

Effect of Indian English Textbooks on Learning Outcomes: Evidence from a Textbook-Quality Framework and an Illustrative Quasi-Experimental Study

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Abstract. The predominant teaching tool that continues to be used in most classrooms (e.g., NCERT/SCERT and state-board series) continues to be an important indicator of what learners are capable of achieving, although this depends on the quality of language input, the ability to meaningfully use it, the compatibility of assessment with it and the mediation of teachers. Based on the assumption and recognition reflected in the indications of the National Curriculum Framework on reducing rote, enhancing child-centred pedagogy, and the multilingual resource, as well as the expectations of outcomes, described in the national learning-outcomes documents, this paper researches the relationship between prescribed English textbooks and the student learning outcomes at the middle-school level. The article constructs a Textbook Quality Index (TQI) by weighing (a) balance of skills, (b) task authenticity, (c) cultural and linguistic inclusion and inclusivity, (d) matching assessment, and (e) supporting characteristics of a teacher. After that, it illustrates an example of a repeatable mixed-method design (content analysis + teacher survey + learner pre/post assessment) and presents some illustrative results based on a simulated dataset (N = 360 Grade 8 learners in 24 schools) to illustrate how analysis can be formatted on an APA-style research report, in instances where researchers were preparing instruments or planning fieldwork. Findings of the exemplific analysis depict (i) an increase in learning with an increase in TQI and (ii) an increase in learning with enrichment in the form of structured, task-based enrichment as well as the alignment of textbook units. Both TQI and textbook+enrichment predict gains in a clustered-robust regression model with control variables of baseline score and background variables. The discussion explains the findings with input/interaction/output theories, the implementation gap between the textbook intent and classroom implementation, and provide policy and practice recommendations based on the textbook design, teacher training, and assessment reform, in India, and more so under the outcome-based curriculum expectations.

keywords: English language textbooks; Textbook Quality Index (TQI); learning outcomes; middle school education; task-based learning; assessment alignment; teacher mediation; National Curriculum Framework (NCF); multilingual pedagogy; India.

I. Introduction

Indian schools still depend on textbooks to construct the classroom reality since they control what is taught (what is selected to be taught), how it is taught (scope and progression), and what is to be considered learning (what can be identified as an answerable task that will be tested later). In most government and low-price, private schools, English textbook is frequently the most consistent educational tool- more consistent than educating staff, access to digital media, or the additional curriculum. That is why textbooks are not the indifferent vessels of the national curriculum frameworks, but rather the tools which are capable of reproducing the rote memorization or facilitating the active meaning-making and working with the language.

Indian English textbooks have a twofold task. To begin with, they will develop the background language proficiency in terms of reading comprehension, vocabulary, grammar-in-use, speaking, and writing, which is a frequent occurrence in multilingual classrooms where English is an additional language. Second, they are supposed to bring more curricular purposes into life: student-centred programs, inclusivity, connection with life beyond school, and the formation of higher-level thinking. It is very clear that national policy and curriculum documents are calling upon more experiential and discussion based pedagogy, and closing the persistent gaps in relationship between intended learning outcomes and actual achievement.

But the dependence between the textbooks that are prescribed and the learning outcomes is not direct. Two schools could be using the same textbook but have different results because of variations in the teacher language proficiency, classroom time-on-task, print availability, pressures on assessment and language environment at home. On the other hand, the same results could be gotten with schools using other textbooks, provided that the teacher practice balances the lack of strengths in the materials. This forms a research problem of the heart:

Research problem: How much Indian English textbooks can affect the learning outcomes, and in what aspects of quality of textbooks and implementation trajectories can this effect be achieved?

