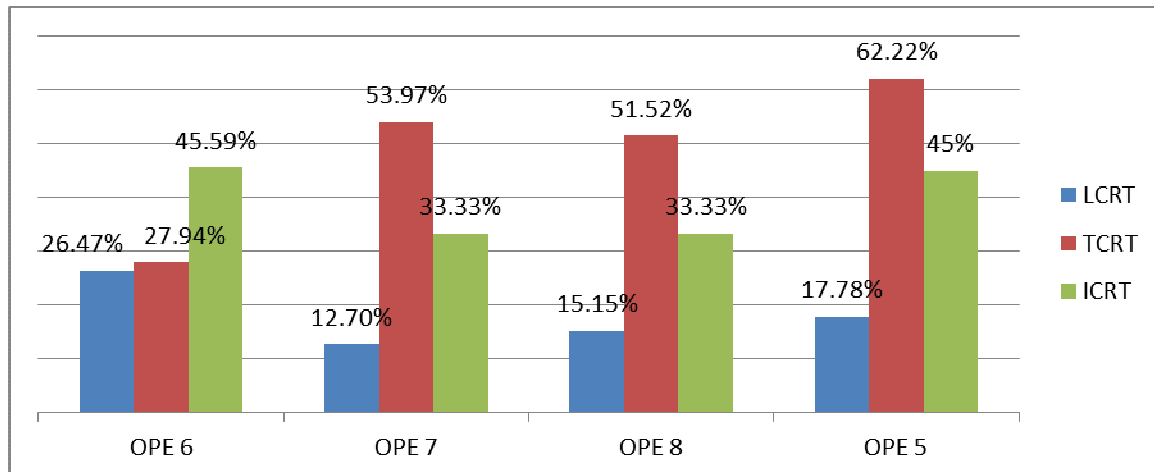


Figure 1. Total no. of reading texts used in OPE 5, OPE 6, OPE 7 and OPE 8

Figure 2 is the culture wise representation of total number of reading texts used in the *Oxford Progressive English* for the class level 5, 6, 7, and 8 (OPE 5, OPE 6, OPE 7 and OPE 8). In this table LCRT stands for Learner Culture Reading Text, TCRT means Target Culture Reading Text and ICRT is International Culture Reading Text. The total numbers of reading texts in all the three books of OPE 5, OPE 6, OPE 7, and OPE 8 are 242. The reading texts related to the learner culture in these books are 44 (18.18%). The international culture related reading texts are 83 (34.30%) of the total. The texts related to the target culture are 115 (47.52%) in number. It is clear from the Figure 2 that the total number of reading texts of target culture is the greatest (47.52%) than the learner culture (18.18%). Moreover, even the international culture related reading texts are higher in number (34.30%) than the learner culture texts (18.27%). The results show that the representation of the target culture and the international target culture in the OPE books is greater than the learner culture representation. This points out towards the research question 2 on the focus of the OPE textbooks on the cultural representation. It shows that the representation of the target culture and the international target culture is greater in the OPE textbooks as compared to the learner culture representation.

