

**Environmental Discourse in EFL Textbooks in Egypt: A
Critical Ecolinguistics Case Study**

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EFL curricula and teachers play a significant role in motivating ecological citizenship and helping students become critical ecological thinkers. This study applies critical Ecolinguistics as the theoretical background for its qualitative case study in order to identify the ecosophy guiding the design of the written discourse of lessons addressing environmental issues in a sample of EFL textbooks mandated by the Ministry of Education in Egypt. Analysis focuses on the linguistic features of the environmental discourse as well as nature related values, types of reasoning and forms of participation promoted in the texts. Findings reveal a propagation of shallow conservationism-environmentalism discourse and anthropocentric reasoning reflective of the consumerist age guiding the ecosophy of the texts. The results contribute to a proposal of suggestions addressed to educators in general, and EFL teachers and curriculum designers in Egypt in particular, as well as recommendations for future research.

Keywords: critical ecolinguistics, environmental discourse, EFL textbooks

الخطاب البيئي في كتب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في مصر: دراسة حالة نقدية لعلم اللغة البيئي

تلعب مناهج ومعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية دورًا مهمًا في تحفيز المواطنة البيئية عند الطلاب ومساعدتهم على أن يصبحوا مفكرين ناقدين في مجال علم البيئة. تطبق هذه الدراسة علم اللغة البيئي الناقد كخلفية نظرية لدراسة نماذج من الدروس التي تتناول القضايا البيئية في عينة من كتب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية والتي قررتها وزارة التربية والتعليم في مصر من أجل تحديد الفلسفة التي توجه تصميم الخطاب البيئي. يركز التحليل على استكشاف السمات اللغوية للخطاب البيئي وكذلك القيم المتعلقة بالطبيعة وأنواع التفكير وأشكال المشاركة التي يتم الترويج لها في النصوص محل الدراسة. تكشف النتائج عن انتشار خطاب ضحل للمحافظة على البيئة وسمات التفكير المتمركز حول مصلحة النوع البشري مما يعكس العصر الاستهلاكي والذات يوجهان محتوى النصوص. تساهم النتائج في وضع اقتراحات موجهة إلى المعلمين بشكل عام، ومعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ومصممي المناهج الدراسية في مصر على وجه الخصوص، بالإضافة إلى توصيات للبحوث المستقبلية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: علم اللغة البيئي النقدي، الخطاب البيئي، كتب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية

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1. Introduction

Nature exerts a “psychological pull” on humans creating an innate tendency to affiliate with it (Verbeek & de Waal, 2002 in Kahn & Kellert, 2002, p.20). However, this “genetic bond” weakens over time as a result of the dominance of the anthropocentric reasoning. The epoch after World War II is marked by the ascendance of anthropocentric reasoning over biocentric reasoning. In contrast to the latter, anthropocentric reasoning legalizes human superiority by prioritizing human interests and addressing non-human objects only in relation to their usefulness to human beings. The Anthropocene regards humans “as a distinct and independent part of the animal kingdom and of all nature” (Martinelli, 2008 p. 82). Therefore, the need to emphasize the integrity of the constituents of life ecosystems in these modern times becomes inevitable.

In light of the above, the UNESCO plan for Global Citizenship Education (GCE) voiced the need for the “addition of learning” as well as “a broader role for educators” in strengthening this bond to combat the prevailing anthropocentric reasoning and values of nature (Jacobs, Jiexin, & Michael, 2016, p.7). It also called for enabling the learners to acquire the skills needed to actively contribute to creating “more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure and sustainable societies” (UNESCO, n.d.). In response to UNESCO’s call, two strategies for approaching environmental issues in education emerged: environmental education (EE) and education for sustainability (ES).

EE encompasses non-traditional “moral and ethical dimensions” through instilling a sense of moral obligation towards humans and non-humans and towards future generations (Xiong, 2014). It adopts an information-based strategy in order to change attitudes and behaviors making ‘knowledge’ and ‘informedness’ the “proxies for measuring the effect of an EE program” (McGuire, 2015, p.696). Therefore, EE transcends the traditional concept of “citizenship in formal education” by

motivating ecological citizenship (Porto, 2016, p.395). However, EE was reported to be “unreliably predictive” of pro-environmental behavior (Carmi, Arnon & Orion, 2015).

Meanwhile, ES prioritizes local environmental issues while acknowledging their international and global effects. It enhances awareness of the wholeness of the earth’s ecosystems by fostering a “sense of agency and civic responsibility” to encourage the learners to make “deliberate and informed choices and advocate for sustainable solutions” (McNenny, 2018, p. 2).

Ecology is the discipline that investigates the nexus between humans and other living species in the physical environment as well as the ways to preserve life ecosystems (Alexander & Stibbe, 2014). The connection between language and ecology was first introduced by the American linguist, Einar Haugen, who coined the term “language ecology” for studying the “interactions between any given language and its environment” (Haugen, 1972, p. 323). Of the different approaches to language ecology, one strand explores how languages affect and are affected by the social, cultural, and natural environments, and investigates how some languages become extinct, eroded, or dominant (Chen, 2016).

Another strand, which emerged in 1990, was a response to Halliday’s influential speech at the Association Internationale de Linguistique Applique (AILA). This speech directed ecolinguistics to adopt a critical approach to discourses which reflect “a syndrome of grammatical features which conspire ... to construe reality in a certain way; and it is a way that is no longer good for our health as a species” (Halliday, 2001, cited in Stibbe, 2015, p.184). According to this strand, “ecolinguistics is concerned with texts that influence people to protect or destroy the environment rather than a narrow focus on texts about the environment” (Stibbe, 2020, p.3). It explores the nature of this effect as either forming, maintaining or destroying the bond that unites the inhabitants of the earth’s ecological systems (Chen, 2016; Alexander & Stibbe, 2014). The present study adopts this strand in its investigation of the “stories” that shape the minds of the EFL students towards the earth’s ecosystem whereby “stories” are the “cognitive structures in the minds of individuals which influence how they think, talk and act” (Stibbe, 2020, p.1).

As the world is facing the consequences of severe environmental destruction (Stibbe, 2015), there are concerns that environmental education is becoming overly theoretical and dissociated from the real-life interests of the students (Freire, 1996). Children experience nature either directly through spontaneous play in the natural habitat of animals independent of human control, or indirectly through “actual physical

contact but in far more restricted, programmed, and managed contexts” as in zoos, or symbolically through the “innovative communication technologies” such as TV, video games or magazines (Kellert in Kahn & Kellert, 2002, p.119).

This study is motivated by the GCE assertion that classes and material for teaching English as a foreign language are “ideal... to foster the development of global citizenship, due to their cross-cultural nature” (Díaz, 2017, p.160). Language teaching can help the learners “become informed about as many issues as possible that intrinsically affect their lives” because its content can address a wide range of topics (Brown,1991, p.4). It is also motivated by the “call to TESOL community to respond to the growing climatic and ecological crisis” (Goulah, 2017).