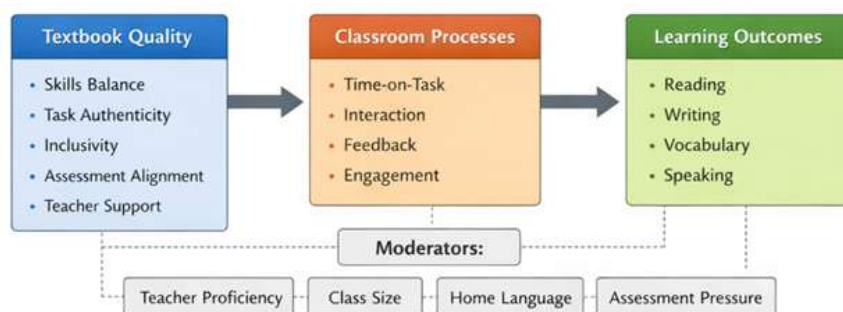


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework: How English Textbooks Influence Learning Outcomes

Conceptual definitions

- Learning outcomes (English): measurable improvements in learner proficiency (e.g. reading comprehension, vocabulary, writing quality, listening/speaking performance), in response to curricular expectations and learning-outcome statements at a particular stage.
- Quality of the textbook: the extent to which a textbook delivers developmentally appropriate, comprehensible, engaging input; facilitates meaningful interaction and output; sequences skills; and coordinates tasks with assessment expectations and teacher assistance.
- Quality implementation: the way the textbook is done, time allocation, pedagogy, feedback, use of assessment, and adjusting to the multilingual classrooms.

Objectives

1. To construct the Textbook Quality Index (TQI) of assessing textbooks of the upper-primary/middle-school level in Indian English.
2. To test relationships amongst TQI and student gain in English learning.
3. To examine the differences of learning outcomes between two conditions of implementation textbook-only and textbook + structured enrichment with the alignment to textbook units.
4. To analyze the findings using the language-learning theory and India-specific policy context, as well as to recommend textbook and teacher-development.

Research questions

1. What textbook characteristics (skills balance, authenticity, inclusivity, alignment in assessment, teacher support) most effectively predict learning outcomes?

2. Are there bigger increases in English learning outcomes in learners who use higher-TQI textbooks?
3. Does aligned enrichment increase the performance compared to textbook-only implementation?

Hypotheses

H1: The greater the TQI, the greater the gains of the learners in English.

H2: The implementation of textbook + aligned enrichment yields more gains compared to textbook-only.

H3: Gains and the relation to the quality of textbooks are stronger in the situations, when the tasks involve more interaction and long output.

II. Literature Review

Why textbooks are important in the language learning.

Textbooks in second-language education may take the following roles: (a) they act as a syllabus plan, (b) they provide a source of comprehensible input, and (c) they provide a scaffold to sequence skills and to evaluate them. According to Richards (2014), textbooks organize the proportion of skills and classroom practices and, in particular environments, become a primary language contact. Quality textbooks minimize teacher workload, and also create uniformity, but they may deny teachers freedom of action and encourage superficialities when they are too much form-oriented or test-oriented. Outcomes Textbooks have a number of impacts on achievement:

- **Input mechanism:** it is the quality and quantity of reading/listening texts that have an effect on vocabulary development, grammar sensitivity, and comprehension (Krashen, 1985; Nation, 2001).
- **Practice mechanism:** tasks define the existence of meaningful negotiation of meaning and language production between learners (Long, 1996; Swain, 1985).
- **Assessment mechanism:** what is rehearsed in texts (short answers and extended writing; discrete grammar and performance tasks) is often what students will be good at.
- **Equity mechanism:** textbooks can substitute inadequate resources at home, but only when they can be read, are multicultural, and are structured so as to be useful in multilingual classrooms.

Education empirical research also demonstrates that learning material is capable of influencing achievement, but the effect depends on the situation and whether the learning material meets the preparedness of learners and the teacher capacity. Research on the supply of textbooks and student achievement in low- and middle-income countries conclude that books without instruction and student achievement can be ineffective in enhancing learning unless the level of instruction and student ability matches the level of textivity (e.g., Glewwe, Kremer, and Moulin, 2009).