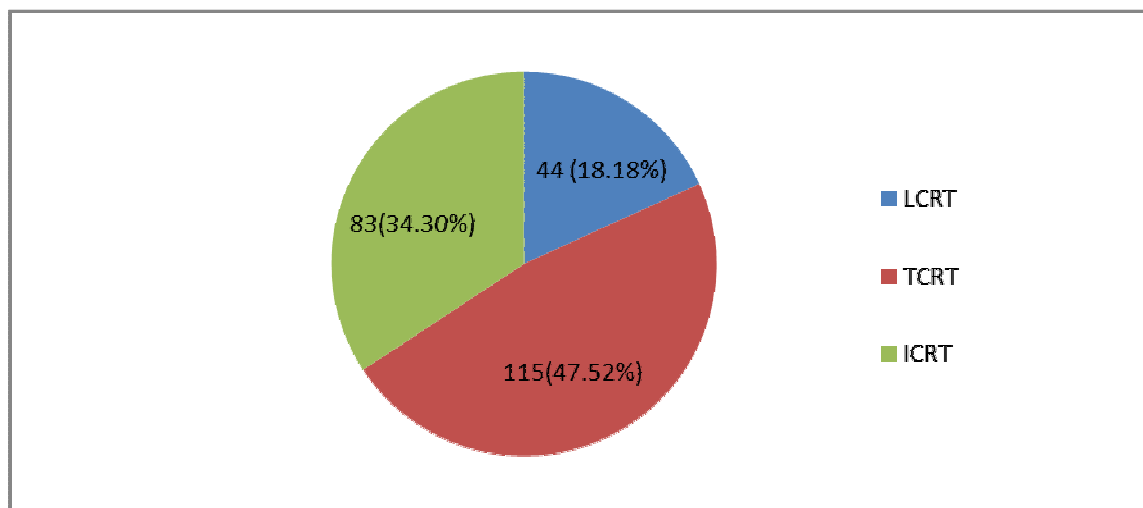


Figure 2. Culture wise representation of Texts in the OPE books

### 5.3 Sociological sense culture in OPE

Among the four definitions of culture used in foreign language teaching posited by Adaskou, Britten and Fashi (1990), the second aspect is called sociological sense culture or low culture or small 'c' culture. In this definition there are aspects of organization and nature of family, home life, interpersonal relations, material condition, work and leisure, customs and institutions. The organization and nature of family discusses the nature and pattern of family, family names, and different things related to the family. The home life discusses the way of living, different vocabulary items in a particular culture for home and family related things. The interpersonal relations define the relationships between different persons come in contact with one another. Work and leisure

describes how the people in a community spend their time and what kind of work and duties they perform. Customs and institutions is a vast area which involves different traditions and customs of a culture as well as what are different institutions in that culture. These institutions may range from social institution of marriage, burial, etc. to the political and religious institutions like religious beliefs and political ideas.

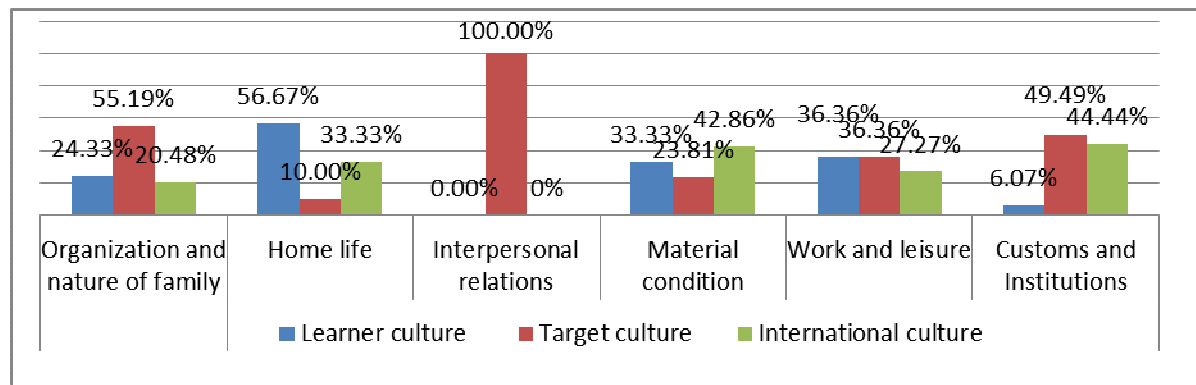


Figure 3. Representation of Sociological Sense Culture in the OPE Textbooks

i. The learner culture representation and number of occurrences in the text are 82 in number which form 24.33% of all the data in the *organization and nature of family* aspect of the sociological sense culture. The target culture related texts of the *organization and nature of family* aspect are 186, comprising of 55.19% of the total while the international target culture related reading texts are 69, which form 20.48% of the *organization and nature of family* aspect in all the four books of OPE.

ii. The texts for this aspect are chosen from the learner culture, target culture and international target culture related texts. As Figure 3 shows that the representation of the learner culture related *organization and nature of family* aspect is minimum (24.33%) against the target culture (55.19%) which is highest. This shows that the greater focus in this aspect of culture is made on the representation of the target culture or the international target culture. In the aspect of the *home life*, there are 17 (56.67%) occurrences/instances of the representation of the learner culture. The target culture representation is found 3 (10%) in this aspect, while the number of occurrences for the international culture representation in this aspect of *home life* is 10 (33.33%). Hence, in the aspect of home life, the learner culture representation is highest than the target culture and the international culture.

