

Constructing Nature in the Classroom: An Eco linguistic Analysis of Depiction of Human-Nature Relationship in English Textbooks

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Abstract

In the face of escalating environmental crises, the role of education in shaping young learners' ecological consciousness has gained critical importance. School textbooks, particularly language textbooks, play a foundational role in constructing students' perceptions of nature and their relationship with the environment. The current research paper examines the representation of human-nature relationships in school textbooks and how it may impact the ecological awareness of young students. Drawing upon the ecolinguistics framework by Greta Gaard, this study aims to understand how textbook language and approach towards natural ecology may construct students' perceptions of the environment. The analysis focuses on the degree of emphasis on ecological issues, the approach to human-nature interaction, and the presence of anthropocentric or eco-centric perspectives in the portrayal of nature in grades sixth and eighth English textbooks taught in government schools in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. Through purposive sampling technique, lessons were critically evaluated using a qualitative approach to identify patterns, themes, and underlying ideologies in the language used to describe nature. The findings reveal that, on the one hand, ecological issues are not openly and adequately addressed in textbooks. On the other hand, texts that deal with any aspect of living or non-living natural ecology show a prevalence of anthropocentric language- depicting nature as a resource for human activities or merely a backdrop to such activities rather than emphasizing its intrinsic value. The current study found that the textbook material predominantly adopted a human-centered approach towards nature- depicting it in anthropocentric terms, thereby lacking students' practical engagement with the environment. The paper examines the implications of this approach and highlights the need to revise textbook's content and to include ecologically balanced narratives that foster a deeper respect for nature and promote sustainable thinking among students from an early age.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Textbooks are an important source of material that can influence the perception and attitude of students in relation to environmental conservation and human dependence on nature (Kopnina et al., 2018; Sibbel, 2009). Robust environmental education can be an effective way to mitigate environmental degradation and safeguard prospects for a vibrant ecology. However, there are often disconnects between policy intentions, research findings and actual implementation of these two in school curricula (Lee & Kang, 2023). Further, in many cases, there is a lack of research-based authentic findings as to what extent environmental education has been integrated into textbooks; to what extent environment is presented as ontologically independent of human perception and having the right to exist irrespective of serving humans' need for natural environment to provide psychological relief or appeal to their aesthetic sense (Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016). In spite of the rising global concerns about environmental degradation, in Pakistan, little information is available about the teaching of environmental literacy in textbooks and its stance towards the ontology of human-nature relationship.

Environmental education is not taught as a distinct subject in formal educational contexts in Pakistan (Begum, 2012). Instead, environmental topics are embedded in various subjects like language teaching, science, and social sciences. A significant concern related to this approach is the lack of practical activities and methods of incorporating environmental awareness into classroom practice that may enable teachers to develop practical awareness and skills of students to protect environment. Even in science subjects, the inclusion of environmental topics is quite arbitrary and teachers are left to decide for themselves how to approach it in their teaching

practice (Ishaque et al., 2025). Globally, a similar trend is observed in China- the largest pollution emitting country in the world, accounting for 30% global emissions. However, Chinese curriculum often avoids addressing environmental ecology issues directly and attributes them to dominant groups in vague terms (Lee & Kang, 2023). Glossing over the causes and effects of human activities, hazardous to environmental ecology, is more likely to perpetuate future degradation of the environment instead of preparing the next generation to take steps towards minimizing it.

Since the 1990s, ecolinguistics has been an emerging interdisciplinary field in applied linguistics which seeks to explore intersections between language and natural ecology (Zahoor & Janjua, 2020). Language is a key semiotic resource that orients human perception of ecology and their ideological orientation towards the function of ecology in our life (Akcesme, 2013). Language teaching is, therefore, a crucial form of constructing students' social reality and their orientation toward their surrounding environment (Khan, 2021). Against the backdrop of current global ecological crises, it is crucial to incorporate environmental awareness and ecological understanding in the teaching of English (Brown, 1991). However, an anthropocentric orientation towards the ontology of nature prevalent in many forms of linguistic representation of ecology can downplay relegate natural ecology to a subservient role which will not be beneficial for humanity. Rooted in a human-centered ethical framing, anthropocentrism ideologically represents mankind's dominance and presupposes man's superiority over non-human beings; conceptualizing them as existing for the benefit of humans rather than as ontologically independent beings who have equal right to exist (White, 1967).