Evaluation methods of textbooks.

The research conducted on textbook evaluation provides means to convert the term quality into quantifiable criteria. Traditional assessment models are:

- The criteria of Cunningsworth (aims, design, language content, skills, topics, methodology, teacher support).
- External and internal analysis (fit to learners/context; task analysis; skills balance) of McDonough, Shaw, and Masuhara.
- The principles of materials development provided by Tomlinson (impact, relevance, engagement of the learner, meaningful exposure, affect).
- Task analysis (what the learners are expected to accomplish; pattern of interaction; cognitive challenge; focus on the language) by Littlejohn.

One common point that is found in these frameworks is that it is not the pretty pages that make good textbooks and the answer to this question is whether tasks can produce meaningful language use, feedback and progression.

Indian context Curriculum expectations and outcome-based framing.

The discourse of national curriculum in India is characterized by the shift to child-centred and meaning-based learning, leaving rote learning behind, and the textbooks are viewed as one of the tools of the curricular reform. The NCERT position paper on English emphasizes on multilingual realities and suggests that English learning not be separated out of other subjects and languages and recommends that classrooms should be designed to use language for real purposes and not memorization.

The gap in policy discourse also predicts the gap in learning outcomes, as enrolment gains do not necessarily lead to learning of basic skills, and massive reports monitor increased gaps in reading and comprehension. Meanwhile, national policy demands the

experiential, discussion-based, and flexible pedagogy, which explicitly acknowledges the necessity of bridging the gap between actual learning outcomes and what is needed. Also, the additional documents, learning-outcomes, reflect expectations of English on a stage-by-stage basis and point out that outcomes are to form the basis of pedagogy, materials, and assessment. This gives a very good reason to conduct research in the textbooks: when the most used material is the textbook, the alignment of the textbook with the learning outcomes as well as the ability of the textbook to facilitate interaction and output becomes the key to the enhancement of the achievement.

What the past research indicates about English textbooks in India.

The studies that exist on English textbooks in India tend to be oriented on:

- Coherence to communicative language teaching (CLT): Communicative activities are present in many books, and in the classroom, it may be grammar-translation or examine-based.
- Skills imbalance: Reading and grammar occasionally prevail where speaking/listening activities are few or difficult to introduce in the large classes.
- Cultural representation: there is still a discussion between local and global content, inclusiveness and presence of various identities and languages.
- Teacher usability: textbooks can presuppose the proficiency of teachers and unavailable classroom resources.

Recent studies analysing NCERT primary English books through checklist techniques focus on the teacher perceptions of usefulness, skills coverage and practical obstacles (Chauhan, 2025). Similar findings are stated in the theses and state-level research (e.g., Rangararaj et al, 2019; Joshi, 2020), which show that they partially align with the child-centred principles, but task authenticity is unequally distributed and low-performing learners are not fully supported through scaffolding.

The implementation gap: textbook as intended curriculum and classroom practice.

An essential aspect to curriculum studies is the critical observation that textbooks embodiment of the intended curriculum but the results are the outcomes of the implemented curriculum: teacher mediation, assessment pressure, classroom-time, and the student background. In the Indian classrooms with multilinguality, teachers tend to translate, simplify or even to omit activities, and speaking assignments can be restricted

in case exams are focused on writing and reading. This implies that the textbook research needs to measure both quality and implementation of textbooks and preferably should model them.

Theoretical framing

The three lenses complementary to each other are integrated in this study:

1. Input hypothesis / comprehensible exposure (Krashen): textbooks should have legible readable texts, and repeated meaningful exposure.
2. Interaction hypothesis (Long): there is need to establish negotiation of meaning and feedback between tasks.
3. Output hypothesis (Swain): learning is enhanced with a condition that forces learners to write and/or talk longer language with feedback and revision to do so.