iii. In the aspect of the *interpersonal relations*, there is not a single instance in which the text refers to the learner culture. As for as target culture or the international culture representation is concerned, there are 2 (100%) instances of occurrence in the target culture and no entry is noted for the international target culture.

iv. Next to the *interpersonal relations* there is the aspect of the *material conditions*. In this aspect of the sociological sense or small “c” culture, the occurrences of the learner culture representation are 42 (33.33%). The target culture representation in this aspect is 30 (23.81%), while the international culture bears 54 (42.86%) representations of this aspect. So, it shows that in the material conditions the international culture representation is greater than the learner culture.

v. In the aspect of *work and leisure*, there are only 4 (36.36%) occurrence found dealing with the learner culture representation. The target culture representation is also the same 4 (36.36%) to the learner culture. In the international culture representation there is are 3(27.27%) instances in this aspect. Hence, it is clear that the target culture representation is greater in this aspect than the learner culture.

vi. The aspect of the *customs and institutions* of the sociological sense culture is touched in detail in the texts of OPE 6. The number of entries/ occurrences of this aspect in the learner culture are 6 (6.07%) in total. The target culture representation in this aspect is 49(49.49%), while the international culture is very much represented with 44 (44.44%) occurrences in this aspect of the sociological sense culture. It shows that this aspect of customs and institutions is covered mainly by the international culture representation, which has greater number of occurrences than the learner culture.



### 5.3.1. Analysis of the Data

The OPE textbooks have discussed and described at length various entities related to the organization and nature of family, of home life, of work and leisure, of interpersonal relations and material conditions. There are mentioned different family names ranging from the learner culture to the target and the international target culture. For example the writers of the textbooks have tried to localize and contextualize the names. Many names are taken from the Pakistani cultural context, for example Hasan, Imran, Irfan, Talha, Moniza, Sameera, Sara, Jamila, etc. Similarly the names from the target culture and the international target culture have been used in the texts, for example Sarah, Riba, Jones, Rhodes, David, Williams, and many more. But an interesting thing to note is that the local or learner's culture related names are lesser in number as compared to the target culture. Moreover, in the aspect of *Home Life*, most of the common day vocabulary of English is used. But there are some instances where the local or learner culture related vocabulary items are mentioned in the English texts. For example in the OPE 6, there is use of local vocabulary item of *Chador* (shawl or cloak worn to cover a woman), and *chai khana* (Redford, 2005a, p.230-231). In the book OPE 7, there is used a local vocabulary item *roti* (bread) and *Chukky* (Redford, 2005b, p.217). Similarly in the OPE 8, there are also used local words *dal* (lentils cooked consistently of a thick soup), *charpai* (a stringed bed, often used in India and Pakistan), *ayah* (female maid), *shikari* (hunter/hunt), *toofan* (hurricane or tornado). But these are a few instances from the four OPE textbooks. All the OPE books are replete with target culture and the international culture related vocabulary for home life use.

In the OPE textbooks there are numerous instances where the learner culture representation is made as a negative stereotype, while the target culture or the international target culture representation is carried out to highlight certain positive aspects. The target culture representation causes difficulty for the learners due to the content, context and distant setting from that of the learners themselves. In this situation the learners feel difficulty in understanding the content and context of the texts which in return hinders in learning English as a foreign language. Moreover, the learners feel alienated from their own culture. The positive aspects of the target culture and the international target culture are highlighted, and the learner culture representation in the texts is made mostly as a negative stereotype. For example, in the Oxford Progressive English (OPE) level 6 (Redford, 2005a), there are described two brothers who have been pictured fingering at each other over the issue of land division (p.157). The folk tale "The Two Brothers" describing the family affairs and organization, describes that "two brothers are quarrelling over the family land" (ibid). This folk tale is set in the Baltit valley, narrating the two brothers Khamer and Khuru who quarreled over the family land. One of the brothers wanted to avail for himself and his family all the land inherited from their father. He deceives his brother to gain all the land for himself but in the end he loses one of his seven sons at the spot. Later, all his sons died one after the other leaving him issueless. The purpose of including this folk tale might be to convey the message that greed is a curse. But for this purpose, the writer has chosen a folk tale that is set in the learner's cultural background which presents a negative stereotype that the villagers in Pakistan's rural areas always quarrel over the land issues. This kind of example may nourish hatred in the young reader for the learner's own cultural values. It may also breed despire on the part of the immature mind to develop unhealthy feelings in his heart.