Against this backdrop, the current study is based on ecolinguistics evaluation of textbook contents, relevant to raising environmental awareness among school students of grades sixth and eighth studying in government schools in Pakistan. Based on the ecological framework for the evaluation of environmental texts developed by Greta Gaard (2008, 2009), this analysis aims to show underlying assumptions and ideologies that undergird specific approaches adopted to presenting environmental material in the texts. The analysis aims to underscore potential impact of these approaches upon students' awareness regarding the natural environment around them. Specifically, this study seeks to explore how the English textbooks construct nature for the students and, secondly, how it projects human-nature relationship in the texts. The study analyzes potential impact of these aspects of the texts upon students' orientation toward nature and their possible future interaction with it as predicated through their worldview regarding nature formed through these texts.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Ecolinguistics combines linguistics and environmental studies- investigating the interdependency of environmental awareness and its intersection with language use (Harrison, 2022; Steffensen & Fill, 2014). According to Steffensen and Fill (2014), ecolinguistics focuses on how language plays a key role in transmitting knowledge about the natural world- emphasizing that linguistic diversity is crucial for the conservation of biodiversity and coexistence of human beings and nature. This shift towards ecocentrism instead of anthropocentrism in recent decades is conducive to finding solutions for environmental problems facing our planet. The eco-centric approach is rooted in the recognition of interrelationship among all living creatures, with an appreciation for nature and recognition of its authentic independent existence (Kortetmäki, 2016; Kravchenko, 2016). According to Washington et al., (2017), the promotion of an eco-centric worldview is not only essential for conservation of natural environment but is also a key ethical principal underlying the promotion of justice on a global scale. The discrepancy between the developed north and developing south is predicated upon exploitation of natural resources which is often uneven, unjustifiable, and obscured by anthropocentric ideologies. Further, according to Cho (2009), the eco-centric approach is significant from ethical, evolutionary, spiritual, and ecological perspectives. By adopting this approach, we prioritize nature and accept its value as inherent rather than being centered on humans in anthropocentric framing.

In the face of rising environmental issues and global ecological catastrophes, it has been acknowledged since early 1990s that ecological awareness and conservation must be a key theme in the teaching of English as a second or a foreign language (Brown, 1991). In this connection,

it is particularly stressed that language as a tool of human socialization needs to respond adequately to the increasing global degradation of the environment. School curriculum can play a foundational role in shaping students' orientation towards nature and the effects of human activities on their natural surroundings (Jabeen et al., 2014). However, research indicates that textbooks often portray the natural environment as subservient to human needs and desires, without attributing any intrinsic ontological value to its existence. For instance, Lee and Kang (2023) demonstrate how language teaching textbooks taught to Korean ethnic students in China deliberately obscure the effects of human activities on nature. The textbooks from major publishers, they studied, not only fail to show to students the intrinsic value of natural environment irrespective of the human needs it serves, but also glosses over assigning responsibility while discussing increasing environmental crises in the present times. Other studies show that textbooks often include undefined terms that are usually either not specific or based on an anthropocentric view of the world (Alabas & Akagunduz, 2021; Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016). These and other studies show that the anthropocentric view is commonly adopted in textbooks, limiting the textbooks' role in raising students' awareness about the natural world in its entirety. Critiquing human-centered textbook content can be an important step in transforming human views about the real value of the natural environment on this planet.

A significant gap exists between textbooks' approach towards nature and there is a need for an explicit recognition of the fact that the natural environment is crucial both for human survival as well as on its own terms as an intrinsically key aspect of the world. According to De Jonge (2011), anthropocentrism erroneously presupposes the dominant position of humans whereas "deep ecology" perspective criticizes it as the underlying cause of major ecological crises for the last several decades. De Jonge stresses the need for a shift from one of domination of nature to a deep concern for it because the domination perspective not only threatens the non-human but also the human aspect of the world. It is important to not only focus on the symptomatic results of a dominance perspective like urbanization, pollution, degradation of natural resources, and global warming, but also lay bare the underlying ontological fallacy of seeing humankind as separate and superior to the natural environment. As Luke (2002) points out, the human/nature dichotomy is ideologically connected with other aspects of domination such as the powerful versus weak, western superiority versus non-western countries, and masculine over feminine. Deep ecological perspective suggests that human-centered and dominance-based ideologies permeate all aspects of social domains and can be an important underlying cause of major social justice issues in the world today (Kopnina, 2019; Kortetmäki, 2016).

