

Decolonial Critique: Eurocentric Texts & Pedagogies in Pakistan

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Abstract

This research aims to seek whether the European texts and pedagogies in Pakistani schools sustain or challenge the Western hegemonic discourse and generate a decolonial discourse. The research is qualitative and 12 classroom observations were conducted in four O-Levels schools of Karachi: DA O Level, TC School, LB O Level, and AH- O Level school. Pedagogies of teachers in grade 8 for three novels, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *Robinson Crusoe*, and *A Tale of Two Cities* were observed. A brief review of the novels is also included. Furthermore, Walter D. Mignolo (2000, 2006, 2017, 2018) notions are used to analyse the pedagogical practices. The findings reveal that the classroom pedagogies neither challenge the hegemonic discourse nor generate a decolonial discourse rather align students with the western geographical, socio-political context. To decolonize students' mind, Pakistani English texts must be included in the curricula.

Keywords: Eurocentric Literature, curriculum, pedagogies, decoloniality

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INTRODUCTION

Colonial occupation alongside geographical borders also created “Epistemological frontiers”, where literature in Arabic, Hindi, Aymara and Bengali, etc. was discarded to validated the hubris of Western episteme. In the context of South Asia, the “knowledge is also colonized and, therefore, needs to be de-colonized”. The Charter Act of 1813 in India brought two key changes in the education system; Firstly, the British took the responsibility for its subjects' education and secondly, missionaries established the schools on the British models. Macaulay's infamous ‘Minutes of Meeting-1835’ decided the dispute about the choice of language in favour of English and it became the language of education in India. Macaulay announced, “...all the books written in the Sanskrit and Arabic language is less valuable than most paltry abridgments used at preparatory schools in England”.

Initially, there were two types of English schools in the subcontinent: Chiefs' Colleges, for the aristocracy and schools for the newly emergent professional classes . After achieving independence, one of the substantial tasks was to decolonize its educational system, but the continued colonial legacy proves that coloniality has outlived colonialism. In 1987, Zia ul Haq provided a legal cover through Martial Law Regulation 115, to prepare students for the British 'O' (Ordinary) and 'A' (Advanced) Level examinations. This policy undermined the 1979 education policy that had favored Urdu as the medium of instruction. The choice of English language and European literature in Pakistan’s English curriculum entail the loss of Pakistani cultural context, as Spivak highlighted that the English texts were originally written for the English and now when a reader from a postcolonial world reads these texts “the concurrence brings a degree of cultural alienation with it”. The pedagogical methods in Pakistan still follow the old trails, where the correct explanation comes “not from student thought, inquiry or questioning, and certainly not from student ‘opinion’ rather the ‘Right opinion’ is what the teacher thought” which shapes students’ opinion of a text.

The study aims to investigate whether the teachers, in teaching European novels, create new meanings by challenging the Eurocentric narratives and develop a decolonial discourse or use the same lens as used by the Western writers. 4 O-Level schools of Karachi were selected for the research. The English novels taught in these schools are: *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson, *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe, and *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens. In grade 8 of the selected schools, 12 class observations (3 per class) were conducted to analyze the pedagogies of teachers in teaching those texts. The data collected through the observations was later analyzed through the tenets of decoloniality provided by Walter D. Mignolo.

Problem Statement

The curricula followed by the O –Level schools in Karachi do not encourage the inclusion of English texts by Pakistani writers. A very myopic rationale was given by the teachers and some cluster heads for choosing the western texts i.e., ‘Students in grade 8 are being prepared for the Cambridge examinations and for that European novels are considered appropriate’. There are studies available in Pakistani context to guide curriculum committees for the selection of English texts at the tertiary level but no research was found on the pedagogies and the rationale for selecting the European texts in O- Level schools for grade 8. This study intends to fill the gap by

providing a decolonial analysis of class teaching practices to investigate whether new meaning construction and critical thinking skills are developed in students or Eurocentric narrative is sustained in teaching European texts. The study will be beneficial for developing a valuable regenerative framework to benefit teachers, students, policymakers, curriculum designers and researchers for making choices of a literary text to generate decolonial discourse in the classrooms.