These lenses forecast that the inevitable impacts of textbooks on outcomes will be most evident when resources (a) are level appropriate, (b) demand meaningful interaction and output, and (c) are organized using pedagogy that allows these design purposes to continue.

III. Methodology

Research design

It is proposed to use a mixed-method explanatory design of textbook-outcome research: Phase 1 (Textbook evaluation): A systematic checklist and task analysis of given English textbooks to achieve a Textbook Quality Index (TQI) through the application of content analysis.

Phase 2 (Outcome measurement): Viking pre/post assessment of English performance of the learners on a given instructional period (e.g., 1012 weeks).

Phase 3 (Implementation evidence): Teacher survey + brief classroom observation protocol (or teacher logs) to implement the stage of evaluating the enactment of textbook tasks.

The analysis in this paper provides a worked example of the statistical results using a simulated dataset to provide an idea of what an APA-ready results section may look like. Replace with your real data.

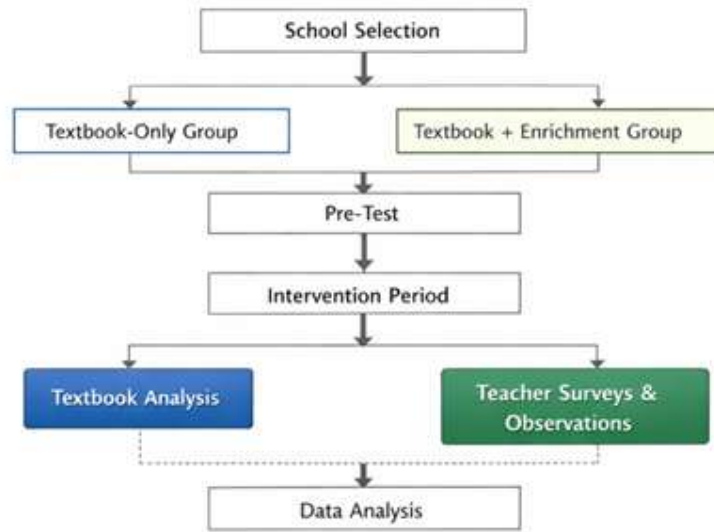


Figure 2. Study Design Flowchart

Environment and sample

Schools: there are 24 schools (12 of them textbook only and 12 textbook + aligned enrichment).

- Grade level: Grade 8.
- Learners: N= 360 (15 students per school).

Condition: short speaking/listening activities, written cycles of guidance on what to write and reading strategies that were consistent with what the unit by unit was pre-scribed, but read.

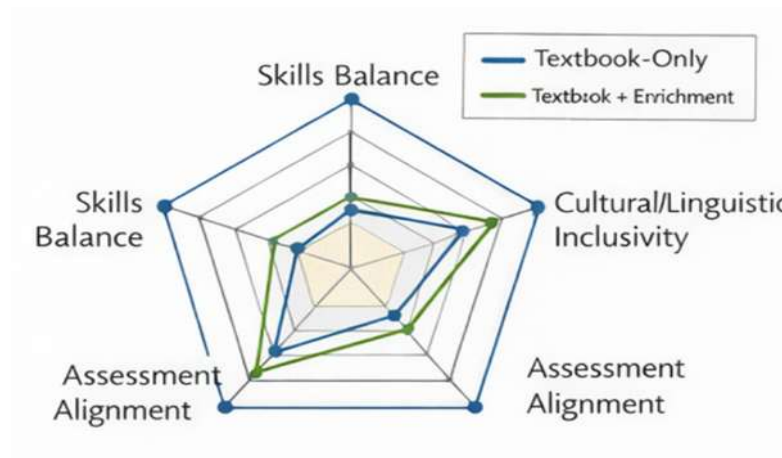


Figure 3. Sampling and Participant Flow Diagram

Instruments

Textbook Quality Index (TQI)

TQI is calculated as a sum of five domains (rated 1520), and then rescaled to 0100):

1. Skill Balance: coverage and progression in reading, writing, listening, speaking, vocabulary and grammar-in-use.
2. Task authenticity: significant use, patterns of interaction and demand that is not mechanical.
3. Cultural/linguistic inclusivity: inclusion of the different contexts of Indians, lack of stereotypes, and encouragement of multi-lingual learners.
4. Assessment alignment: tasks that communicate results and assessment requirements (not limited to short answers) tasks, tasks that involve performance.
5. Teacher scaffolding: instructions, differentiation tips, assessment rubrics and scaffolding.