As discussed earlier in this section, ecolinguistics is an emerging field in applied linguistics. The study of English language teaching materials in ESL/EFL context has only recently emerged as a focus of study in ecolinguistics. Globally, there are limited studies available contributing to this field such as Lee and Kang's (2023) study of language teaching material taught in ethnic minority schools in China where they found a lack of an explicit analysis of the causes and responsibility of environmental degradation in the world in general and in China, in particular. In a higher education context, Kopnina's (2019) study analyzes liberal arts students' perspectives on environmental and ecological justice through assignments from a course on Environment and Development. The study critically examines their reasoning along the anthropocentrism–ecocentrism spectrum and offers curriculum recommendations to foster eco-centric thinking in higher education. Adopting a CDA research perspective, Akcesme (2013) reveals what ideologies of environmental ecology are circulated by major global English coursebook publishing companies. The study analyzes the potential impact of these ideologies upon language students' perspective about human-nature relationship and their potential behaviors about nature as future grown-up individuals. In their study of Turkey's secondary school geography curricula and textbooks, Alabaş and Akagündüz (2021) use qualitative content analysis of documents and textbooks from grades 9–12. Their research identifies a blend of ethical perspectives—both anthropocentric and eco-centric—emphasizing responsibility, self-control, and love for nature.

In Pakistan, the few studies that exist in this field include Ishaque et al. (2025) that used qualitative content analysis to examine how environmental education is integrated into Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) teacher's training programs. They found that while basic strategies are

present, the curriculum lacks practical, community-based approaches toward promoting ecological awareness and sustainability. In a qualitative study of grade seven English textbooks, Zahoor and Janjua's (2020) study critically evaluates the Punjab province primary-level English textbooks in Pakistan through ecolinguistics and eco-pedagogical lenses-revealing that while environmental content is present, it predominantly promotes an anthropocentric worldview and lacks meaningful eco-pedagogical depth. The current study aims to contribute to the growing field of ecolinguistics analysis of ESL/EFL textbook material by analyzing grades sixth and eighth (secondary school) English textbooks taught in government schools in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. To the best of my knowledge, there is no research study available focusing on analysis of secondary school curriculum in this province. In Pakistan, each province formulates its own English teaching curriculum via their textbook board department while observing the guidelines provided by the National Curriculum for English Language (NCEL). Based on Greta Gaard's (2008) framing of analysis of English teaching material from eco-pedagogical perspective, the current analysis aims to explore how textbooks construct nature in texts as well as the human-nature relationship.

3. METHODOLOGY

As mentioned above, this study focuses on English textbooks taught in public schools in sixth and eighth grades (secondary school level) in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. According to the 2021-2022 Annual Statistical Report of Government Schools, a total of 49.57% of students in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa attended government's primary and secondary schools out of which 32.59% attended secondary schools (GoP, 2022). This is a significantly large number of students in the densely populated country of around 250 million people. A total of ten lessons were selected for analysis through purposive sampling. Such lessons as related to natural environment, covering a range of topics such as nature, ecology, environmental, and living and non-living aspects of the natural world. However, texts that explicitly address issues of ecological conservation and aim to engage students in active protection of the environment were found lacking in the textbooks.

Ecolinguistics analysis was conducted using a qualitative approach, focusing on the language used in textbooks to describe human-nature relationship. The analysis is based on identifying patterns, themes, and underlying ideologies in the language used to depict nature. A coding framework was developed based on Gaard (2008) focusing on how nature is portrayed in textbooks in terms of its ontological position as intrinsically valuable or only in relation to humans. The analysis is also focused on analyzing anthropocentric depiction of nature in textbooks and its ideological underpinnings. A further related significant point of focus is the analysis of hierarchical conceptualization of nature—human relationship. Lastly, another significant analytical theme relates to whether nature is shown in the texts to have autonomy and agency or is it shown as dependent upon humans to save it from destruction. The analysis involved a systematic coding process, where passages from the textbooks were coded according to the established framework of thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke (2021).

4. RESULTS

4.1. Ontology of Human-Nature Relation

- “The Dawn's awake!”

