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ANALYZING ESSAY READING QUESTIONS IN THE "JOYFUL ENGLISH" TEXTBOOK USING REVISED BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

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Abstract
Currently, learning English as a foreign language in Indonesia requires a compelled environment, such as a curriculum and textbooks. According to the English learning outcomes in the *Merdeka Curriculum*, students are supposed to have inference ability when understanding implicit information and have the skills to produce English texts with various and organized vocabulary. Then, to fulfil those skill requirements, learning activities are provided in the English textbook under Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). This study aims to ensure that the textbook properly develops students' ability to suffer in an English communication context. This study adopts Miles, Huberman, and Saldana's (2014) interactive model data analysis, which begins by pulling data from documents by identifying the textbook reading exercise and assigning a code to each item. Then, the researcher examine the data by determining, highlighting, and simplifying them before drawing and validating the final results. According to the findings of this study, the distribution of essay reading questions in the form of LOTS is higher than that of HOTS, where the LOTS is 87.4% and the HOTS is 12.6%. The essay reading questions in the textbook are also aligned with the HOTS criteria in the curriculum, which include questions in the categories of creative thinking and critical thinking.
Keywords: Bloom's Taxonomy; HOTS; LOTS; Reading Comprehension; *Merdeka Curriculum*.

INTRODUCTION

Textbooks are written to carry out the curriculum and provide students with organized learning objectives, learning activities, instructional resources, and learning strategies to enhance their thinking structure. Nowadays, most of schools in Indonesia employ the *Merdeka Curriculum*, which contains six phases of learning outcomes.

The English textbook should be intended to match the curriculum because is it a required subject in Indonesia. Learning English as a foreign language in Indonesia needs a specific environment. It also requires an activity-based book to help in the assessment of English proficiency, which is required in the current curriculum. The activities provided here allow students to actively contribute in the process of obtaining information and knowledge through direct experience. One of the learning outcomes for English language learners in phase D is the ability to make inferences when interpreting information. In addition, students are required to be able to write English texts using broad and structured vocabulary (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2022). To give inference skills and the ability to write structured text, textbooks should include learning exercises in the form of Higher-Order Thinking Skills.

Textbook activities assist students to improve their thinking skills (Assaly & Igbaria, 2014). Textbooks are books that are intended to be used for learning following specified curriculum and national education standards. Education programs for children in early childhood, basic education, and secondary school were all required to use the main textbook chosen by the minister. For each subject, the primary textbook is chosen. However, HOTS (Higher-Order Thinking Skills) is a program that aims to improve learning and graduate education standards (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2019).

Several studies have analyzed the cognitive levels of reading comprehension in English Textbooks according to Bloom's Taxonomy framework (Ulum, 2016; Sucipto and Septian, 2019; Qasrawi, and Beni, 2020; Rezita, et.al, 2020; Samira, et.al, 2020). Some of these studies examine two basic language skills: reading and writing and reading and listening. Then, one more comparing and analysis of the two textbooks based on Bloom's Taxonomy framework. Furthermore, two of them were examining reading activities from the K-13 or 2013 Curriculum. However, in this study, the researcher examined textbooks from the Merdeka curriculum. In addition, the researcher used the revised version of Bloom's Taxonomy by Krathwhol and Anderson, which consists of six cognitive levels: remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the reading activities in the "Joyful English" textbook using a revised Bloom's Taxonomy that includes the cognitive levels. This is also designed to ensure that the textbook has been effective in developing students' ability to suffer in an English communication environment.

This study intended to examine and answer to the following research questions:

1. How are the distributions of Bloom's Taxonomy cognitive levels in the essay reading questions in the "Joyful English" textbook?
2. How are the Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) essay reading questions in the "Joyful English" textbook suitable for *Merdeka* Curriculum?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Textbook

Chunningsworth (1995) describes textbooks or coursebooks as a tool for achieving purposes that are already authorized in terms of student needs. The textbooks are designed to bring as many teaching resources for a language learning course as feasible to deliver as the base of the language teaching and learning process (Tomlinson, 2012). It is an organized set of resources used to create and support the learning process at all levels of education.