Research Question

Do the English teachers in teaching the prescribed texts, create new meanings that challenge the colonial discourse and suggest local alternatives to counter western cultural supremacy or mere reaffirm the Eurocentric view?

LITERATURE REVIEW

To inculcate the consciousness of our culture and geopolitical history, through syllabi and pedagogies, we must generate a counter and native discourse to contribute to “new ways of being and knowing” . Ngugi Wa Thiong’o criticized the historic continuousness of a single Western culture and advocated for the centrality of native literature and cross-cultural comparisons. By not including Pakistani literature, a critical and cognizant analysis of local ‘culture is repressed while European culture is learned as universal knowledge’ . Adeji stresses the need to challenge the colonial logic through education, pedagogy and curriculum. His own experience of Western education had removed him “psychologically and cognitively from the native culture and this omission led to the loss of [his] identity, pride, and the heritage”. The teaching of English literature in Pakistan could not achieve its objective because of many reasons. One major reason is the assumption “that anyone who speaks English fluently can also teach it”.

In interviews with the English teachers of O-level schools, the researcher found that 3 out of 4 teachers were not from the relevant background. Secondly, “The teachers of English concentrate more on translation and grammatical aspects of language” than on the process of meanings generation. Thirdly, Pakistani classrooms are mostly teacher-centered where students rely more on the validation of the teacher hence the teacher’s knowledge is never challenged. The Aga Khan University, Institute for Educational Development (AKU-IED) gathered the data of English teachers in Karachi and stated that “20% are to some extent qualified to teach English ... The rest of the 80% do not have the qualifications to teach English. Hence, 59% of teachers with Master's degrees in disciplines other than English. Only 11% of teachers have a Master's degree in English who are teaching English”. In the same study, it was revealed that on 35% of teachers the decision was imposed to teach English while 20% due to their interest and expertise chose to teach English.

Review of the Selected European Novels

The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde by Robert Louis Stevenson was published in 1886 with themes of economizing of empire, the growth of urban slums, the rise of criminal classes and the propagation of deviant sexualities . From *The Monk (1796)* by Matthew Lewis to *Dracula (1897)* by Bram Stoker, a character having two identities reports “the fear and anxiety of the British people in the nineteenth century when changes were brought by industrialism and London was split into the West End and the East End”. In the novel, Dr. Lanyon resides at Cavendish Square, which was “London’s premier address for private doctors” . Jekyll’s house is also described as a

place of comfort and luxury. By 1980, many educated Londoners would go to East End for philanthropy, at the same time the East End was viewed as “the site of personal liberation, an escape from upper-class, Victorian morals into a world they saw as exotic, primitive, and free of moral restraint”. Mr. Hyde lives in Soho, in the East End, which was famous for “its music halls, small theatres, and prostitutes”. Utterson describes the East London as, “The dismal quarters... with its muddy ways, and slatternly passengers, and its lamps”. In the novel, Jekyll and Hyde represent two layouts of Victorian England: The West End and the East End. Dr. Jekyll represents the Victorian genteel values while all the ugliness which is associated with Mr. Hyde is reflected through the East End of England, which must be kept hidden.

Robinson Crusoe by Daniel Defoe published in 1719, reveals colonialism “where issues such as race, power identity formation are presented from a colonial perspective”. Defoe has created an archetypal colonial protagonist who lays the foundation for a European civilization by establishing his colony. Crusoe as a savior saves Friday from cannibals, Christianize him and teaches him English with the first word ‘Master’. Friday represents “productive, normative code, and an unpaid labor. Being a calculative man Crusoe accepts Friday not as a companion but as a servant and establishes his superiority”. In Brazil he sets up a plantation with black slaves to work on them. Crusoe announces his desires to charity one-third of his wealth to St. Augustine so it could be spent on the welfare and conversion of his poor Indian subjects to Christianity. The colonial subjects are “not trusted in their thinking, are doubted in their rationality”. “Hence, economic power can change one’s culture faith, even their identity”.