There are different texts on the topic of war and peace in the Unit 2, War and Peace in the OPE 7 (Redford, 2005b). There are presented such texts that primarily deal with the content and theme of war and peace. There is a text dealing with Japan, the international culture, on the theme of peace. There is another text dealing with the theme of peace set on the front between England and Germany's battle and the exchange of good will on the eve of Christmas, showing Christmas as a gesture of peace. The third text is a non-fiction on "The Battle of Paniput", which was fought between a Moghal emperor Babar and Sultan Ibrahim Lodhi in 1526. The other two texts are from poetry of foreign poets describing the value of peace and curse of war. In the text of "The Battle of Paniput", the writer has described the invasion of Babar on Paniput in 1526, just to highlight the war-like trait of the Muslim emperors and kings.

As compared to this, the presentation of the target culture has been done to highlight the positive and the elitist aspects. The purpose of this type of presentation is to promote good feelings and attitude, the positive stereotypes, towards the target culture. For example there is description of Amy Johnson, English solo flyer. In Unit 7 of OPE 6, the text 'Amy Johnson--- Is the 60-year search over' starts as follows:

Amy Johnson was once known all over the world for her achievement in solo flying. In 1930, at the age of twenty-six, she became the first woman to fly ten thousand miles solo from England to Australia in her little green aero plane, a de Havilland Moth. It took her twenty days. The first part of the journey from southern England to Karachi took her six days, which was a record (Redford, 2005a, p.153).

This positive description of Amy Johnson is made as hero-figure who rendered a great job as a record holder, who died during a flight. She belonged to English community that is why she has been considered important enough to be entered in the textbook (Ahmed & Shah, 2013, p.154). There are many reports in the OPE textbooks where the target culture and the international target culture representation is made in a positive sense.

The examples of these reports can be located in OPE 6 page no. 85, 122, 142, 200, 201, in OPE 7, page no. 126, 251, 263, 272; and OPE 8, page no. 11, 158 respectively.

An important aspect of the sociological sense culture is *the material condition* of the places where the texts are set or the action of the text takes place. It is very interesting to note that like all the other aspects, the representation of the learner culture is not made at length in this aspect as compared to the target and the international culture. There is not a single city, town or village of Pakistan that is discussed in detail. Moreover, the description of any place or thing related to Pakistan is made just for the sake of reference. For example, the book OPE 6 (Redford, 2005a, p. 130) just refers that “Karakoram Mountains in Pakistan”. There is reference of the Shundur Pass thus, “perched dramatically on the ridge between ‘heaven and hell’ the Shundur Pass polo ground is surrounded by some of the most spectacular mountain scenery in the world” (Redford, 2005b, p. 49). Similarly there is only reference made of “Choco Ice Cream Factory” (Redford, 2005c, p. 22), “Hawk’s Bay near Karachi (ibid, p.42), similarly various international organizations (NGOs) based in Karachi such as Sight Savers, etc. Similarly there is described a little bit about the cities like Lahore, Karachi, Rawalpindi, Hyderabad, Ghora Gali (Islamabad), Murree, Chitral, Quetta, Kalat, Hunza valley, etc.

But opposite to these there are many places and cities described and mentioned in detail to highlight the characteristic features of these cities belonging to the target and the internal culture related contexts. For example, there are numerous instances and texts describing London, the capital city of England. The book OPE 6 describes the city of London in detail:

I’m attaching a photo of Big Ben, the famous clock on the Houses of Parliament in our capital city, London. London is famous for its red double-decker buses where you can sit upstairs as well as downstairs, and for its black taxi. Ten million people live in London. We’re a multicultural city with people from every corner of the world living here... (Redford, 2005a, p. 2).