Accordingly, this study agrees with Haig (2000) that the aims of an EFL program need to extend beyond the acquisition of the four language skills to the enhancement of critical thinking skills in order to enable the learners to challenge the propositional and ideological content of a text. Moreover, addressing environmental issues in language teaching textbooks is reported to not only correspond to the communicative and thematic approaches to content design, but to also cater to the students’ learning preferences (Jacobs & Goatly, 2000).

Moving from the world to Egypt, I found that research in Egypt on the promoted environmental ideologies in EFL textbooks and on the nature of the ecosophy that guides the design of these textbooks is scant. The rarity of research on these issues is unacceptable for two reasons: first, Cairo is reported to come 34th among 150 most polluted cities in the world according to a study by Ecoexperts which analyzed data from the World Health Organization (WHO) on air, light and noise pollution (Jackman, 2021); second, a review of the history of English language in Egypt revealed that English is the mandatory first foreign language in public schools. It attained this position with the start of the open-door economic policy and the signing of The Camp David Accords in the late 1970s (Schaub, 2000).

However, the significance of this study extends beyond addressing the gap in research in the Egyptian context to appealing to “global readership” because it addresses the international trend to “greening the educational curricula” in EFL/ESL textbooks. This trend is part of a “new and underexplored area” of research (Zahoor & Janjua, 2020).

The ecosophy of the study springs from two ecological frameworks that attempt to counter the anthropocentric view of nature which considers nature only with respect to its effects on human physical and personal welfare. The first framework by Alexander and Stibbe (2013)

proposes that discourse must not be limited to merely valuing human wellbeing but must extend to valuing the lives and the wellbeing of all species as well. The second framework by Goulah (2017) is based on a cultural-educational perspective which considers the ultimate aim of education to be the creation of eco-ethical consciousness through value creation. According to this framework, the attainment of this aim requires the promotion and integration of the values of goodness, beauty, individual gain and social moral good in education. Finally, I would like to point out that this study uses the terms “environment” and “nature” interchangeably.

1. Literature Review

Zahoor and Janjua (2020) emphasized the limited number of published ecolinguistic studies of EFL/ESL material. The articles reviewed below specifically investigate the discursal representations of nature in English language teaching (ELT) textbooks in relation to the percentage of activities involving elements of nature, the linguistic features of the discourse, the promoted forms of students’ participation and types of reasoning.

Jacobs and Goatly (2000) explored the promoted types of students’ participation in environment related activities in the discourse of a random sample of 120 ELT books from the South East Asian Ministries of Education Organization. The percentage of topics on nature was found to constitute only 2% in low-proficiency level books. This low percentage was attributed to the assumption that “students lack the language tools needed to interact on this topic” (Jacobs & Goatly, 2000, p.261). Two types of participation in nature-related issues are: first, potential participation where students observe nature or engage in related language activities; and, second, active participation where students either carry or are required to carry out tangible real-life actions. However, active participation was the least promoted bin the discourse of the sample. This was attributed to the material developers’ assumption that it “is beyond their mandate to tell students what to do in matters beyond language learning” (Jacobs & Goatly, 2000, p.262).

Stibbe (2004) concluded from a CDA of Japanese EFL books that most textbooks address environmental issues with an anthropocentric view focusing mainly on the “immediate physical symptoms” of these issues as relevant to humans’ interests while ignoring the stimulation of in-depth understanding of “underlying cultural, political, and ideological matters”.

The study by Xiong (2014) aimed at identifying the form of participation mostly promoted by the discourse of a sample of 28 bestselling ELT textbooks in China as an indicator of the ideological orientation of these textbooks. Analysis showed that nature topics constituted only 4% of the 188 units in the sample. The form of participation most promoted was potential action while activities that encourage positive and real participation were rare. The eco-critical discourse analysis highlighted discursual features of shallow environmentalism, which included the use of passive voice and nominalization to obscure human agency in environmental deterioration, as well as the use of lexical choices that trivialize the problem. Moreover, it was reported that proposal and application of solutions to environmental problems were within the realm of government responsibilities. This revealed a linear technocentric approach with an authoritarian and state-controlled ideology blurring the responsibility of the individual and creating mentalities that are reluctant to think critically.

Jacobs et al (2016) investigated the percentage of activities involving animals in 22 English as additional language (EAL) textbooks in Singapore. This study showed that such activities constituted only 7.94% of the total activities.

In Egypt, Faragallah (2016) assessed environmental education in the Egyptian formal education by investigating the extent of the students' knowledge and awareness of environmental issues as well as the effectiveness of the environmental policies in enhancing this environmental awareness. The results of the interviews conducted with a sample of public-school students indicated a poor level of environmental knowledge by the majority of the participants as well as a disregard of environmental education in public policies.

The present study therefore aims to explore whether the representations of the environment in EFL textbooks mandated by the Egyptian MOE are helpful towards increasing ecological awareness and creating eco-ethical consciousness in Egyptian students. The overarching goal of this study is to identify the ecosophy of the texts that address environmental issues and their follow up activities in the EFL textbooks. Here, I would argue that this ecosophy can be identified by observing the extent that the Anthropocene and the Biocene ideologies prevail in the environmental discourse of the texts.

Investigation aims at answering the following research questions:

1. What are the linguistic features of the environmental discourse of the sample?

2. What are the types of reasoning, the channels via which children build harmonious relationships with nature, the values of nature and forms of students' participation that are promoted in the texts?
3. What is the prevailing type of discourse from among the four types of environmental discourse identified by Stibbe (2014)?

1. Methodology

3.1 Theoretical Background:

From an ecological perspective, consumerism, as it is promoted by global capitalism, brings destructive actions to the earth's ecosystems by encouraging ecologically destructive discourses. The capitalist discourses exhaust the earth's natural resources by establishing material comfort and possessions as the core meaning of attaining "a good life". Capitalism, by encouraging the urgent consumer demands, threatens the earth's ecology and the "well-being and survival" of all living creatures through the dissemination of anthropocentric values of nature (Stibbe, 2014). Therefore, this study employs a critical ecolinguistics (CE) approach to the analysis of written discourses, excluding the accompanying images, of lessons addressing ecological issues in EFL textbooks in Egypt.

CE pursues three aims: to investigate "the features of language that normalize and reproduce dominant, often unsustainable, conceptualizations of the relationships between humans and their environments" (Poole, 2016, p. 577); to identify the anthropocentric ecologically destructive stories that we live by and which shape our understanding of life and impact our attitudes towards nature; and to suggest ways to resist the destructive anti-ecological language that promotes the anthropocentric exploitation of the environment.

3.2 Analytical Models:

The present study applies Stibbe's (2014) model of cognitive linguistic tools, his classification of the types of ecological discourse as well as Kahn and Kellert (2002) categorization of the anthropocentric representation or values of nature in capitalist discourse and the promoted forms of participation.