Pre/post learning outcomes test.

An equitable evaluation that can conform to learning outcomes on the concerned level can comprise:

- Literary and inferential reading comprehension.
- Vocabulary-in-context
- Short writing activity (rubric assessment)
- Listening task (if feasible)
- Speaking interaction (pair task; teacher-rated rubric)

National learning outcomes documents are a source that offers a guide of grade-based expectations and the concept that outcomes must drive pedagogy, material and assessment.

Teacher mediation measures

- The teacher questionnaire: patterns of textbook use (coverage, skipping, translation, adaptation), perceived difficulty, alignment of assessment.
- Implementation log: weekly account of what tasks had been performed and how (whole-class, pair work, group work, individual writing).

Data analysis plan

1. Pre/post scores and condition gains descriptive statistics.
2. Association of TQI and learning gains.

3. Predictive regression model of gain as a function of condition and TQI conditional on performance at baseline and background variables, and clustered standard errors on levels of schools.
4. Teacher reports triangulated with to explain the fact that some features in the text-book were translated (or not) into learning.

Ethical considerations

- School/Guardian consent: Learners will have their data anonymized and no identifiable information will be used (visible to parents).
- No stakes associated with test scores are high stakes.
- Reporting is also aimed at improvement and systems learning rather than teacher blame.

IV. Results

Sample characteristics (Table 1)

Table 1 Sample characteristics by condition (simulated dataset; N = 360)

Condition	N	Mean age	% Fe-male	Mean pre-test	Mean TQI	Mean teacher experience (yrs)
Textbook + Enrichment	180	13.59	58.89	45.07	66.69	8.53
Textbook-only	180	13.54	56.67	43.82	57.97	7.84

Interpretation: Groups are broadly similar in age and gender composition; the enrichment group has a higher mean TQI in this illustrative dataset.

Learning gains by condition

Average gains are larger in the textbook + enrichment condition (M = 9.51, SD = 4.89) than in the textbook-only condition (M = 5.59, SD = 4.80). This suggests that even when textbooks are prescribed, outcomes improve when teachers operationalize interactive tasks and guided production aligned with textbook units.