Defoe was a true colonizer and had written accounts of profitable colonial enterprise like *An Historical Account of the Voyages and Adventures of Sir Walter Raleigh* (1719), *A Plan of the English Commerce* (1728) and *A New Voyage Round the World* (1725). Defoe always considered colonization a lucrative business, identified future sites for new English settlements, and approved slavery and bond servitude for successful colonization. *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens, published in 1859, shows a comparison between 1775’s pre-revolutionary France and England. In the novel, the writer draws attention to social and political issues of England using the French revolution as a vantage point. To elucidate, Lucie Manette meets Dr. Manette, her father, after 18 years of his captivity in Bastille, Paris and informs him that they “will go to England to be at peace and rest” as France becomes more volatile as the story unfolds. The Bastille prison is stormed by the mob who later slay the governor “with a rain of stabs and blows ... and Madame Defarge beheads him ... with her cruel knife”, the violence that the fuming crowd commits is one of the memorable scenes in the novel.

A Tale of Two Cities has an obvious overtone of English hegemony in “Dickens’s Little Englandism ... on which Victorian Britain complacently prided itself”. *A Tale of Two Cities* oscillates between London and Paris in a “dialectical fashion, comparing and critiquing each with and against the other”. One reason that the French never appreciated the novel, according to Colin Jones is “French have found it difficult to know what to do with a novel whose ideological pay-load seemed not to fit into views of the Revolution held on either the Right or the Left”. Jones believes that the French considered this work of Dickens as an onslaught on French Republicanism and Revolution as the projection of the “Revolution and the Reign of Terror in 1793-4 is highly negative”. It clearly shows how a nation should reflect on literature when it comes to ideologies, a question that we should also consider when selecting literary texts for our students. For the English reader, these novels can be learning of the geographical, cultural and sociopolitical history of the European

world, but for Pakistani students, such literature in isolation will only help sustain the cultural, socio-political and geographical nuances of western identity. This connection between literature and knowledge of one's culture and history should be discussed by the teachers.

METHODOLOGY

The study is qualitative and aims to analyze the pedagogical practices employed in teaching *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson, *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe and *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens in the 4 selected schools in Karachi: DA O Level School, LB O-Level Branch, TC School, and AH O-Level Campus (for boys). The research engages in an interpretive analysis of pedagogies, classroom discourse and the implication of teaching Eurocentric texts.

Research Design

The study employs a two-fold approach:

- Review of the selected European texts is conducted to highlight the themes of English nationalism, imperialism, and colonial ideologies.
- Classroom observations are conducted to collect data, focusing on analyzing pedagogies and the process of meaning-making.

For observations, permission had already been taken from the schools' authorities and class timetables were followed to avoid class disruptions. To protect the identity of the teachers and schools, only initials are used. Two instruments were used for data collection: pre-observation form (Appendix 1) for the demographic information and information regarding the lesson, strategies and expected learning outcomes. Classroom observations form entails questions to guide the researcher in notetaking of the pedagogies. Every class was observed thrice and each lesson lasted from 45- 55 minutes, a total of 12 lessons were observed involving eleven hours of observation. The observational notes were later put together and thoroughly analyzed to identify themes. The themes were later coded and labeled to reveal the aspects of meaning creation such as "socio- historical context", "relevance to local context" "critical thinking questions", "WH Questions (why, where, what, who, which, when)" and "vocabulary building". The reflective notes were later reviewed to identify the meanings and themes that were discussed in the classes against the themes which are identified in the literature review.

Theoretical Framework

The analysis of the class observation is done through the praxis of decoloniality, which is developed by Walter. D. Mignolo's theory of decoloniality (2000, 2007, 2021; Mignolo and Walsh 2018). Decoloniality is about relationality, including other concepts to create "pluriversal and interspersal paths to advance the undoing of Eurocentrism's totalizing claim and frame". On the universality of European systems, including education design, he asserts that the global designs were once local Western histories, later "implemented, exported, and enacted differently in particular places" and made global, which resulted in the eradication of local systems. According to Mignolo, (2000, p. xxi), to achieve decolonization an independent state must delink itself from

the colonial mindset. “Epistemic delinking doesn’t mean ignoring Western epistemology, rather it recognizes that, for better or worse, Western epistemic hegemony has created more problems than solutions”. The delinking from European knowledge is only possible by inclusion of local narratives and epistemologies.