First, Stibbe's (2014) model is employed in the study for the analysis of written discourse to identify the use of the following cognitive linguistic tools:

- a. Frames: which are triggered in our minds by certain words.
- b. Metaphors: as the tools of framing that use the source as an imaginable experience from real life to frame the target.
- c. Evaluation: is the language evaluating objects implicitly or explicitly as either positive or negative.

- d. Identity: is established in the use of language features such as pronoun usage to indicate in or out Group affiliation.
- e. Facticity: is established by using language patterns to create a conviction of either truth or falsity.
- f. Erasure: is utilized by the powerful to enforce their ideology of dominance while denying agency to natural elements.
- g. Salience: is the foregrounding of certain issues.

Based on the results of this model the analyzed discourse can be classified as reflecting any of these types of environmental discourses (Stibbe, 2014):

- a. The destructive, which reflect consumerism as the core feature of the Anthropocene and foreground the interests of humans over those of other living creatures; thus, these discourses endanger the wellbeing of all living organisms.
- b. The ambivalent, which “at first sight appear to be constructive” and are used by the environmentalists (Stibbe, 2014, p. 123).
- c. The beneficial, which “convey ideologies which can actively encourage people to protect the systems that support life” (Stibbe, 2014, p.30).
- d. The shallow conservationism-environmentalism, which is in line with the attitudes that attribute supremacy to humankind.

As stated earlier, CE can also help identify the anthropocentric values of nature as well as the types of reasoning most promoted in the texts. The anthropocentric values of nature are: the aesthetic value, which sees nature as a source of beauty; the dominionistic endows humans with feelings of success and self-achievement in facing the challenges of nature; the humanistic, which values nature as an opportunity for humans to connect with their humanity through connecting with it; the moralistic where nature is regarded as a room for humans to reflect on moral and spiritual matters; the recreational where nature is considered a site for leisure activities, the negativistic, or nature as a provoker of antagonistic responses; the symbolic whereby nature becomes a source of figurative language; and finally the utilitarian, whereby nature is materially useful as a source of energy and employability Kahn and Kellert (2002).

Children follow a similar developmental process of reasoning about nature. In early childhood years, they show a preference for anthropocentric reasoning, regardless of how close they are to nature. As children grow older, they start to employ “isomorphic biocentric reasoning”. They become aware of the shared characteristics between humans and animals where what is unacceptable for humans is regarded

as equally unacceptable for non-humans. At a later stage, children adopt “transmorphic reasoning”, which allows them to also acknowledge the differences between humans and non-humans (Khan in Kahn & Kellert, 2002). Finally, they construct a harmonious relationship with nature via the following five channels (Kahn and Kellert, 2002):

1. The physical: Acts done in, to, or with nature in either positive or negative acts.
2. The sensorial: Experiencing nature directly through the senses.
3. The experiential: The feelings one experiences when in contact with nature.
4. The relational: Building human-like ties with nature by means of talking to it.
5. The compositional: Creating a balanced relationship with nature.

The present study uses a qualitative approach to produce a descriptive analysis of the discourse of a total of 11 written texts and it does not analyze the images accompanying these texts. The analyzed texts and their follow up activities address environmental issues in six EFL textbooks from Kindergarten, lower and upper stages. The sampling of textbooks is limited to the text books that are accomplished by the MOE plan for curriculum modernization and educational reform at the time when this study was conducted. This plan aims at enabling the learners to acquire lifelong learning tools and skills and is expected to pay off by 2030. The texts included in the appendices are taken from two lower stages textbooks entitled *Connect*:

1. Second grade Kindergarten (Medwell, 2018): two pupil’s textbooks (1st & 2nd term)
2. First year primary (Wingent, 2018): two pupil’s textbooks (1st & 2nd term)

And two upper stages textbooks entitled *New Hello*:

1. First year preparatory (Penn, Ross & Pelteret, 2019): one student’s textbook (1st term).
2. First year secondary (high school) (Curtis & Hart, 2019): one student’s text book (1st term).

1. Analysis

Following the research questions, the analysis is carried out in relation to two aspects: first, the linguistic features of environmental discourse; second, the promoted types of reasoning, the venues through which children can live harmoniously with nature, the values of nature and forms of participation promoted in the texts.

1. Results of Analyses for Lower Grade Books

In the kindergarten textbook (Appendix A), environmental discourse appears in the unit entitled “My Farm” under the module “How the World Works”. The unit introduces the pupils to the names and food needs of farm animals.

The environmental discourse of two lessons entitled “Its Lunchtime at the Farm” and “Let’s Care for Animals” uses four linguistic tools to establish facticity of the students’ identity as nature lovers: first, the simple present verb tense; second, the expression of affect “like”; the collective pronoun “Us” in the title “Let’s Care for Animals” and the personal pronoun “I” in “I care for animals” to create a balance between collective and individual identities; fourth, the salience given to human role in caring for the animals, which implies that they are dependent on the humans for their survival.

The metaphorical personification of the animals as in “rabbits like apples” presents them as having human-like food preferences. It activates the moralistic and humanistic values of nature and promotes isomorphic reasoning. The discourse appeals to the physical channel for experiencing nature by highlighting the positive acts that can be done in nature and with it.

Despite the clearly inviting and emotive tone of the kindergarten texts, the follow up activities stop short of promoting potential participation whereby students are treated as either observers of benevolent actions towards animals or enactors of language activities.

Moving to first year primary textbook (Appendix B), the discourse in the vocabulary lesson entitled “It’s Rainy” endorses Anthropocentric reasoning. First, the discourse does not give reasons why nature is liked, thus overlooking the intrinsic value of nature and focusing instead on the human emotions aroused by nature as in the use of the emotive “like” in the title “I like rainy days”.

Moreover, the students are encouraged to reflect on weather phenomena and their effects on them, which frame nature as a source of sensual experiences. The few words in the text imply that nature is better understood through sensorial and experiential venues. The facticity of the students’ identity as nature lovers is emphasized by the use of the simple present tense and the personal pronoun “I”. The follow up activities, which focus on the acquisition of language skills, merely motivate potential participation.

The title of the social studies lesson “Let’s Take Care of Egypt” further emphasizes the prevalence of anthropocentric reasoning in the environmental discourse. The title frames nature as needing human care not so much out of its intrinsic value as out of patriotic sentiment. It

echoes the dominionistic value of nature, whereby nature is the source of feelings of success and self-achievement in solving its problems. The use of the pronoun 'Us' in the title endorses a collective identity of saviors and caregivers of the environment. Apart from the title, the lesson is an activity that requires the students to classify the photos based on the behavior each photo depicts as being either positive or negative.

Despite the friendly tone of the invitation in the title, the students remain mere potential participants with no out-of-class nature-focused activities to do. The language of the two image captions in the life skills lesson in the same text which reads "I don't litter" and "I don't shout" emphasizes the facticity of the human responsibility for actions that affect the environment through the use of the pronoun 'I' and the negation in the present tense. These two texts address the environment from the perspective of the actions done in nature and to it. Therefore, the discourse foregrounds the role of humans and attributes the dominionistic value to nature.

