

Relevancy of Revised Bloom's Taxonomy in School-Level English Language Curriculum

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Abstract

The study is based on the analysis of curriculum objectives of Compulsory English textbooks for grades 6, 9 and 11 based on the educational taxonomy of Bloom and its relevance. It is based on the document analysis of all two-level curriculum analysis: basic and secondary level and the selection of the objectives in relation to the six levels of educational objectives and higher order thinking and lower order thinking skills. Based on the international and national review of secondary sources, the study focuses on the curriculum analysis of the Compulsory English curriculum. It was found that the curriculum objectives were more focused on reading and writing skills compared to listening and speaking skills. With regard to thinking skills, it was found that the majority of the curriculum objectives and its learning outcomes included Lower Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) more than Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in grades 6 and 9 than of grade 11.

Key words: Curriculum, taxonomic, order-skills, hierarchy, techniques

Background

In language pedagogy, the curriculum is a reflection of different educational elements, such as contents, learning objectives, instructional techniques, evaluation scheme, and recommended books for discussion, to be used in a language classroom. Language is a complex human behaviour and all elements of language cannot be taught at a time to make it a successful teaching. Any successful teaching requires the selection of content depending on the set objectives, proficiency, level of difficulty and duration of the course. Similarly, Candlin (1984 as in Nguyen, 2015) suggests that curricula are concerned with making general statements about language learning, learning purpose, experience, evaluation and the role and relationships of teachers and learners. Therefore, the taxonomy of educational objectives is essential to make a curriculum relevant and learner-focused. The study of taxonomy helps educators develop a common language and framework to connect standards with specific rubrics and techniques that teachers can use to help their students reach their mastery.

Therefore, curriculum planning is useful in decision-making with identifying learning needs and purposes, establishing goals and objectives; selecting and grading content; organising appropriate learning arrangements and learner grouping; selecting, adapting, or developing appropriate materials, learning tasks, and assessment and evaluation tools. When we design any syllabus, we should think about its teachability and learnability on the part of teachers and learners respectively. The basic analysis of curriculum in terms of language skills and identification of higher and lower order thinking skills are essential factors to be considered in syllabus designing in pre-hand before we plan curriculum designing and take an act of planning.

Problem Statement

Learning process, contents and outcomes are the major components in the curriculum in basic and secondary level education. The majority of language skills affect reading and writing completed by students in grades 6, 9 and 11 in the curriculum system in Nepal. Further, students' skills in reading and writing largely depend upon the teachers who facilitate them are even low, as shown consistently in test results from the National Final Exam.

This problem is made even more complicated by several factors, including:

The curriculum and evaluation process is one of the problems of language learning where the objectives determined in the curriculum and evaluation process do not go together. As a result, the objectives set in the curriculum are not addressed properly. This happens when the exercises in the textbooks are not aligned with the objectives and the order of exercises including both lower-order thinking and higher-order thinking in questions. Therefore, having limited congruence of educational objectives, activities and assessments is the major problem in educational practices in school-level curriculum and textbooks.

In many instances in grades, English textbook difficulty levels do not match the student's level of knowledge. In this situation, it is essential to have a proper taxonomic study among the curriculum objectives and textbook exercises. Therefore, in order to determine the taxonomy of objectives in the curriculum based on skills, creativity and higher-order thinking, the study as such is essential in the context of Nepal.

Objectives of the Study

The major objectives of the study were: taxonomic analysis of curriculum objectives in Compulsory English of grades 6, 9 and 11 based on cognitive domain of Revised Bloom's

Taxonomy [RBT] and analysis of the curriculum objectives of High Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) and Low Order Thinking Skills (LOTS).

In line with curriculum objectives, the research questions of the study included the following:

- a. What are the major taxonomy of curriculum objectives of grade 6, 9 and 11 English textbooks based on RBT?
- b. What are the major order of exercises and their relevance based on RBT of selected textbooks?

The study was based on the cognitive domain of Revised Bloom's taxonomy. The level of curriculum objectives was categorised based on RBT, endorsed by CDC of grades 6, 9 and 11 in 2020 as a revised curriculum.