The lesson is based on the personification of nature, especially the dawn shown as a very active force bringing about change and activity in the world. The imagery describes dawn as "awake" and carrying "a torch of gold," showing its potential to excite a fresh beginning in life and spur change. When the dawn is described as "awake," one can have a visual image of nature as something living and participating in life. Similarly, at the sight of the dawn, bearing "a torch of gold," we see nature as light or a beacon pointing out the way into yet another day filled with possibilities and adventures. The personification of nature in this case asks us to look at nature not just as a setting for our lives, but as an energetic and potent force that molds experiences allowing us to perceive things from a fresh perspective. This brings one into a deeper relationship with the natural world that allows them to appreciate its aesthetic and intellectual complexity:

The Dawn's awake!
 A flash of smoldering flame and fire
 Ignites the East. Then, higher, higher,
 O'er all the sky so grey, forlorn,
 The torch of gold is borne.
 The Dawn's awake!
 The dawn of a thousand dreams and thrills.
 And music singing in the hills
 A paean of eternal spring
 Voices the new awakening. (English 8, p. 46)

The beauty of nature is often portrayed in folklore and myths as a poignant source of inspiration and spiritual renewal. The lesson invokes Dawn as someone who brings dreams to the mountains, where the warmth comes through with the thunder and music as if the sky were full of smoke and blaze. These details fill the imagination with magnificent images, creating interesting emotional states through an understanding of nature's magnificence and its inspirational power. As the sun rises, the sky burns in a way that can be described as an exploding bonfire with its captivating fiery light and colors; this may be seen as a metaphor for the everlasting flow of energy that warms the world and renews the sky with a fresh dawn. The lesson refers to the dawn as a friend to the hill and the music as its thrill. The day has finally arrived, bringing new life to the world. This characterization illustrates the fact that nature does not only play a neutral role in the mute landscape but is also a strong stimulating power that puts the mind in balance and gives energy. While nature is listening and its singing to get a "haunting music in the hills" conveys the idea of harmony and beauty, attesting to the fact that both nature and humans have their own ways of communication and expression.

However, although a powerful way to stimulate empathy with nature among young learners, personification used in the text is not without its drawbacks- attributing anthropomorphic qualities to nature either contributes to reifying the ontological gap between humans and the natural world or supports ideas of human exceptionalism. This is obvious in phrases like "the boon of light we craved," where the cravings of human beings and their feelings are juxtaposed with nature as if all those elements are there for the good of human beings. Personification, though brings nature down to a level of our understanding and makes it more relatable, it can also distort the image of the natural world. For instance, if we project onto nature human or anthropomorphic qualities, we might perceive that humans are disconnected and superior to the rest of nature. This can perpetuate a harmful worldview whereby nature is seen as available for mankind's use. Furthermore, the use of personification might limit our understanding of nature, reducing its richness and diversity. Such a narrow perspective can work against the efforts for the protection of nature and its preservation.

- "What a Blessing"

As mentioned in the previous lesson, "What a Blessing" describes nature as it appears to the speaker at the beginning of a new day. The lesson provides details of the speaker's relationship with nature which provides a backdrop to human activities in the morning. It depicts a peaceful setting of nature, giving a suitable condition in which humans may carry out their activities—music from chirping birds, watching the play of the squirrel, and walking along next to a stream. The speaker stands in awe and is grateful for the beauty and peace that accompanies nature. By concentrating on human experiences within nature, the poem considers the equilibrium between mankind and the natural order:

What a blessing it is to wake up every single day,
 To hear the birds chirping as they go on their merry way,
 And to watch the little squirrels as they come out to play,
 Then to make ready for another crazy and hectic day,
 Or maybe a walk by the stream or stroll along the bay-
 Thank you, Lord, for letting me live another precious day. (English 8, p. 92)

Although the poem celebrates nature's beauty and tranquility, it also portrays nature in a rather passive light- largely existing as a backdrop to human activity. Given this very limited viewpoint, nature is meant to serve as a backdrop for human experiences. Such a vision may lose sight of the inherent value and agency of the natural world. Nature is not only there to make a scene look more beautiful; it is a living, dynamic, complicated system with its own cycles and rhythms that have to be respected and preserved.