The end-of-book story entitled "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" propagates a different message from that of the previous lessons. The story opens with Goldilocks eating the bears' food without their permission. After the family of bears discovers that their food has disappeared, Goldilocks is obliged to apologize before the four of them can happily walk off together in the forest. The story employs non-anthropocentric discourse which excludes the use of pronominal references to animals with 'it' and 'which' and gives them human familial appellations such as "Mommy", "Daddy", and "Baby" (Cook, 2016). Integration of the two worlds, the human and the non-human, is realized by means of the metaphorical personification of the bears with Goldilocks emerging at the end as a member of the bear family.

The story, therefore, highlights the humanistic value of nature by showing the ease with which human beings can communicate with animals and the moralistic value whereby nature can provide the opportunity to practice the morality of apology. The moral of the story is that using others' belongings without their permission can be an equally unacceptable behavior for humans and non-humans. This promotes isomorphic reasoning.

Finally, by presenting the possibility of establishing human-like ties and creating a balanced relationship with non-humans, the discourse validates the relational and compositional venues for experiencing nature.

Table 1
Results for Lower Grades Books

Aspect	Linguistic Features	Values of nature	Types of reasoning	Channels for Experiencing nature	Forms of participation
KG texts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Framing 2. Facticity 3. Metaphorical personification 4. Use of emotives 5. Exclusion of pronominal language 6. Use of identity markers 7. Saliency 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Moralistic 2. Humanistic 	Isomorphic	The physical	Potential
First year primary	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Framing 2. Identity markers 3. Use of emotives 4. Metaphorical personification 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sensorial 2. Dominionistic 3. Humanistic 4. Moralistic 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anthropocentric 2. Isomorphic 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physical 2. Sensorial 3. Relational 4. Compositional 	Potential

5.2.2 Results of the Analyses of the Upper Grade Books

The first appearance of animals in the first-year preparatory (7th grade) textbook (Appendix C) is in module one entitled “Family and Friends” in a story entitled “Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland”. The animals that Alice meets with are metaphorically framed as human beings by means of several devices. The discourse gives saliency to the human-like attributes of The Cheshire Cat and The White Rabbit such as being friendly, funny, busy and wise. It uses the pronoun ‘He’ to refer to the Cat and the Rabbit. This metaphorical framing encourages the students to employ transmorphic reasoning to closely connect with the animal characters. It appeals to the relational channels via which children can live in harmony with non-humans. This is further supported by including this text in the module entitled “Family and Friends”. The reading enforces potential participation as it stops at requiring the students to decide if this is a true story or not and to offer a rationalization for their decision.

In module two entitled “The World around Us”, Mazen, one of two boys described in the text, prefers to be engaged in activities in nature to staying indoors or spending time doing cell phone activities such as texting and making video calls. The textual discourse establishes Mazen’s identity as a nature lover through the use of the personal pronoun “I”, the simple present for facticity and the explicit emotives in “I love nature”, “I like walking and watching the trees” and “I like being in the garden”. Therefore, salience is given to the physical, the sensorial and the experiential venues to experiencing nature while endorsing its aesthetic, utilitarian, and recreational values. This framing of nature, inclusive of trees, gardens, animals, flowers, and insects as a source for infotainment promotes anthropocentric reasoning. The students’ participation is limited to filling in a table of the similarities and the differences in the hobbies of the two boys.

The last encounter with nature in the first-year preparatory textbook appears in the same module entitled “Holidays”. The creation of environmental awareness is listed as one of the lesson’s objectives to encourage the students to spend their holidays in nature settings. The representation of nature within the frame of ecotourism serves infotainment goals and promotes anthropocentric reasoning. Nature is not explicitly evaluated; rather, evaluations, either positive or negative, address the experience of engaging in activities in nature. For example, Mariam, one of the characters in the text, refuses to enter a dark cave during a family trip to Hurghada on the Red Sea because “she was frightened”, while camping in the Siwa Oasis in the Western Desert is described as “my favorite holiday”. The promoted form of participation is potential participation in carrying out language activities and in designing an advertisement to market the touristic places in Egypt.

The term ecotourism is included in the list of objectives for first-year secondary textbook (Appendix D) in module one entitled “Community”. The reading entitled “Ecotourism...is this the Future?” states that the main principle of ecotourism is to encourage harmless and educational holidays in local “endangered” environments. The text introduces the students to environmental concepts by focusing on the acquisition of environmental vocabulary such as: “ecosystem”, “sustainable” and “National Park”. The discourse is marked by the use of passivation as in the passive verbs “endangered” and “isolated”, thus erasing human agency and responsibility for endangering the animals and isolating their habitats.

However, the text highlights the human role in maintaining the coral reefs and the environment along popular destinations for ecotourism. This is indicated by repeating the verb “protect”, which

frames nature as dependent on humans for its survival. It also alludes to the global need for environmental sustainability. Facticity of information is established by reporting the percentages of animals that have escaped extinction. Potential participation is limited to carrying out the reading comprehension questions, writing a paragraph on the advantages and drawbacks of ecotourism in addition to a speaking activity to discuss how Egypt can benefit from ecotourism and encourage it without harming the endangered places. Highlighting the infotainment aim of ecotourism promotes recreational and utilitarian values of nature, the experiential venue to understanding it as well as anthropocentric reasoning.

The reading passage “Working Together” in the same module highlights the efforts of “The Lion Guardians” in Kenya and Tanzania in changing the attitudes of the villagers towards animal killing. The discourse includes evaluative expressions praising the Lion Guardians as being “very successful” and doing “amazing work”, which gives salience to the role of humans in preventing animal extinction. Stating that the villagers kill the lions in order to protect their cattle grants them a legitimate reason for the killing and an acquittal from the crime. The discourse, which promotes the dominionistic and the humanistic values of nature, appeals to the physical, experiential and compositional venue of living in harmony with nature. It, therefore, balances between isomorphic and transmorphic types of reasoning. Potential participation is promoted by requiring the students to reflect on the reasons why people kill the lions and the importance of safeguarding the survival of these animals in addition to the language activities.

Table 2
Results for Upper Grade Books

Aspect	Linguistic Features	Values of nature	Types of reasoning	Channels for Experiencing nature	Forms of participation
First-year preparatory	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Metaphorical representation 2. Identity markers 3. Contrasting Frames 4. Framing within ecotourism 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Aesthetic 2. Utilitarian 3. Recreational 	Transmorphic Anthropocentric	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Experiential Relational 2. Physical 3. Sensorial 	Potential

	5. Salience to human role				
First year Secondary	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Framing within ecotourism 2. Facticity of information 3. Erasure of human agency for endangering actions 4. Salience of human efforts 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. recreational 2. utilitarian 3. dominionistic 4. humanistic 	Anthropocentric	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Experiential 2. physical 3. Compositional 	Potential

1. Discussion

6.1 *The Linguistic Features of Environmental Discourse*

The results from applying the analytical models show that in order to reach out to its young readers, the texts in the lower grades textbooks appeal to the children's curiosity to experience nature and allude to their fantasies of talking animals through metaphorical personification. These texts cater to children's innate desires to experience nature and to enjoy intimate relationships with non-humans. Therefore, the texts highlight the sensorial, relational and compositional venues for experiencing nature. Although humans are represented as having agency of anti and pro-environmental behaviors, the texts endorse collective and individual identity of lovers of nature and establish patriotic sentiments and caring for others as the trigger for environmental responsibility.