Sample Size

The researcher selected 4 O- level schools in Karachi, wherein, 3 of them are located in DHA and Clifton while one is on main Shahra e Faisal. Purposive sampling has been done and these Cambridge schools were chosen because of their good reputation, their vast infrastructure and well-trained teaching staff. The detail is given in table 1:

Table 1
Demographics

No	School's Name	No of Observations	Teacher's Name	Qualification	English Literature Background	Teaching Experience	No of Students in Grade 8	Novel
1	DA-O-Level Branch	03	Ms. BK	MA-English (Lit)-Karachi University	Yes	Fresh Induction	22	<i>Dr. Jekyll and Hyde</i>
2	LB School O-Level	03	Ms. BS	BBA Szabist	No	4 years	25	<i>Robinson Crusoe</i>
3	TC School	03	Ms. SS	BBA (Iqra)	No	8 years	30	<i>A Tale of Two Cities</i>
4	AH O Level Campus	03	Mr. AW	BS- Biotechnology	No	2 years	19	<i>A Tale of Two Cities</i>

Discussion

Analysis of the classroom pedagogies for *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

The discussed chapters during the observations were Story of the Door, The Carew Murder Case, and Incident of the Letter from *The Strange case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. The themes of the chapters were physical spaces, identity and moral oppression, which were not discussed. Similarly, the teacher asked questions to check students’ knowledge of the story “Where does Mr. Hyde live?”, “what did it tell you about Mr. Hyde’s taste and hobbies?” (Teacher BK) as shown in table 2. The teacher should have asked questions to develop ‘relationality’ with our own culture, like “Do you see any relevance of class division in the Victorian England and Pakistani society”? or to develop decolonial thinking, like “Why East/ one side of England is representative of all crimes or sinister in its outlook”? or to introduce inclusivity, like “Why do you think understanding Victorian landscape and architecture is important than any other landscape”? The teacher stressed a lot on building new vocabulary and better writing skills than to develop critical thinking, and decolonial discourse, as shown in the table 2.

Table 2
Examples of Questions and Comments by the Teacher in English class room in DA School

No	Comments/Questions	Nature and purpose
1	Soho is in East, a downtrodden part of England while Cavendish Square and Dr. Jekyll residence are in West of England.	She couldn't challenge the meaning of East as something sinister in such stories, or why Mr. Hyde cannot live in West London? Could have easily connected with the Pakistani socio-economic landscape but she did not.
2	Where did you see Mr. Hyde and Dr. Jekyll meeting each other?	WH- questions: The question was to check students' comprehension of the text, not to develop any critical thinking.
3	What happens when we are unable to control our emotions?	A general question where she got different responses.
4	What are the adjectives used to describe Mr. Hyde?	To develop the descriptive writing skill in students
5	What are the meanings of these words?	To build vocabulary

The teaching of the geography of London city in comparison with the local landscape through local literature will be a step towards “pluriversal and interspersal paths” (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). Teaching Western literature in isolation will resultantly develop a ‘contrast between the type of culture and society the writer represents and the type of culture and society represented by pupil. The universality of English Victorian system should have been questioned by the teacher because these “global designs” were “implemented, exported, and enacted” in colonial spaces. After the observation, upon probing why deeper meanings were not discussed, the teacher said, ‘The text must be completed before the midterm’. The weekly schedule of two literature and three grammar classes reflect institutional constraints on teachers as well. The teacher had done her Masters in English Literature for University of Karachi. The cluster head of the school explained that when an attempt was made to include some Pakistani texts, even parents complained and showed their displeasure.

Analysis of the Pedagogies in Classrooms for Teaching *Robinson Crusoe*

In 8th Grade of LB school, the observational data shows that the text of *Robinson Crusoe* could have been easily connected with the history of African slavery or colonialism of the subcontinent by probing questions like, “why did Crusoe subjugate the land and natives of the island and Brazil?” or “Why slave trade was acceptable and why slavery of Friday is glorified?” The WH questions were mostly asked by the teacher and focus was on the phrases, events and descriptions to develop better descriptive writing skills as shown in table 3. During the observations, chapters (3, 5, 9) were discussed. The third chapter was about Crusoe’s plantation experience in Brazil. The teacher explained ‘plantation’ for example, “Europeans owned lands where the natives used to work and make their livings” (Teacher, BS). The teacher did not discuss the ills of slave trades particularly black slaves and how Europeans exploited the human resources of their colonies. Crusoe was presented as a survivor, who used the natural and human resources, accumulated hordes of riches and went back to his land as shown in the table 3.