There is a complete unit in the OPE 7 that primarily deals with the city of London, important places here, and the important incidents attached to it. In a text in the OPE 7 (Redford, 2005b) there is full length lesson on the establishment, history, burning of the St. Paul’s Church in London.

Before the fire the cathedral of St Paul’s dominated London, rising clear above other buildings. As it stood apart from other houses, the people believed it would be safe from the fire. After the fire, it was rebuilt by Sir Christopher Wren and once again became one of London’s most distinctive landmarks. St Paul’s Cathedral, the highest, greatest, most conspicuous building of all London, stood unharmed whilst the fire raged about it... St Paul continued burning night and day (Redford, 2005a, p. 60-61).

Moreover, there are other political incidents of history that focus on the role of London, not only in the country but also worldwide. In it there is described the great fire of London in September 1666, the treason and gunpowder plot of 1605.

The second language textbooks are a great source of imparting religious beliefs and values. In the OPE textbooks there are such contents that promote the Christian beliefs and values at length and cause the promotion of the authors and publishers’ beliefs in the guise of imparting international attitudes. This is done through a hidden curriculum so that the unwanted information may float easily and steadily in the minds of the innocent souls of the Muslim community of Pakistan. In the OPE 6, Unit 1 deals with the theme of Where We Live. In the texts Reading e-mail, there are described various cities of the world and the important aspects of this city (Redford, 2005a, p.2). Text dealing with Moscow starts as:

Here in Moscow we have beautiful ancient churches and cathedrals as well as famous fortress of Kremlin. The churches have brilliant golden domes, which are very bright in the winter sunshine. In Red Square we have St Basil’s Cathedral which was built in the sixteen century...

There are other texts where reference is made of the Christian values, beliefs or customs and traditions. In the OPE 6, there is reference of “St. Mary’s Church in the hollow of the little hazel near a rapid whirlpool and the Church of St. Tysilio by the Red Cave” (Redford, 2005a, p.27). In a text in the OPE 7 (Redford, 2005b) there is full length lesson on the establishment, history, burning of the St. Paul’s Church in London:

Before the fire the cathedral of St Paul’s dominated London, rising clear above other buildings. As it stood apart from other houses, the people believed it would be safe from the fire. After the fire, it was rebuilt by Sir Christopher Wren and once again became one of London’s most distinctive landmarks. St Paul’s Cathedral, the highest, greatest, most conspicuous building of all London, stood unharmed whilst the fire raged about it... St Paul continued burning night and day. (ibid, p.60-61).

Similarly the sentences “power of cross protects us”, “all Russians belong to the Russian Orthodox Church”, “to cross oneself is to touch one’s forehead, then the chest, then the left and right shoulders to symbolize the four points of the cross”, “The Russians Orthodox Churches are famous for their icons, the beautifully and traditionally painted representations of the holy figures with which they are decorated” (Redford, 2005c, p. 44), “She was mortified that she couldn’t accompany her mother and Shah Rukh, to the Christmas Bazaar that Mrs Carter was holding in her garden” (ibid, p. 92), “mum goes to church some evenings and Sundays” (ibid, p. 184),

show that the writers and the publishers have intentionally focused on the Christian beliefs and values so that the young learners of English language may have some knowledges of the Christian belief.

## 6. Conclusion

The present study highlights that the ESL textbooks in Pakistan present the foreign culture and society that is primarily American, and British in nature. Representation of the target culture in so much quantity is in a way to make the young learners alien to their own culture and society and the purpose behind this representation is to prepare such a force of the young adults that may serve their objectives in a better way.

Research question 1 & 2: The findings show the answer to the research question 1 & 2 regarding which culture is highlighted that in the OPE textbooks:

- i. Frequency list of OPE 6 clearly shows that the international culture related reading texts are higher (45.59%) while the learner culture related reading texts are minimum (26.47%) in number.
- ii. Frequency list of OPE 7 shows that the target culture related reading texts are greater (53.97%) while the learner culture related reading texts are minimum (33.33%).
- iii. Frequency list of OPE 8 highlights that the target culture related reading texts in the OPE 8 are greater (51.52%) while the learner culture related reading texts are minimum (33.33%).
- iv. Frequency list of OPE 5 focuses that the target culture related reading texts in the OPE 5 are greater (62.22%) while the learner culture related reading texts are minimum (17.78%).