The texts in the upper grades (10-12) textbooks appeal to the same venues for experiencing and enjoying nature. However, these texts are marked by using statistics, which appeals to the teenage readers who

would appreciate this to establish the facticity of information. There is also the erasure of human responsibility for endangering certain species through the use of the passive voice while giving salience to the human role in protecting and saving nature.

Nature is framed differently across the modules spanning different educational stages. In the kindergarten texts, nature is framed as an integral component of the life systems as in the module entitled “How the World Works”. For first year primary under the module “Communication”, nature is framed as a motivator for reflection on the similarities between humans and non-humans.

For first year preparatory, the texts are characterized by their celebration of nature for infotainment purposes. These texts resonate with the desire of teenage students to explore and enjoy the world and to establish friendships. Therefore, these texts are included in modules entitled “family and Friends” and “The World around Us”.

For first year secondary under the module “Community”, nature is framed as in need of human protection. The emphasis on human agency in the conservation of nature sparks the spirit of environmental responsibility and sets it as a condition for establishing a healthy and balanced community. The utilitarian discourse frames nature as a source of infotainment and as a source for self-actualization because nature creates the opportunities to give back to the community.

6.2 Types of Environmental Discourse

The environmental discourses of the sample discussed above cannot be described as being destructive, where destructive discourses refer to the “neoclassical economic discourse which, through their omission of ecological consideration, can encourage people to behave in ways that are ecologically destructive” (Stibbe, 2014, p.118). This is because the environmental discourse in lower grades textbooks encourages isomorphic reasoning by highlighting the similarities between humans and animals as an equalizing strategy. Moreover, there are attempts to motivate shared ecological citizenship in the preparatory stage textbook in promoting transmorphic reasoning. However, the prevailing type of environmental discourse is shallow conservationism-environmentalism. This conclusion is based on the following deductions:

- Discussion of environmental issues does not extend to pressing ones such as rationalizing the consumption of natural resources.
- The prevailing discourse frames humans as the saviors of the earth’s ecosystems. Apart from the “Lion Guards” text, nature is

preserved to avoid putting humans at risk, rather than for the sake of nature itself (Martinelli, 2008).

- The textbooks mainly encourage potential participation while active participation is not at all promoted. The environmental discourse of the reading texts encourages neither experiential learning nor reaching out to the community beyond the classroom. This confirms Payne's observation (2001) that nature is often studied as an object that is "out there". The discourse also contradicts the assertion by Carmi et al. (2015, p. 187) that "the solution of environmental problems depends not on what people know, understand, or feel about them, but only on what they do (or don't do)". The limited appeal to real life concrete participation not only endangers environmental education by becoming more theoretical, but it also increases the students' isolation from nature as one of the negative effects of modern technology and urbanization which minimizes contact with live animals for most people (Cook 2015; Jacobs & Goatly, 2000). Consequently, the students are not prepared to be ecologically critical thinkers who are able to make environmentally sound decisions and carry out their environmental responsibilities (Xiong, 2014).
- Following the schematic model for classifying anthropocentric mental attitudes by Martinelli (2008), the attitudes towards nature most promoted are: anthropomorphism, by which human traits are attributed to animals, as in Goldilocks' fairy tale where the bears dress and act as humans and in "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland"; zoophilism, where the perception of animals as aesthetic objects leads to their being put in captivity to be cared for as in the kindergarten textbook; finally, utilitarianism, where other creatures are prized for their monetary value and are regarded as resources for economic activities as in the upper grades textbooks.
- Although the commonly promoted values of nature across the sample are the aesthetic and the recreational, the contradiction in the values that mark each grade further consolidates my argument for a prevailing shallow conservationism-environmentalism. The lower grades textbooks are marked by the appeals to the humanistic, moralistic and compositional values to highlight the possibility to live in close contact with nature, to avoid being instructive and to overcome theoretical environmental knowledge. The upper grades textbooks promote the utilitarian, and the

dominionistic values where humans are the saviors and controllers of nature and nature is a source of self-actualization.

- There is a disruption of the realization of the long-term goals of ecotourism, which include protecting primitive nature, developing needy communities, and spreading world peace. The general principle of ecotourism is to “enhance ecological and cultural sensitivity, instill environmental awareness and a social conscience in the travel industry, and satisfy and educate the discriminating tourist” (Blamey, 2001, p. 5). This disruption occurs in favor of the short-term goal of encouraging tourism to the endangered areas for having holiday fun and awareness enhancement.

On a positive note, there are scattered attempts to overcome this shallowness, which include:

- There are appeals to experiencing emotions when in contact with nature. These appeals echo the move towards stimulating the mediating role of emotions to strengthen the psychological approach in EE. This move aims to overcome the superficial effect of objective knowledge and to stimulate a “long-lasting environmental behavioral change” (McGuire, 2015, p.701). For example, the unit on farm animals for KGs is an attempt to overcome the claim that farm animals are “erased” from the consciousness of most people in order to legitimize their consumption or slaughter for human needs (Stibbe, 2012). This example shows an intention to create environmentally-oriented emotions and to motivate emotional involvement on the grounds that these emotions not only enable environmentally savvy individuals to show more responsible environmental behavior but to also predict this behavior (Carmi et al. 2015).
- The lesson about the lion guardians in the first year secondary textbook includes references to local environmental issues in order to acknowledge their global effects and to highlight the civic efforts to reach sustainable solutions (McNenny, 2018). This is an instance of ES by addressing a global ecological theme. ES “explicitly teaches about the interconnectedness of global systems... with the need to come together to solve the problems facing humankind” (McNenny, 2018, p. 5). Introducing the concept of sustainability enhances the students’ “abilities and motivation to act on behalf of the environment and human wellbeing, and to raise

environmentally conscious citizens who are committed to a sustainable way of life” (Uitto et al. 2011).

6.3 *The Ecosophy of the Textbooks*

In the last analysis, anthropocentric reasoning permeates all the texts reviewed above. Preservation rarely targets the intrinsic value of all the creatures inhabiting the earth’s ecosystem; rather, it sometimes works towards the supremacy of consumption. The Anthropocene shapes the students’ mental attitudes by granting humans agency to dominate other species. This widely held assumption directs the lives and the mindsets of the masses to view nature as existing mainly to benefit and entertain humankind. Moreover, framing nature within the framework of ecotourism epitomizes the global anthropocentric economic system. This system persists despite attempts to recover the state of the Holocene, or the unified stability among living creatures, and to highlight the importance of collective efforts and awareness-raising of the youths (Stibbe, 2012).