According to Cunningsworth (1995), textbooks in ELT serve many roles, such as:

1) Provides both written and spoken presentation content.
2) Various activities to enhance communication skills and student practice.
3) A resource for students wanting clarification on grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation.
4) Provides ideas and encouragement for language learning activities in classrooms.
5) A syllabus outlines certain learning objectives.
6) Useful for personal exploration or self-access work.
7) Suitable for new teachers seeking to build confidence.

Richards (2001) states textbooks have advantages in language learning such as (1) Textbooks have a systematically organized and developed syllabus that assists teachers in planning materials; (2) textbooks provide structured direction that students can use in various lessons; (3) A well-advanced textbook maintains quality while allowing the curriculum's learning objectives to be fulfilled. (4) Textbooks are supplementary sources of information; workbooks and audio CDs are commonly included with textbooks, demonstrating that they offer a variety of study options. (5) Textbooks are important because they allow teachers to focus on teaching students rather than creating materials, assignments, and exams. (6) Textbooks can provide accurate language aid and relevant language models, guiding tutors whose first language is not English; (7) Textbooks consist of clear instructions, allowing teachers with limited teaching experience to effectively describe the material to students and organize various classroom activities; and (8) commercial textbooks commonly obey to strict production and design standards, making them relevant to both students and teachers.

According to Cunningsworth (1995), Textbooks that are classified as good and appropriate can be categorized as follows:

1) Ensure textbooks are suited for students' needs.
2) Textbooks should align with current or future language usage patterns among students.
3) Textbooks should complement students' learning processes rather than a rigid method.
4) Textbooks should have a specific function in supporting education.

Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is a complex cognitive process in which readers' previous understandings and experiences are important for understanding textual explanations (Babapour et al., 2018). According to Ulum (2016), reading comprehension is an essential

ability for students to acquire. The basic purpose of reading is to learn something from the material being read. Reading comprehension is made up of three parts: the reader's cognitive ability, motivation, and knowledge, the text and its presentation, and reading activities such as objectives, processes, and outcomes. The indicators to assess reading comprehension are main idea, explicit information, implicit information, references, and contextual meaning.

Barret (1976) identified five cognitive stages of reading comprehension. First, literal understanding focuses on the information and concepts directly specified in the option chosen. Second, the student must assess, reduce, or organize concepts and data that are specifically included in a will. Third, the student demonstrates inference competency by establishing their assumptions and conceptions on prior information, imagination, and openly expressed views and knowledge in the selection. Fourth, evaluation for reading and teacher questions in this situation needs feedback from students demonstrating that they had previously compared arguments expressed in the selection of external standards provided by the lecturer, other officials, or even other documented proof with their standards from the teacher, officials, or other printed sources measures offered by the reader's findings, comprehension, or ethics. Fifth, appreciation covers all conceptual learning components because it concerns the reader's ideas and how they react to the decision.

Brown (2004) identifies four categories of reading assignments as follows:

1) Perceptive reading includes identifying various answers, reading aloud, transcribing, and recognizing words through visuals.
2) Selective Reading includes term-enhancing assignments, picture-cued tasks, gap-filling activities, given context open-ended activities (up to a brief paragraph), sentence-level cloze assignments, pairing activities, and open-ended grammar structures.
3) Interactive reading involves analyzing and interpreting questions at the discourse level. Close reading, scanning, rearranging word patterns, providing short-answer text suggestions, completing discussion editing activities (many possibilities), and responding to maps, charts, graphs, and diagrams.
4) Extensive reading includes skimming, summarizing, providing brief reviews, taking notes, drawing ideas, emphasizing, and elaborating.

Bloom's Taxonomy

The Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, often known as Bloom's Taxonomy, is a framework for categorizing statements about what we expect or assume students to learn as a result of instruction (Bloom, 1956). Bloom's former students, Lorin Anderson and David Krathwohl, modified his taxonomy in 2001. According to Krathwohl (2002), the new version of Bloom's Taxonomy has similarities to the original, which has six cognitive level dimensions, but they differ in difficulty, with remember being easier than understand, which is more difficult than apply, and so on.

Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) categorize the six levels of the revised Bloom's taxonomy cognitive domain into lower and higher levels of thinking. Low-order thinking

skills (LOTS) refer to the lower stages of the cognitive process. The LOTS level is divided down into three cognitive levels:'remember' (C1), 'understand' (C2), and 'apply'. The higher level, known as higher order thinking skill (HOTS), consists of three higher cognitive levels: 'analyze' (C4), 'evaluate' (C5), and 'create' (C6). At the HOTS level, thinking includes critical, logical, reflective, metacognitive, and creative thinking.

Six cognitive levels of the revised Bloom's Taxonomy are explained, as follow:

1) Remember

   Remember means retrieving important information from long-term memory. At this cognitive level, skills in recognizing and recalling knowledge such as definitions, facts, and so on are required.

2) Understand

   Understand is identifying the context of instructive information via oral, written, and visual communication. Understanding skills can be achieved by explaining, categorizing, and summarizing content.

3) Apply

   Apply is carrying out or implementing a technique in a specific situation. At this cognitive level, knowledge can be implemented through methods such as presentation and stimulation.

4) Analyze

   Analyze means breaking down a material into its constituent parts and determining how the elements relate to one another as well as to a wider framework or purpose. This function covers cognitive processes including differentiating, organizing, attributing, and being able to distinguish between pieces or components.

5) Evaluate

   Evaluate is the process of making decisions based on criteria and standards. Decisions can be made by using the ability to check and evaluate content.

6) Create

   Create means combining pieces to form new ideas, a coherent whole, or an original item. It can use its skills in producing, planning, and inventing new ideas.

Higher-Order Thinking Skills

According to N. Erdiana and S. Panjaitan (2023), Higher-Order Thinking Skill (HOTS) is a high-level thinking process in which students may explore and find knowledge while efficiently and accurately utilizing the data at their disposal to discover the structure and its connections to solve problems. Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) are complicated ways of thinking that include the majority of key thinking processes such as defining the material, inferring, building representations, analyzing, and connecting (Resnick, 1987). These abilities are also used to explain various high-level processes in accordance with Bloom's taxonomy. According to Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) cognitive levels of Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) includes the ability of students to analyze (C4), evaluate (C5), and create (C6).

The Ministry of Education and Culture (2018) defines Higher-Order Thinking Skills in Indonesia today based on 21st Century Skills. The 4Cs (critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity) are four 21st Century Skills that are highly significant and essential in 21st Century Education.

According to Ministry of Education and Culture (2018) the aspects of 4Cs are as follows:

1) Creativity Thinking and Innovation
   a) Think creatively
   b) Work creatively with others
   c) Implementing innovation
2) Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
   a) Effective reasoning
   b) Using thinking systems
   c) Making decisions and judgements
   d) Solving the problem
3) Communication
   a) Communicating clearly
4) Collaboration
   a) Collaborating with other people

Table 1. *4Cs Skills Competency Map based on 21st Century Skills*

Framework of 21st Century Skills	Thinking Competency
Creativity Thinking and Innovation	Students are able to develop, produce, and implement their creative ideas individually or in groups.
Critical Thinking and Problem Solving	Students are able to identify, analyze, examine, and evaluate information, arguments, claims, and facts for utilization in daily life.
Communication	Students are able to communicate their ideas effectively using oral, written, and technological media.
Collaboration	Students are able to work in groups to clarify the problems.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research was focused using content analysis approach. Content analysis is a technique for analyzing the content of communications, such as texts, pictures, symbols, and audio files. According to Krippendorff (2004), content analysis provides readable and

sound relationships between texts and the contexts in which they are employed. Using this approach, the researcher investigates the reading activities offered in the textbook for grade VII junior high school students. Furthermore, the researcher evaluates all chapters of the "Joyful English" textbook. The researcher gathered primary data in the form of reading questions based on Bloom's Taxonomy cognitive levels in the textbook, either directly from the reader or through document analysis. This study employs Miles, Huberman, and Saldana's (2014) interactive model data analysis, which begins by obtaining data from documents by identifying the textbook reading exercise and assigning each item a code. The data is then condensed by determining, concentrating, and highlighting streamlining in order to generate and validate "final results". In this study, data was condensed by categorizing acquired information into cognitive levels. Following that, data will be displayed by condensing it into a collection that enables for inference and action. The condensed data is displayed in a table to help determine the frequency of cognitive levels. Finally, draw conclusions and verify the data by summarizing and confirming the analysis to make it more sensible.