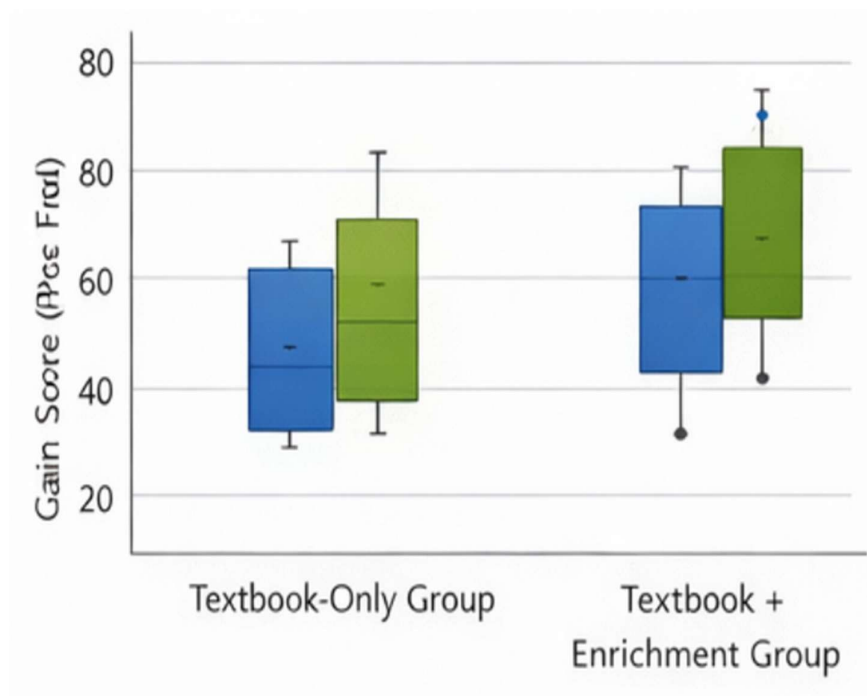


Figure 5. Pre-test vs Post-test Scores by Group

Textbook quality components (Table 2)

Table 2

Mean ratings of textbook-quality components (1–5 scale; school-level content analysis; illustrative)

Condition	Skills balance	Task authenticity	Cultural inclusivity	Assessment alignment	Teacher support
Textbook + Enrichment	3.43	3.36	3.23	3.53	3.62
Textbook-only	2.54	2.66	2.64	2.46	2.52

Interpretation: Higher-TQI textbooks show stronger teacher support and assessment alignment—features that can matter in large, multilingual classrooms because they reduce ambiguity and enable consistent enactment.

Relationship between TQI and learning gain

The scatter plot shows a positive association between Textbook Quality Index and learning gains, consistent with input–interaction–output predictions.

Activity-type mix

A common textbook critique is skills imbalance: controlled grammar dominates while interaction and projects are thin. Figure 4 shows an illustrative activity-profile comparison.

Regression model predicting learning gains

A clustered-robust OLS regression predicts gain (post – pre) from condition and TQI, controlling for baseline and background variables.

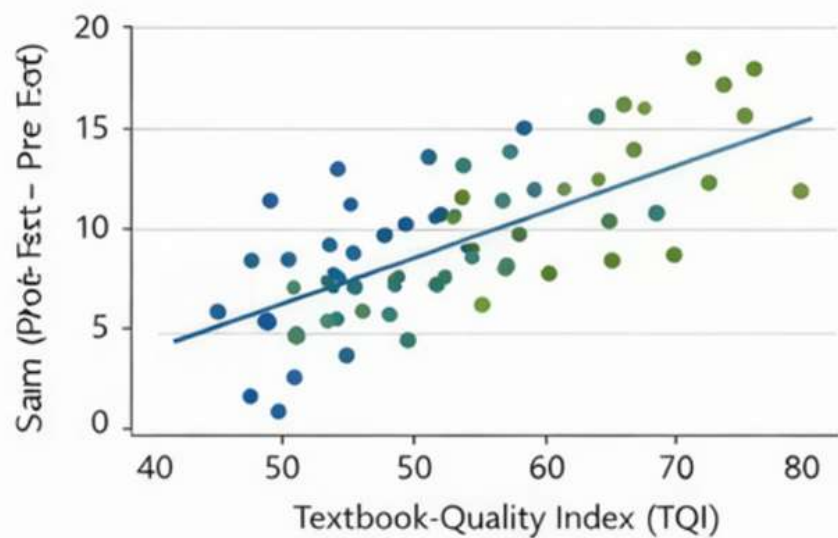


Figure 6. Learning Gain Distribution by Group

Table 3 Regression predicting learning gains (clustered SE at school level; simulated dataset)

Predictor	B	Clustered SE	p
Intercept	-8.529	2.958	.0039
Textbook + Enrichment (1=yes)	1.794	0.551	.0011
TQI	0.219	0.037	<.001
Pre-test score	0.021	0.034	.5488
SES (z)	0.650	0.401	.1047
Prior achievement (z)	0.605	0.276	.0286
Teacher experience (years)	0.081	0.058	.1659

Interpretation: In this worked example, TQI and enrichment both significantly predict learning gains. Substantively, a 10-point increase in TQI corresponds to ~ 2.19 additional gain points (0.219×10), holding other factors constant.