Therefore, shallow environmentalism is the ecosophy that guides the environmental texts in the sample. It does not promote ecological self or encourage the creation of eco-ethical consciousness and is in contrast to “deep ecology” which stresses the equality of all the inhabitants of the ecosystem and denies the supremacy of any species (Zahoor & Janjua, 2020).

1. **Educational implications**

Language teachers play a critical role in helping their students become ecologically responsible citizens and overcome the environmentally shallow discourse pervading the textbooks (Jacobs & Goatly, 2000). From a pedagogical perspective, nature plays a primary role in the development of the children’s cognitive, affective, and social behavior. With reference to Bloom’s taxonomy, nature provides valuable opportunities for enhancing the skills of naming, sorting, and categorizing on the knowledge level and integrating theoretical with practical information on the comprehension level. The support of teachers and parents to students in increasing their contact with nature triggers affective development and integrates emotion with intellect for the consolidation of the values of “creativity, beauty” (Kellert , in Kahn & Kellert, 2002, p.127). Active participation in outdoor play for informal environmental education is effective in changing the children’s environmental behavior (Mahasneh, Romanowski & Dajani, 2017). Moreover, given the powerful effect of multimedia on the youths, open

access technologies can be used in order to promote involvement in environmental issues, and create “democratic” class discussion as a platform for the youth to voice their opinions (Korteweg, 2007).

Children have recently developed a tendency to separate between humans and nature and to regard the latter as having a separate entity. The prominent consequences of this tendency are generational amnesia and familiarity with certain levels of pollution as the norm (Khan in Kahn & Kellert, 2002). It is proposed that to overcome these problems, the structural-developmental constructivist approach to environmental education can be paired with the Identity-Based Environmental Education Model (IBEE) (McGuire, 2015). On one hand, the first assumes that individuals are capable of adopting biocentric reasoning as they become aware of the flaws in their relationship with nature. On the other hand, IBEE aims at “fostering environmental self-identities” in younger age groups, enhancing emotional appreciation of environmental issues, meta-cognitive self-awareness, and internalizing and automatizing the required environmental behaviors. Therefore, EFL teachers are recommended “to engage in dialogue with children about what has been lost and to use such dialogue to help shape the future” (Khan in Kahn & Kellert, 2002, p.111). Teachers can also foster a decision-making process that balances automatic and controlled thinking processes to promote “more behavioral volition and personal expression” (McGuire, 2015, p. 705). EFL teachers can “use historical diaries and historical novels to convey a sense of the landscape of years past” while giving “writing assignments can involve students in the comparative endeavor” (McGuire, 2015, p.112). Students need to be encouraged to produce stories “which do not repeat the same errors of the past” stories that would “consider humans as part of the natural world rather than conquerors of it” (Stibbe, 2014, p. 121).

Conclusion

Motivated by lack of research on the types of reasoning, nature related values, forms of participation and the ecosophy that are promoted in the EFL textbooks, this qualitative case study explored the representations of nature and the features of environment discourse of a sample of EFL textbooks mandated by the MOE. It is certainly not void of the limitations imposed by the qualitative research design, which implies subjectivity of analysis in addition to the small sample size. However, the study is a practical application of Stibbe’s framework of cognitive linguistic tools in the identification of the prevailing type of environmental discourse and the role of anthropocentric reasoning in shaping the ecosophy of the textbooks.

Opportunities for direct contact with nature in modern times are eroding despite research findings indicating that real and imaginative

exposure to nature, specifically at younger ages, is the starting point for building healthy moral relationships with others, constituting childhood experiences, predicting affective wellbeing, and allowing for the formation of ecological identity, which is “how people perceive themselves in reference to nature” (Thomashow in Kahn & Kellert, 2002, p.266). Further exploration of the relationship between education and the environment that can benefit from two strands of research becomes necessary. The first strand explores the students’ already existing mental models, which if ignored may lead to overlooking possible cause-and-effect relationships (Garrity, 2018). The second strand explores the relationship between the level of knowledge and the students’ awareness and sense of responsibility towards nature (Jacobs et al. 2016). The use of qualitative as well as quantitative studies that adopt a critical ecolinguistic analysis of educational materials can be useful in evaluating curricula and investigating the ecosophy that guides their design. These explorations are needed in order to both determine what best motivates the imitateness of positive environmental behavior and also to design interventions to change the simple and static stories of nature to more comprehensive ones where human beings are in harmony with nature (Liu & Lin, 2015).

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Appendix A

KG Text Book

Let's care for animals!

Unit Values 6

1 Look and say

horse

rabbit

cat

2 Sing and do

I care for animals!

Values: caring for animals

32



Appendix B

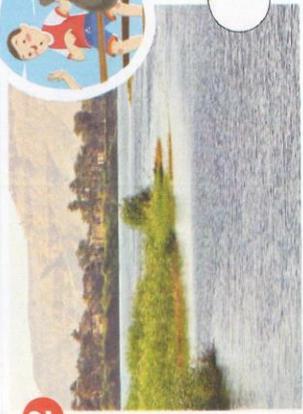
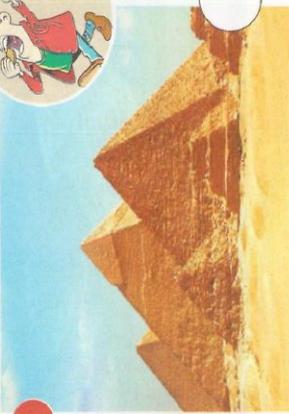
Primary Stage Text Book



Let's take care of Egypt



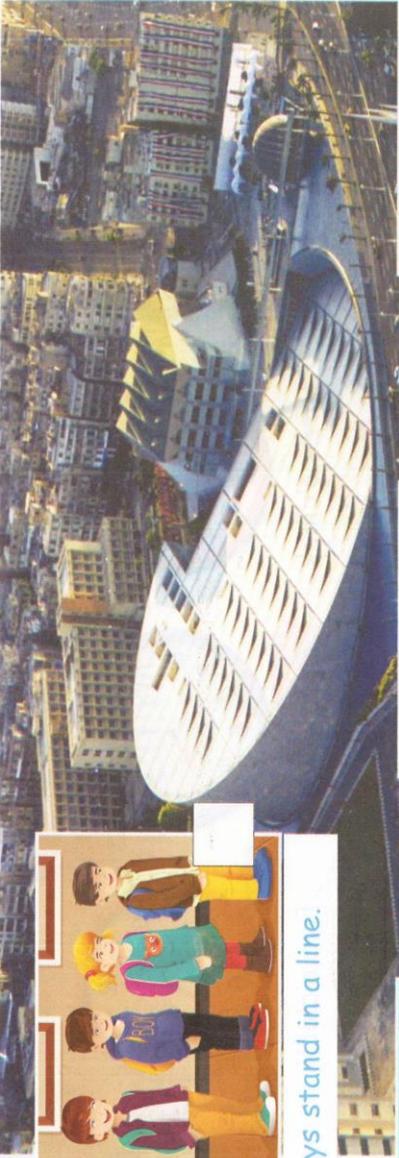
Look and draw 😊 or ☹️



Unit 16
Life skills

At the Alexandria Library

Listen and number



a  I always stand in a line.

b  I throw trash in the bin.

c  I don't shout.

d  I ask the librarian before I take anything.