In the search for "who am I?", ontologically, the identity of the speaker is not voiced in isolation but bound up with the experiences contained within nature. This points to a deep sense of interconnectedness and unity with the natural world in which human existence does not feature without the larger ecological system. Man thanking nature has played a part in forming the experiences of the individual. Moreover, the poem holds the idea that human identity is not fixed or static but rather fluid and dynamic—it is moving and changing through a series of participations; such as through interaction with natural objects and, animals. This fluidity points to a deeper understanding of human existence, wherein the speaker is part and parcel of a greater whole.

In spite of these ecologically useful aspects, the poem also appears to have originated from a very limited anthropocentric perspective that nature acts as a mere backdrop for human actions. This highlights the belief that nature's primary purpose is to fulfill and entertain human needs instead of being a dynamic system with its own set of principles and intrinsic worth. This is potentially the reason why the popular view of this subject often appears to be driven by the common prejudice that man holds in being superior to everything else in the natural world. Natural existence is thus given to serve human beings and a propensity that makes people access the resources offered by nature without thinking of future repercussions- if such resources are used without measure. This may lead to the loss of biodiversity, depletion of natural resources, and weakening of the larger biosphere. Moreover, the idea that nature can actually "die" into a mere background for human activities is a case of human chauvinism and exceptionalism.

4.2. Ecojustice in the Texts

- "Letter to the Editor of a Newspaper"

In this letter, a female student draws readers' attention to the impacts of pollution. The author attempts to show that pollution is much more complex and has far-reaching implications as compared to what it is generally perceived to be. Focusing on the consequences of air pollution, she stresses the greenhouse effect and the negative effects of air pollution on people's health. She speaks of dangers posed by water pollution, threatening animals, and human life. Further, she points out that the negatives of noise pollution include tiredness, reduction of sleep, and loudness. Land pollution affects quality of both the soil and groundwater. She points out that the answer is to raise public awareness for action in lessening the impact brought about by human activities on our environment. The letter by the student is an actual call to action, pleading people to put measures in place that can conserve the environment and urging clean living habits.

In this letter, she argues that everyone is responsible for polluting the environment, and needs to contribute to collective action to mitigate the effects of human activities on natural ecology. This is in line with the eco-justice movement calling for casting down the hierarchy in favor of community and participatory democracy (Martusewicz, 2014; Washington et al., 2018). The letter stresses that people differ in their contributions to environmental issues, instilling a feeling of common responsibility and urging people to take individual actions to address the matter. This also resembles the belief that everyone is responsible for creating a sustainable and just society. However, the letter does not recognize that the major contributors to environmental issues - large organizations, multinational companies, and major productions - are among the main sources of all forms of pollution. These types of businesses may be the worst contributors to pollution and environmental violations owing to their activities or practices. Awareness of the environment created by industries should be directed at the heart of the issue to develop systems in order to control and fix the problem. Instead, the letter focuses solely on individuals rather than addressing the institutions or systems responsible for environmental contamination:

In order to battle pollution, people need to know more about it for they will be able to fight against pollution only if they are aware of what the types are and what the repercussions of not

controlling pollution will be. I have tried to bring into the limelight the sources of pollution and its effects on human and plant life. I hope this will awaken the people to their role in making the environment clean. (English 6, p. 76)

Achieving sustainability requires implementing more sustainable practices and policies at both individual and institutional levels. Embracing this holistic view can enable ecojustice promotion on a larger scale-leading to greater and more impactful results. While the letter does not explicitly suggest that children alone should solve all problems, the statement "[the letter] will awaken the people to their role in making the environment clean" implies that individuals, rather than systemic weaknesses in the present capitalist economic structure are responsible for solving environmental issues. It is a myopic approach because it does not consider distinctions in the functions of institutions, governments, and businesses that might cause environmental pollution. It also places a heavy burden on individuals, especially the youth, forcing them to make decisions they may not have the ability to make and confronting them with issues they cannot control.