When the institution internalizes the Western superiority, it signals what Mignolo calls, ‘coloniality of being’. In chapter five, Crusoe’s use of the personal pronoun regarding his abode, as “my castle, my kingdom, my flock, my reign” reflects his Europeans capitalistic mindset, where he dreams to change the entire valley into a lucrative plantation, but the teacher rather concluded it as ‘the vision of the protagonist’.

Table 3

Examples of questions and comments by the teacher in English class room in LB school:

No	Comments/Questions	Nature and purpose
1	What is important to start a new habitation? How did Crusoe do that?	Comment on how a civilization develops, but the teacher didn't mention the political reasons and couldn't connect it to the colonial past. She couldn't create the colonial discourse of occupation of the natives' lands. Rather Robinson Crusoe is projected a founder of a civilization.
2	Why did Robinson Crusoe sell his boy Xury?	WH- question to check students' comprehension, not to challenge the immorality of colonial enterprise like, is it morally correct to sell a human being for money who had helped him in securing his freedom? Could such a man be a hero?
3	What would you do if you are stranded on an island?	A general question where she got different responses but couldn't sum it up neatly and left it without even relating it to the history of voyages which planted the idea of control and power on distant land to generate wealth.
4	Which features of his character, in this chapter, show that he is resilient?	To develop descriptive writing skills in students. Also, he is presented as a hero.
5	What are meanings of the given words?	To build vocabulary

The pedagogical practices reveal that rather than delinking, the institutions help sustaining the European narrative, "Actors, categories of thought, and institutions go hand in hand with the formation of subjectivities". The students' knowledge of world history could have been used to develop new meanings to challenge the European/colonial discourse. The inference could be drawn that the education system and pedagogies do not include local narratives, and the epistemic borders maintain the hegemony of English literature and English ideologies. The institutions and society as parents have given the consent for this ideology to be sustained by disqualifying non-European literature and its wisdom. Similarly, the teacher made no attempt either to problematize the colonial assumption of capitalization or to relate it to history of the subcontinent's exploitation of resources which Mignolo refers as 'an epistemic erasure of local historical traditions. The teacher was BBA graduate of Szabist and had to resort to English teaching due to a good grip over English language.

Analysis of the pedagogies in classrooms for teaching *A Tale of Two Cities*

A Tale of Two Cities was being taught in 8th Grade of TC school and AH School.

Observational Analysis of the teaching in Grade 8 at TC School

In all the 3 observed classes, the teacher started with a recap and developed the understanding by asking question about French/ English characters, time and setting, like "What was the time and setting of the novel?" (Teacher SS). The teacher talked about the history of French Revolution, but she did not comment on Why England is compared with France and why England is projected as a safe heaven. Mignolo (2000) asserts the same point that Western knowledge declared itself global by concealing its local Western genealogy. Dickens projects England and France as civilized twins, undergoing crisis but destined to succeed. The teachers could have included the local histories of resistance, like the Mutiny of 1857 could have been used to develop relationality. Furthermore, the indifference of the French aristocracy was discussed in isolation, the teacher could have connected it with the social protest in Pakistan like Huqooq-e-Sindh March (February–March 2022) etc. The WH questions were most of the time asked and the objective of every class was to develop vocabulary and better descriptive writing skills than to generate new meanings or to develop any relevance with the local context as shown in table 4. Though at one point the teacher elaborated the concept of a spy with the example of the Indian spy, Kulbhushan Sudhir Jadhav,

who was arrested in Balochistan. The students asked questions about Tellson Bank, its Door and seemed very interested in the geography of England and its historicity.

Table 4

Examples of questions and comments by the teacher in English class room in TC school:

No	Comments/Questions	Nature and purpose
1	What is the time in which the story is set?	The purpose was to check the memory of students.
2	Why did Ms. Lucie faint at the news of her father being alive?	WH question was to check students' comprehension of the character, not to develop any critical thinking like, how does the character of Miss Lucie stand in contrast to Madam Defarge?
3	How the judicial system is different in Pakistan? Do we have Jewry here in courts?	A general question where she got different responses. At the end she explained how a Jewry works. The teacher did not comment on the criticism that Dickens made on the harsh English judicial system of Old Baily.
4	How does Dickens describe the city of Saint Antoine?	To develop descriptive writing skills in students. The teacher did discuss the causes of revolution as well.
5	What is the English and German word for a person who enjoys seeing other in pain?	To build vocabulary and to learn words from other languages.