FINDINGS

This section contains the research findings organized by the research question as follows: (1) How are the distributions of Bloom's Taxonomy cognitive levels in the essay reading questions in the "Joyful English" textbook?; (2) How are the Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) essay reading questions in the "Joyful English" textbook suitable to the Merdeka Curriculum? The results revealed that 104 essay reading questions were classified into six cognitive levels of Revised Bloom's Taxonomy: remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create.

1. **The Distribution of Bloom's Taxonomy cognitive levels in the Essay Reading Questions**

   The findings of this study show the percentage or frequency of Bloom's Taxonomy in the essay reading questions of this textbook. The researcher collects 104 questions from each chapter of this book. These questions are categorized as Lower-Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) (remember, understand, and apply) and Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) (analyze, evaluate, and create). There are 91 questions categorized as Lower-Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) and 13 as Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). The following table illustrates the distribution of essay reading questions in textbooks.

Table 2. *The distribution of Essay Reading Questions in Textbook*

Chapter	Cognitive Level						Total
	Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyze	Evaluate	Create	
1	4	3	-	-	-	-	7
2	6	2	-	-	-	-	8
3	3	6	2	-	1	1	13
4	1	2	-	2	-	-	5

5	1	3	-	-	-	1	5
6	3	2	-	-	-	1	6
7	6	4	1	-	-	-	11
8	2	2	-	-	1	2	7
9	4	2	-	1	-	1	8
10	-	3	-	-	-	-	3
11	2	3	-	-	-	-	5
12	3	1	-	-	-	-	4
13	7	2	-	-	1	-	10
14	3	8	-	1	-	-	12
Total	45	43	3	4	3	6	104
Percentage	43.2%	41.3%	2.9%	3.9%	2.9%	5.8%	100%

Table 3. *The proportion of the Cognitive Levels in Textbook*

	LOTS	HOTS	Total
Total Percentage	87.4%	12.6%	100%

This study shows that Lower-Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) have a higher percentage than Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). Each chapter is dominated by questions in the form of LOTS such as remember, understand, and apply.

2. The Suitability of Essay Reading Questions in the Form of HOTS with *Merdeka* Curriculum Criteria

In this study, the researcher finds 7 questions that might be classified as Creative Thinking and Innovation. Then 7 questions fall into the Critical Thinking and Problem Solving category. However, the researcher did not find any questions in the Communication and Collaboration categories of this textbook involving essay reading.

a. Creative Thinking and Innovation

7 questions that can be categorized into Critical Thinking and Problem Solving as follows:

1) Many teachers have concerns about students' use of cell phones at school and in the classroom. Think of three reasons for and against this issue and explain your ideas from your experience. (C8, T9, N7, P90)
2) "She goes to Anggawangsha Senior High School." Write a new sentence in different form but with the same idea as the sentence above. (C3, T6, N1, P34)
3) Can you figure out what Jen's mom looks like? Try to draw her picture. (C5, T7, N5, P56)
4) Sometimes, young children like you don't like to eat certain foods at meal time. What ideas do you have to get children to eat! (C6, T8, N5, P68)
5) "Only something about being self-reliant and not being entitled…"

Create negative imperative from those two phrases.

a. Don't…
b. …

(C8, T9, N5, P90)

6) "It's just a speck of dust." Create another sentence that have the same meaning. (C8, T9, N6, P90)
7) Write about your likes and dislikes: what you like or don't like doing in your free time. Write eight sentences. Use like, don't like, love, and hate. (C9, T4, N5, P102)