- “The Wolf Cub”

In this story, a boy Mowgli, who is raised by wolves in the jungle, is threatened by a tiger named Cheeto. Mowgli, now an adopted member of the wolf pack, is kind towards all other animals in the jungle while Cheeto is resentful towards everyone and wants to kill Mowgli. After Cheeto reveals his ill intentions which in turn are revealed to Mowgli by Bhaloo the bear, he employs a strategy involving the use of horned bulls as a preemptive attack to protect himself. Drawing on the help of his many animal friends, Mowgli gathers eight wild-horned bulls with the most extended and piercing horns. They fall upon Cheeto together, crushing him under their weight with their horns and ending his life. Mowgli returns victoriously- ending Cheeto’s cruelty in the jungle. The story highlights the concept of ecojustice and community engagement through its illustration of human and non-human characters’ cooperation in to fight against tyranny and injustice. As a result of his close association with the animal community in the jungle, Mowgli has a very different and egalitarian view of the relationship between humans and other animals.

The story of "The Wolf Cub" has equality for all forms of life as its central theme. Humans are not given any hierarchical priority in the ladder of existence rather they are considered part of the collective community of living beings who share natural resources of the jungle. This egalitarian principle counteracts common assumptions about human exceptionalism that are often ideologically embedded in commonly occurring narratives- including those shown in textbooks. Although the protagonist of the story is a male character who is often in charge of how collective actions are planned and execute, yet there is a sense of equality and justice among the members of the jungle community as they forge collective action against the oppressive tactics of the tiger. Although it can be argued that the story does not endorse deep ecological awareness in the sense that there is still a depiction of a human being controlling other creatures around him, the sense of fellowship and equality shown in the text can potentially inculcate ideas, among students that go beyond a dualistic worldview anchored in unquestioned anthropocentric norms.

4.3. Subjectivity and Agency of Nature

- “A Family Trip to Naran”

In the letter, a girl student describes to her friend a wonderful holiday trip to the natural scenic beauty of Naran valley in Pakistan. The letter describes going over a suspended bridge on the “River Kunhar”, her stay at a tourist lodging, and visiting a fascinating lake called Saif-ul-Malook which is famous for fairy stories associated with the history of the lake. According to the author, Naran is a natural paradise on earth. The letter sketches Naran and its environment in a vivid, painting-like manner, personifying nature as a calm and complete setting that offers relaxation. The description of the Kunhar River, the adorable picnic gardens, and the bewitching Lake of the Crown Prince illustrates nature's beauty to our senses. However, the free spirit of nature remains devoid of aspects such as agency and subjectivity. Natural beings and humanity coexist in nature, not separately. In textual representations, it is not uncommon that nature is treated as a place of respite and rejuvenation which is available for human use whenever needed.

However, in this utilitarian view, nature is seen as a mere tool for human use, lacking intrinsic value or its own dimension to exist.

Nature's description in the afore mentioned lesson reveals that there is an anthropocentric approach that emphasizes nature's value based solely on its "benefits" to the human race. Humanity views nature as a resource bank and a recreational playground, often overlooking its complexities, independence, intrinsic values, and its own voice. This view sees nature as an instrument for the use of humankind towards their purposes; there is no independent value in nature. It tends to locate nature in a one-way relationship: either it views human beings as aliens in nature or superior over nature. This perspective has put into the background the view of mankind's stewardship of nature. Rather, they are prepared to allow the living of other organisms as pleasure for themselves. A society and economy based on such ethics cannot sustain a balance between human activities and the importance of natural conservation.

- "The Kingfisher"

The poem "The Kingfisher" by William Henry Davies could be a good guiding example leading towards an attitude of environmental awareness in the minds of young students. The poem presents nature for its intrinsic value. Nature is depicted as a realm of awe-inspiring beauty. The kingfisher, emerging from a rainbow, embodies its vibrant colors. This portrayal not only highlights nature's inherent worth and beauty but also serves to emphasize the vital role nature plays in human lives. It alludes to the interconnectedness of living aspects of nature like birds and non-living ones like a rainbow. However, the anthropomorphism of nature, such as trees sighing over the speaker's mournful heart attributes human qualities to natural objects and, as such, creates a dichotomy between the human and non-human aspects of nature. The poem suggests that the speaker observes nature with respect and reverence- expressing a desire to dwell in a serene, green environment away from human influence, symbolizing a deep respect for nature. Furthermore, the speaker imbues elements of nature, like the kingfisher, with human-like qualities, adding a layer of projection onto the natural world.