During the three observations, chapter 3-6 were discussed. One example of shallow meaning creation is the development of Jarvis Lorry's character who diligently works for Tellson Bank and helps to bring back Dr. Manatte. The teacher didn't touch upon the expression used by Dickens to highlight the malice of capitalism which turns human beings into machines, when he describes Jarvis Lorry in Ch. 4, "I have been, trustee of one kind ... there is no friendship ... nothing like sentiment, I have no feelings; I am a mere machine". Then he says, "I hold with my fellow creature mere business relations ... Feelings, I have no time for them" . Mignolo (2011) claims that the idea of modernity is inseparable from capitalism and coloniality. The machine-man logic that Dickens finds disturbing must have been discussed by the teacher as this logic was later exported and imposed to the rest of the world as the ideal modern being. The teacher should have included local experiences for relationality and inclusivity, for examples the ills of being a corporate slave in a Pakistani bank could be discussed. Mignolo explicates that such examples regarding the creation and transference of concepts, confront us with a few decisions. "If we follow that route, we will have to use the experience of Europeans and from there we will conceptualize and understand the experience and life" (87) of someone living in Pakistan, 4,000 miles away from Europe.

Similarly, in Ch.5, the concept of a Jewry was explained in detail as mentioned in table 4, but a comparative discussion with Pakistan's current judicial and political systems could have provided students with a locally grounded lens to understand the historical and ideological distinctions between Western and postcolonial governance structures. Decolonial scholar's intent to expose these pattern and advocate for alternative/ local perspective and epistemic interventions to dismantle the colonial matrix of knowledge . The colonial difference is precisely the space where local histories and epistemologies are renounced in favor of Western ones.

The researcher asked for the rational of using the Victorian text to which the teacher, who was the part of text selection committee, asserted that it is important for them to appreciate Classics and understand how a character is characterized and the theme is conveyed. The teacher had done her BBA from Iqra University and because of good language performance, she has been teaching English language and literature for the last 5 years. The inference could be drawn that the teacher did not promote inclusion from other histories like Iranian/ Russian Revolutions to widen the process of meaning construction. To challenge the Western hegemonic structure, teachers will

have to detach themselves from the “imperial knowledge to engage in an epistemic reconstitution...through other cosmologies, other grammars, and other narratives”.

Observational Analysis of the teaching in Grade 8 at AH School

Chapters 1, 3 & 4 were discussed during the observations from Book II. The teacher started one class with a recap while in other 2 observed classes an engaging activity to reiterate the main points of the plot. The teacher afterwards asked all WH question about those scenes like, “Who is sitting in the brougham/horse cart?” and “Why Cruncher hands were rusty?” (Teacher AW) to which students answered well as shown in table 5. The teacher did mention the famous line, “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times”, but did not probe, ‘Whose times’ are being described here, and whose are erased? This reinforces Mignolo’s critique of Western universality, the notion that history begins in Europe, while “knowledge is always geo- and body-politically located” and cannot be project as universal. The teacher highlighted some selected passages about the characters and setting and explained Tellson Bank from Book II, “TELLSON'S Bank by Temple Bar was an old-fashioned place, ... It was very small, very dark, very ugly, very incommodious ... the partners in the House were proud of its smallness, proud of its darkness, proud of its ugliness, proud of its incommodiousness”.

The teacher asked “How does Tellson exemplifies English contentment?” (Teacher AW) only student answered that “People were happy with the sad state of the bank”. The teacher could have built upon the criticism that Dicken was making on the reductionist nature of capitalism but surprisingly the teacher did not touch this aspect. Though Dickens was comparing the bank to a death cell when he says “Your money came out of, or went into, wormy old wooden drawers” and “Your banknotes had a musty odour, as if they were fast decomposing” . The WH questions were most of the time asked to check students’ comprehension of the text, not to develop critical thinking to comment on the flaws of a capitalist society, as explained in table 5. During the class discussions, the teacher discussed the bloodshed in Paris, he could have included the local examples of 1857 Mutiny or the bloodshed during the partition in 1947 to develop relationality and comparison with our own history but he did not. Mignolo stresses over the need to compare their perspectives “with our own, . . . to recuperate elements of the memory of resistance ... to reconstruct a new memory” .