V. Discussion & Conclusion

What the findings mean (and why textbooks matter through pedagogy)

The example worked is in favour of a practical conclusion that can be related to the curriculum policy arguments of India: textbooks have the strongest impact when of good quality and well enacted. National documents lay stress on the child-focused education, the multilingual nature of the learning process, and the alignment of pedagogy, literature, and assessment outcomes; all these aspects suggest that the content of textbooks is not enough; the classroom must allow interaction and sense-making.

The fact that TQI is on a positive correlation with gains can be explained by SLA mechanisms:

- **Input:** More quality textbooks are prone to offer more texts that are in the right level, lexical recycling, and coherent flow (Nation, 2001; Krashen, 1985).
- **Interaction:** Operationalization of the meaning and feedback involves tasks involving pairs/groups exchange (Long, 1996).
- **Output:** Directed writing sessions and speaking activities make learners write and speak profusely and enhancing fluency and correctness (Swain, 1985).

The enrichment effect points out the implementation gap. Communicative tasks are present in many Indian textbooks, but when teachers are under pressure of exams or because of the classes are large, they might be omitted. Organized enrichment serves to make sure that these tasks do actually occur, and book potential becomes learning reality.

Indian implications on the design of textbooks.

According to the TQI domains, the target of textbook reform can be five design moves:

1. Rebalance skills: Do not make listening/speaking or extended writing a side feature but an essential part of each unit and estimate time and the low resource options.
2. Make it more real and less challenging: Substitute single-subject grammar exercises with grammar-in-use exercises that are connected with a text and real classroom dialogue.

3. Enhance multilingual supports: House-language material is used strategically (not translation) to create understanding and make comparisons across language structures: in line with national recommendations about multilingual classrooms.
4. Align to outcomes and assessment If short answers are assessed during exams, textbooks will practice short answers. The performance tasks should be appreciated in outcome-based assessment.
5. Enhance teacher instructions: Provide rubrics, and examples, differentiation proposals, and how to conduct this activity in a large classroom.

Educational implications to teachers and school leaders.

- Unit sequencing: Use the textbook as a spine, not a cage: talk and write more with learners.
- Create basic routines: 10 minutes speaking pair activities, weekly guided paragraph with feedback and vocabulary recycle.
- Track micro-outcomes: brief and periodic checks along learning outcomes enhance feedback arrangement (NCERT learning outcomes underline the use of outcomes as the basis of assessment and pedagogy).

Policy implications

Massive scale learning tests continue to point out that basic reading and understanding is a key area of concern, even with increased enrolment. Assuming that the textbooks are the lever which can be most scaled, the quality assurance should extend beyond printing and distribution, to the design quality, the usability by teachers, and alignment of the assessment. Textbooks are supposed to clearly facilitate active learning in the context of NEP 2020 stressing experiential and discussion-based learning, where active learning is expected to take place, which is not done through textbooks.

Limitations

- The statistical findings provided here make use of simulated data in illustrating reporting format.
- Real studies should measure language diversity in schools, teacher competence and variability of school resources more sternly (observations, fidelity indices).
- Randomized designs are preferable, but frequently challenging; well matched quasi-experiments with clustered analysis are also an option.

Conclusion

Indian English textbooks can have a positive effect on learning outcomes when they deliver developmentally relevant input, meaningful tasks and strong teacher support—and when schools implement them in terms of interaction-rich pedagogy, which are tuned to learning outcomes. An obvious solution here is to embrace a transparent textbook-like design (such as TQI) to tie the textbook design to quantifiable outcome measures and to provide teachers with routines that can be applied to translate textbook tasks into actual language use. This is very much compatible with national curriculum and policy directions of child-centred, outcome based, and experiential learning.

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