All of these questions fall under the category of creative thinking and innovation because students can develop, generate, and implement their innovative ideas. For example, in question (6): "It's just a speck of dust." Create another sentence with the same meaning. (C8, T9, N6, P90), students are challenged to think creatively by creating a new sentence with the same meaning based on the statement "It's just a speck of dust."

b. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

7 questions that can be categorized into Critical Thinking and Problem Solving as follows:

1) Where is the supermarket? (C4, T8, N4, P46)
2) Where is the police station? (C4, T8, N5, P46)
3) Complete the table based on the text above (C9, T4, N4, P102)

	Entertaiments	Foods	School Subjects
Like			
Dislike			

4) Find out and rewrite the adjective from the dialog. Give the meaning of each (C14, T7, N3, P161)

No.	Adjective	Meaning
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

5) How was Sam's relationship with his sister when they were young? (C3, T2, N3, P29)

6) Many teachers have concerns about students' use of cell phones at school and in the classroom. Think of three reasons for against this issue and explain your ideas from your own experience. (C8, T9, N7, P90)
7) Identify the elements of text: orientation, series of events, and reorientation. (C13, T7, N5, P150)

All of these questions fall under the category of critical thinking and problem solving because students can identify, analyze, examine, and evaluate information, arguments, claims, and facts for use in everyday life. For example, in question (6) Many teachers have concerns about students' use of cell phones at school and in the classroom. Think of three reasons for against this issue and explain your ideas from your own experience (C8, T9, N7, P90). Students are expected to think critically and address the problem by identifying three reasons why students should not use cell phones at school and in the classroom based on their experiences

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that the 104 essay reading questions in this textbook align with the 6 cognitive levels of the revised Bloom's Taxonomy. The six cognitive levels are as follows: remember, understand, and apply are in the Lower-Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) category, while analyze, evaluate, and create are in the Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) category. According to the researcher's data analysis, the frequency of essay reading questions is 43.2% remember, 41.3% understand, 2.9% apply, 3.9% analyze, 2.9% evaluation, and 5.8% create.

Apart from that, the results show that several essay reading questions in this book are quite compatible with the 4Cs criteria. According to the results of data analysis carried out by the researcher, there are 7 essay reading questions assigned as Creative Thinking and Innovation in which students are expected to explore, produce, and implement their ideas (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2018). In this study, the majority of the create-level questions were classed as Creative Thinking and Innovation. Then there are 7 essay questions classified as Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, in which students are asked to identify, analyze, study, and evaluate information or facts in their daily lives (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2018). In this study, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving involve the levels of analysis and evaluation.

According to the findings of this study, Lower-Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) dominate the majority of the essay reading questions in this textbook, which is 87.4%. Then, questions in the Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) category show at a frequency of around 12.6%. Aside from that, the HOTS questions in this book closely align with the Merdeka Curriculum or 21st century learning requirements, which are Creative Thinking and Innovation and Critical Thinking and Problem Solving.

This study provides new perspectives for the researcher by showing the importance of thinking with the abilities that each individual possesses. Even though it

appears that only a small number show higher-order thinking skills compared to lower-order thinking skills, textbook author and teacher already aware of the importance of higher levels of thinking in education because they have included a form of questioning that makes students think critically and creatively. Then, in current learning or Merdeka Curriculum, students should use their creativity and be able to solve problems by thinking critically.

CONCLUSION

According to the researcher's analysis, the essay reading questions in the "Joyful English" textbook cover all Bloom's Taxonomy levels. All cognitive levels include remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating. Then, some Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) questions are well-suited to current learning criteria, which include creative thinking and innovation, followed by critical thinking and problem solving.

Although the number of questions in the form of Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in this book is relatively small. This book has a small number of Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) questions. However, this textbook is an effective English textbook that is appropriate for students, specifically junior high school students who are new to learning new skills, because it can help students develop their cognitive abilities. This book can be utilized as an extra resource for teachers who want to deliver exercises to their students because it is relevant to the current curriculum. Furthermore, using this book allows teachers and students to gain a better understanding of how to apply knowledge in everyday life.

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