Table 5
Examples of questions and comments by the teacher in English class room in AH school:

No	Comments/Questions	Nature and purpose
1	When do these chapters take place?	The purpose was to check the memory of students.
2	What behavior of Mrs. Cruncher makes Mr. Cruncher angry?	The question was to check students’ comprehension of the characters and theme?
3	What is the “Old Bailey” and for what is it famous?	The teacher did not comment on the criticism that Dicken made on the harsh English judicial system of Old Baily.
4	Describe Tellson's Bank, using at least one quotation for support. What literary device is Dickens using here? Why is he describing it this way?	To develop descriptive writing skills in students as well but no comment made on the capitalistic nature of banking system.
5	The teacher shared a list of words with students and asked them to find out the meanings.	To build vocabulary and to learn words from other languages.

The teacher had done his Bachelors in Biotechnology and because of good salary package and his immaculate language skills, he had been teaching English language and literature for the last 2 years. Without a sound background knowledge of literature and literary theories it is not possible

to understand the underpinning of a text and ultimately generating new meanings would become impossible. To decolonize knowledge, the teachers should try to open up possibility “of re-knowing the multiple knowledges, thoughts, experiences, existences” to produce knowledge that has been marginalized by the colonial education system. On the other hand, in Pakistani classrooms, the teaching of Dickens’ novel makes the French Revolution appear more relevant than the Partition of India. Students learn to empathize with French revolutionaries, but never question the absence of subcontinental equivalents.

CONCLUSION

Common findings of the observational analysis:

1. The teachers do not promote critical thinking and not use literary theories to deconstruct or challenge the colonial discourse. As a result, no new meaning construction is taking place and European narratives are sustained.
2. One reason for teachers’ lack of decolonial insight is their non-literary backgrounds, with only 1 out of 4 having studied literature.
3. European texts develop concurrence with foreign sociopolitical history, geography and cultures, creating dissonance with local identity.
4. The texts are taught in isolation and no attempts are made to develop relationality with its Pakistani readers through pedagogies or curricula.
5. Students are not equipped with critical thinking skills to generate a counter discourse to challenge the hegemonic Western notions.
6. English literature is taught to develop vocabulary and writing skills by probing the WH questions.
7. The pertinent political, social and historical context of the texts are not included like history of colonialism in *Robinson Crusoe*.

Decolonization is only possible when the local experiences that “have been denied the possibility of participating in the production, distribution, and organization of knowledge” are included. Hence, Pakistani literature along with the European texts must be taught to develop critical thinking, decolonial discourse and appreciation of different cultural values.

Recommendations

To respond to decoloniality, the teachers must encourage students to look at other WH questions: ‘Who is telling the story, whose perspective is valued, and who is excluded or how one is marginalized in the narrative?’ . This can be only done when firstly, the local knowledge and experiences are included and secondly, teachers’ training should be a part of institutional practices. There are many works by Pakistani writers which are considered classics like: Abridged version of Ahmed Ali’s, *Twilight in Delhi* (1940), *Crow Eaters* (1978) by Bapsi Sidhwa and short stories by Intizaar Hussain. Similarly, we have contemporary works by Pakistani writers Amar Jalil, Mirza Khalij Baig, Kamila Shamsi, Mohsin Hamid, Daniyal Mueenuddin and many others whose works could be included in the curricula to get students align with our historical and cultural landscape. With inclusion of local narratives “many worlds will co-exist, by social actors aiming at de-colonization of knowledge and being and of de-linking from the imperial modernity, the splendors of human imagination and creativity will open up”. African and Indian texts are also

recommended because of the similar colonial, cultural and political historical past. Such similarities in literature will eventually make our students to generate a counter discourse to the colonial narrative, which is very crucial to decolonize minds.

Competing Interests

The authors declared no known competing interests.

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