81

Unit
17

Let's read a story

**Goldilocks
and the Three Bears**



**By: Mandy Loader
Illustrated by: Nathalie Gavet**

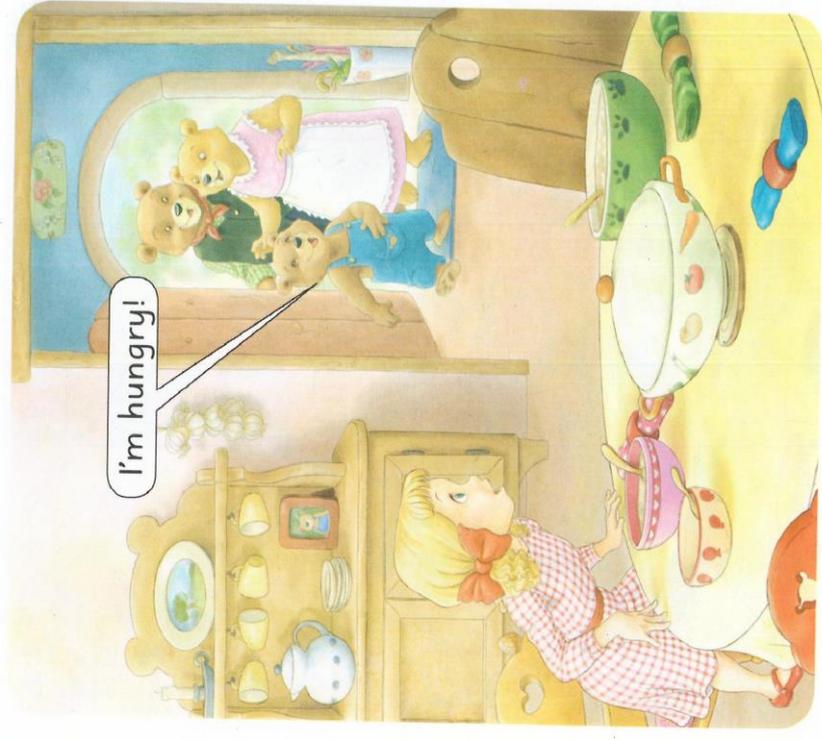


This is Mommy Bear.



This is Goldilocks.

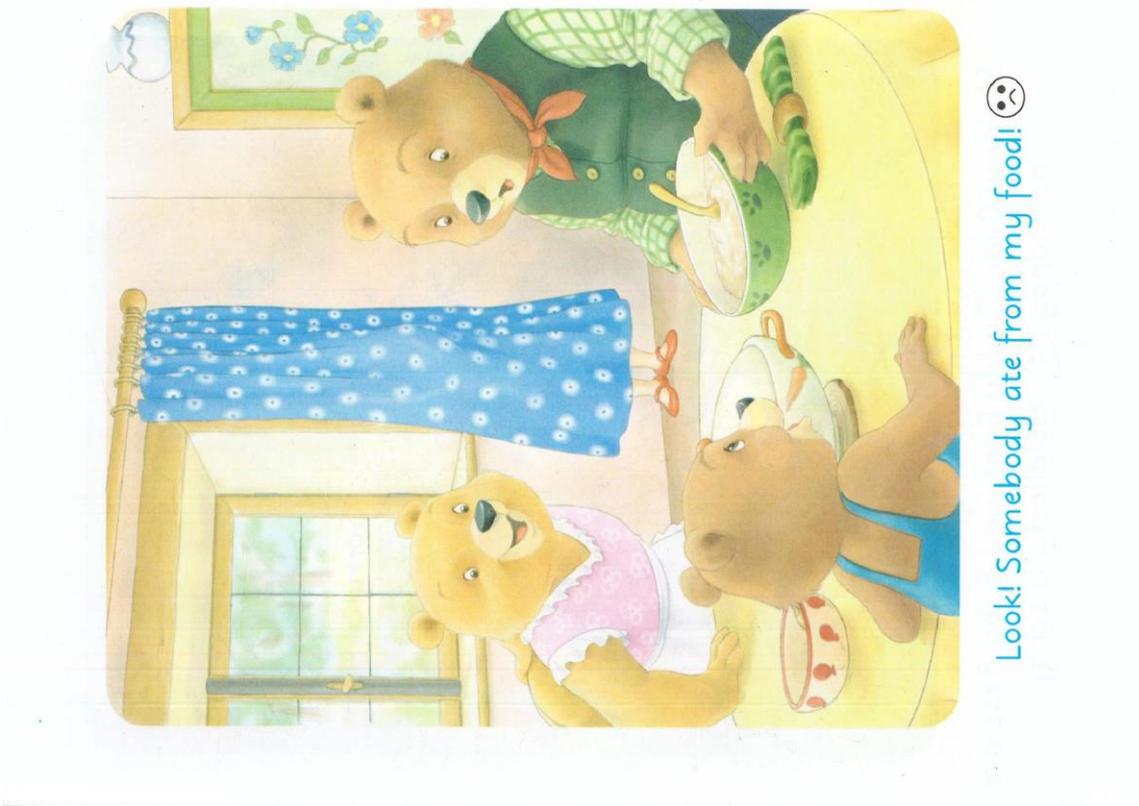




Baby Bear is hungry!



She likes this! Yummy 🍴!





Mommy Bear, Daddy Bear, and Baby Bear are not happy 😞. Goldilocks is sorry.



Look! Somebody ate all my food! 😞

The characters



Read and match



b

a Baby Bear



b Goldilocks



c Mommy Bear



d Daddy Bear



Now they are all happy! 😊

Appendix C

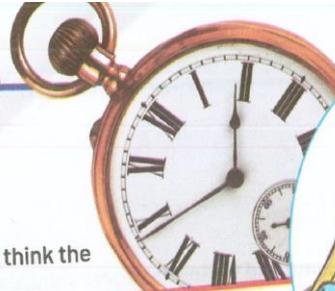
Preparatory Stage Textbook

3

Lesson 4

Reading

1 Look at the pictures. What do you think the story is about? Is it a true story?



Alice



The Cheshire Cat

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

by Lewis Carroll

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland is a famous children's story. Alice's adventure begins when she goes to Wonderland. Alice thinks that Wonderland is interesting, but it is a strange place. She is a **sensible** girl, but she does not understand Wonderland. Alice is also **brave** and **clever**. She meets a lot of interesting characters.