It highlights that the representation of target culture and the international target culture is greater than the learner culture representation. It also shows that the OPE series is not much culturally relevant to the learner's needs, objectives and social and religious background as these books present the target culture in more detail as compared to the learner culture.

Research question 3: The research question 3 asks about which aspect of the target culture or local culture is dominant in the OPE textbooks. The analysis and Figure 3 show that the aspect of *organization and nature of family* of the target culture is dominant in the sociological sense culture. In this aspect there is a detailed description of the target culture organizations and institutes like Churches. Moreover, the Christian beliefs are discussed at length. The setting is also mostly the target culture which shows the primary focus of the writes on the target culture representation. Where there is any description of the local culture, it is highlighted as a negative stereotype to make the young learners alien towards their own culture.

Research question 4: The findings and the analysis highlight that all the OPE textbooks by the foreign authors and publishers are based on hidden curriculum to impart the Western culture, beliefs and religion to the young learners.

[C]ourse contents of English course books are heavily imbued with the colours of Western culture and society. The writers and publishers of these books consciously and as a hidden curriculum transmit the views, values, beliefs, attitudes and feelings of their own society – usually the United States or the United Kingdom. The cultural contents of course books directly or indirectly communicate sets of social and cultural values, which are inherited in their make-up (Ahmed & Shah, 2013, p.157).

Research question 5: As for as the research question 5 on the representation of this particular aspect of religious beliefs is concerned, it is clear that the representation is made on the basis of a political agenda on the part of the writer for the learner culture. There may be some traces of the fact that the writers of OPE textbooks are unaware of the true cultural, social, political and religious values of Pakistan but it seems to some extent an exaggeration. The Oxford University Press has a local office in Karachi, Pakistan, and it is not hidden that the institute is busy in collaboration with the British government to improve the English language proficiency in every field related to ELT. So there are little chances that the Oxford University Press, Pakistan has not made enough research in the field of ESL teaching materials in Pakistan. Although the course contents of OPE textbooks are selected keeping in view the Pakistan National Curriculum and they have been given local and contextualize colour (Redford, 2005a) but the detailed analyses and the findings of the results show that the course contents of OPE textbooks are heavily imbued with the Western culture and society, and they represent the Western outlook and world view (Ahmed, 2012). The findings of the results match with Majeed (2012) that the ESL textbooks reflect the foreign culture and society. In my suggestions regarding improvement in the English language textbooks in Pakistan the researchers agree with Majeed (2012) that “[The] textbooks should be the reflection of culture, religion, social and geographical background of the learners” (p.118). She also concludes the discussion that the existing ESL textbooks in Pakistan have failed to fulfill the expectations of both the learners as well as the teachers. In this scenario there is a dire need to replace the foreign culture in the textbooks with the indigenous culture to harmonize the young learners with the learning conditions as well as the learning materials. Venezuela, Turkey and Saudi Arabia have developed their ELT materials without the reflection of foreign culture. The target

culture is absolutely missing in the ESL/EFL textbooks (Turkman & Celik, 2007). It is also clear from the findings of the results “that the books have been selected for the learners without taking into consideration the learners needs, objectives and attitudes (Ahmed & Shah, 2013). Moreover, the learners’ attitude also plays an important role in learning a second language. Jabeen and Shah (2011) in a case study of attitudes of the students of Government College University, Faisalabad towards target culture teaching. Through a questionnaire with different aspects of target culture, like beliefs, customs, social organization, gestures, and notions of personal space and arts of the target language culture they have measured learners' responses. The findings of the results show that learners have an overwhelmingly negative attitude towards the teaching of target language culture (Jabeen & Shah, 2011, p.592). These responses are in line with the overall reaction of Muslim countries against target culture teaching. In the light of the findings and results of the present research and the similar other researches carried out in the domain of ESL/ EFL in Pakistan and the other Muslim countries, it is need of the hour to focus on local and indigenous culture in the ELT teaching materials and textbooks in Pakistan to achieve maximum results in the areas of ESL/EFL.

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