The poem characterizes nature through its beauty and harmony. Although not a direct solution to issues like climate change and conservation, yet it does emphasize the significance of nature's appreciation and its due respect. The poem implies that the kingfisher is unified with nature since it is portrayed as an integral part of the environment. Reading such a poem can promote environmental awareness and empathy among children through its emphasis on beauty and worth of nature and the interconnectedness of different aspects of the natural ecology which can potentially inspire them to take action to protect it. On the other hand, the anthropomorphizing of nature in the poem results in distorting the independent and interconnected essence of ecology, thus making it difficult for readers to appreciate nature on its own terms. Paradoxically, nature is valued in the poem for its own sake but is also presented as an object on which human feelings and emotional states are projected. The transcendent and enriching image that the poem provides (of nature) might help build ecological awareness amongst students, but its personification will arouse students' sensibilities to viewing nature in humanistic terms.

5. CONCLUSION

This research illustrates the complex interrelation between human perception of nature and the human representation of human-nature interaction in several texts. The lessons considered in the present study are predominantly anthropocentric, with humans as mostly active participants and nature as often a passive stage for human recreation, satisfaction of aesthetic needs, or as an object of personification in human terms. Such ontological orientation towards nature justifies the division between man and nature rather than looking at the interconnection between humanity and nature. Poems like "The Dawn's Awake!" and "The Kingfisher" depict a placid picture of nature, celebrating its beauty. However, this is a perspective that could miss the essence of nature and its power. This could lead to institutionalizing the view of nature as something for human pleasure. As Kortetmäki (2016) stresses that broad ecological justice and deep ecological awareness must be there to shift from a modal of natural exploitation as a prerogative of humans towards care for nature's intrinsic value as the most important part of our ecosystem. "The Wolf Cub," wherein a boy is living in a jungle on equal conditions and partnership with animals, shows

a marginal level of empathy towards nature but still garbed in a hierarchical view of the world in which humans are always in control of the affairs. The letter about a trip to Naran presents nature in the background of human existence as a dreamy and soft source of human recreation. On the other hand, "The Kingfisher" views nature as a carrier of mankind's emotions and association, having no intrinsic value or agency. These findings align with Zahoor and Janjua (2020) in their analysis of government primary school EFL textbooks analysis in the Punjab province of Pakistan. They found that the selected textbooks mostly showed anthropocentric orientation and lacked significant focus on ecojustice and students' active engagement in environmental protection.

This underscores the need for a balance in terms of the interconnectedness of human life with nature. To move away from an anthropocentric view towards an eco-centric view that would give recognition to the importance and value of nature. Teaching English as a foreign language in a multilingual context like Pakistan requires that the linguistic ecology of the local context is protected but also means teaching English for ideological maturity of the students (Ullah, 2020). According to Sharma and Buxton (2015), a balanced and vigilant perspective of the intricate relationship between human beings and the wider environment can ensure a balanced interaction that is just and sustainable. Deep ecology integrated into textbooks can foster this balance in human-nature relationships and help in the development of a much more holistic perception. Deep ecology can ignite in students respect and love for all aspects of the environment, raising their ecological awareness to a higher level.

There is a need, especially in government-run school textbooks in Pakistan, to explicitly include ecological awareness texts that are based on sensitizing students to a deeper understanding of nature. Texts should explicitly address how humans are more dependent on the natural ecology of the earth and not in any way dominating the natural ecology (Khan, 2025). Our young generation needs to internalize these nuanced perspectives about nature if they are to act as protectors of the natural environment. As De Jonge (2011) emphatically points out:

"Though deep ecologists are not unanimous in how best to approach the subject of care, all agree that the prevailing attitude of anthropocentrism lies at the root of ecological devastation, the main reason being that anthropocentrism encompasses not merely one particular critique, e.g. blaming capitalists or Muslims or the Judaeo-Christian tradition, but the entire outlook of domination. (p. 319)."

The main limitation of the study is its analysis of English textbooks of only two secondary-level classes. It is not therefore representative of the other subjects taught in these classes. Furthermore, it does not represent the wide range of privately published textbooks of English and other subjects taught to the same level of students in private schools in Pakistan. Future research studies could investigate these missing aspects of the representation of environmental ecology in textbooks of other subjects, and those taught in private schools. A further limitation of the study includes its purely qualitative analysis of a small number of books. The results are therefore relevant to the specific textbooks studied in the current analysis and cannot be generalized to other contexts without due caution. Future studies could conduct large-scale quantitative analysis of textbooks which could claim generalization in the government-sector school's curriculum in Pakistan.

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