Alice often sees the White Rabbit. The White Rabbit is very **busy** – and he is usually very late. He always runs fast.

The Cheshire Cat is a funny animal. He has got a big smile and he is very friendly. He tells Alice about Wonderland and helps her to find different places and characters.

The Queen of Hearts is not very nice. She is a **scary** person. She is always **angry** and she shouts at people. Alice is brave, so she is not frightened of her.

At the end of the story, all the characters help Alice so she can go home again.



The White Rabbit



The Queen of Hearts

2 Read the story and answer the questions.

- 1 Who is the main character?
- 2 Which other characters are in the book?
- 3 Who has got a big smile?
- 4 Who is not very nice?
- 5 Why is Alice able to go home?
- 6 What can we learn from this story?

Vocabulary

3 Look at the adjectives in red. Use a dictionary to check the meaning. Write the words in your notebook.

Speaking

4 Play a game. Describe a character from the story for your partner to guess.

He's/She's... friendly clever brave
angry funny sensible busy scary
He/She ... helps Alice goes to Wonderland
shouts at people always runs fast



She's clever and brave.
She goes to Wonderland.

Alice!

4

Lesson 4

Reading

1 Read about Wael and Mazin. Who has got a laptop?



I love technology! My favourite hobby is playing video games. I usually play them on my laptop, but sometimes I play them on my mobile phone.

Can you guess my favourite lesson at school? Yes, it is Computer Studies! At break and lunchtime I stay in the classroom and I look at video game websites on my phone.

Wael, age 12



I love nature. I like walking and watching the trees, animals, flowers and insects all around us. I don't like being in the house; I like being in the garden and looking at the sky. At school, I always go outside at break. I go when it's very hot or cold!

I've got a mobile phone. I don't send text messages or make video calls on my phone, but I take photos of flowers.

Mazin, age 13

2 Read and complete the table.

How are the boys similar? How are they different?

	Wael	Mazin
Age		
Hobby		
Where he goes at break time		
What he does on his mobile phone		



Life Skills

- 1 What do you think of Wael and Mazin?
- 2 Who do you think needs help?
- 3 What advice can you give him?

5

Lesson 2

Reading

- 1 Look at the photos in Exercise 3. Do you know where these places are?
- 2 Which activities can you see in the photos?

climb a mountain eat delicious food go in a cave have a picnic make a sandcastle
play games ride a bike see a camel sleep in a tent swim in a lake visit family

3 Look and read. Match the photos with the descriptions.



My holiday photos

- 1 Last summer, when the weather was hot, we went to the beach near my home in Hurgada. Mariam made this sandcastle. There was a cave in the rocks. But Mariam didn't want to go into the cave because she was frightened!
- 2 In October, we visited my uncle, aunt and cousins in Cairo. We had a picnic in Al Azhar Park. We ate delicious food. Then we played games and Ali rode his bike.
- 3 When I was eight, we went to Siwa. We swam in the lake, and climbed the mountain. We saw camels and slept in a tent in the desert. It was my favourite holiday!

Appendix D

Secondary Stage Textbook

UNIT **1** Lesson 1

Getting away

OBJECTIVES

Reading An article about ecotourism; two blogs about the summer holidays

Writing An essay on ecotourism

Listening A story about travelling and what happened when something went wrong

Speaking Describe an event

Language Past simple and past continuous

Life skills Collaboration

Before you start

Discuss these questions in pairs.

- Why are tourists very important for a country?
- Where do tourists go in Egypt? Why do they go there?
- Are a lot of tourists always a good thing for a country? Why?

Reading

1 Read the magazine article about some tourist destinations and match the photos to a country.

Ecotourism – is this the future?

What is ecotourism?

Ecotourism is about providing holidays to places which are often **endangered** and **isolated**. The holidays are designed to have a limited **impact** on the local **environment** and to educate tourists about conservation.

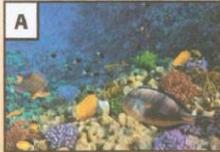
Egypt is developing ecotourism to protect the environments along the Red Sea coast. Tourists can stay in hotels built of environmentally friendly natural **materials**. When tourists go diving, they are taught how to avoid damaging the fish and keeping the special coral reefs safe.

Madagascar is famous for its ecotourism and wants to protect its ecosystem (the animals and plants in its environment). 80% of the animals, and 90% of the plants that live there don't exist anywhere else in the world. Lemurs, for example, only live in Madagascar.

The Galapagos Islands in **Ecuador** are famous for the **unique** animals, such as the giant turtles which live there. Ecuador makes sure that tourism is **sustainable**. Only a limited number of people can visit the islands each year, so the animals and their environment are safe.

The Komodo National Park in **Indonesia** is a popular ecotourism destination. Much of Indonesia's endangered wildlife, including the Komodo dragon, can only be found here. The National Park is also famous for its beach with pink sand.

A



B



C



D





Lesson 3

Before you start

- Who are the people in the photos?
- What do you think hunting parties are, and why do they kill lions?
- Why is it important to protect animals such as lions?

Reading

1 Read the text and check your answers.

2 Read the text again, and answer the questions

- 1 Name three reasons why the Maasai men are selected to be Lion Guardians.
- 2 What do you think will happen if lions disappear from Africa?
- 3 Summarize the text in no more than 30 words.

Writing tip

Do not include your opinion in a summary. It should be objective.

Language

3 Read the text again and underline all the passive forms.

4 Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verb in brackets.

- 1 The young men are taught (teach) to be field biologists.
- 2 Local people (give) jobs.
- 3 The community (encourage) to look after the lions.
- 4 Lions (not hunt) as much as in the past.
- 5 Money (bring) into the area by tourists.
- 6 Lion Guardians (need) in other countries.

REMEMBER!

Words for jobs often end in *-ist*, for example *biologist, artist, scientist*.

20



Lions are disappearing all over Africa but there is some hope now after the amazing work of an **organisation** called Lion Guardians, which is based in Kenya, but Guardians help in nearby Tanzania. The aim of Lion Guardians is to help local people to protect their own **livestock** and reduce the number of lion killings in the area.

Cattle are important to the villagers but they often go missing or are attacked by lions. Then the lions are killed as villagers worry about losing more livestock.

Lion Guardians is changing this. The organisation works with the community to help both the lions and the livestock and this is done by employing local people. Maasai men are chosen to become **guardians** as they understand lions and have the skills needed to **monitor** their movements, find missing livestock and stop **hunting parties** who kill the lions for sport. They are taught to be field **biologists** and are given a sense of responsibility.

Lions are monitored everyday and the information is sent to the cattle farmers who can then make sure their cows are safe.

Lion Guardians are very successful. They help the future of lions as well as the local communities.

LANGUAGE

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Present simple passive

- Use the passive (*am/is/are + past participle*) when the action is more important than the agent (who or what does it): *The organisation **is based** in Kenya.*

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