Review of Related Literature

Bloom's taxonomy has been a tool for designing educational objectives, developing assessments, making state standards more useful to teachers and students, designing curriculum and formulating higher level thinking skills. There are three main domains described in Bloom's taxonomy: cognitive domain, affective and psychomotor domain. Among these domains, the cognitive domain is the most elaborated domain developed by Benjamin Bloom in 1956 to address knowledge and intellectual level of development. Likewise, the development of affective domain was developed by the coordination of David R. Krathwohl in 1964 to address experience and feelings. Similarly, the psychomotor domain was developed by E.J. Simpson and Anita Harrow in 1972 (Grondlund, 1985) to address symbolising mental practices in learners.

The taxonomy of educational objectives and intellectual thinking is mostly influenced by cognitive domain. Therefore, this study is based on the cognitive domain of the curriculum objectives and relevance of the exercises used in the textbooks of grades 6, 9 and 11 prescribed by the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC). For this study, the levels of learning will be identified using Revised Bloom's Taxonomy [RBT] of Educational Objectives (2001) adopting the ideas of Anderson (2001). According to RBT, the cognitive domain includes those educational objectives associated with the attainment and development of knowledge and intellect. The objectives of the cognitive domain can be reduced to six categories: remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating and creating (Anderson, 2001). The theoretical basis of the new taxonomy was brought into practice by Marzano and Kendall (2007) to address the issues in Bloom's taxonomy. Bloom believed that the level of difficulty gradually increased from the level of

knowledge to evaluation. The degree of familiarity plays a crucial role in arranging the level of knowledge.

On the other, the relevancy of the exercises plays a significant role and is related to the curriculum objectives. The exercises in the textbooks include a variety of language-related skills and aspects. There is a diverse pattern in the question formulation. According to Lindquist (1982), questions designed to measure the first two levels in Bloom's taxonomy, knowledge and comprehension, are the easiest to write. There are different levels of questions that can be applied to the relevancy of the exercises. Questions that focus on the attainment of knowledge ask for recall or recognition, a simple repetition of a word or idea from the reading to fill a void in classroom discussion. It is the kind of thinking that asks for the author's name or recalls some detail about a setting. It is based on the hierarchy of higher level thinking skills.

Apart from the above description, remembering is the initial level of knowledge development, understanding is the second level of knowledge development and it involves the addition of ideas to conclude. The third level is applying or which is related to transferring ideas into another set so that students can interpret the way an idea is used in textual exercises to the way the same idea relates to their lives. The concept of analysing knowledge is the fourth level where questions involving analysis divide the literature into parts, asking the reader to study each one. In language exercises, questions centre on sentence or paragraph structure, the pattern of idea development, word choice, and figurative language all ask for analysis, as do those which ask for distinguishing between characters, diagramming plot, or comparing two themes (Lindquist, 1982). The fifth level is evaluation. Questions in the exercises help the reader to evaluate and ask the reader to make a judgement about the work, to form an opinion based on set standards using the understanding derived from studying the other levels. The learners can only answer these kinds of questions if they can answer questions at all other levels; they can put in rank order the more powerful of three characters only if s/he has studied each character fully, from a physical description (knowledge), personality traits (comprehension), comparison of the literary characters to real persons (application) to how the character relates to other characters in the book (analysis). The final level of cognitive development in RBT is creating which relates the praxis of the knowledge in a new creation and contributes to the entire body of knowledge.

This section reviews the use of Revised Bloom's Taxonomy [RBT] as a main framework to analyze the English curriculum objectives of grades 6, 9 and 11. There are number of literature published internationally and nationally has been reviewed to get a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study, which is given below respectively:

Literature Published at International Level

There are few researches (Tabari & Tabari, 2015; Nguyen, 2015) conducted in the area of Revised Bloom's Taxonomy and their practicality in the international context. In this section, we focus on a few international reviews and research. Hirst (1974 as on Frust, 1981) argued that the taxonomy in treating objectives as isolated ends fails to bring out logical interrelations-the central objectives of education as "elements within integrated developing structures of understanding". In this view, items of knowledge such as concepts, facts, norms, and principles are focused instead of being detached from each other, forming distinctive networks of relationships. A proposition becomes meaningful when the concepts are used in a particular way in a given domain. But the acquisition of knowledge in a given domain involves not only the mastery of such networks of concepts (with their rules of relationships), but also mastery of operations with these, and of particular criteria of truth or validity associated with these concepts, as well as more general criteria. This research is useful for exploring the relevancy of the set of objectives of grades 6, 9 and 11 in the Nepalese context of the language subjects; Compulsory English and Nepali. It helps the teacher educators to link the practical dimension in the provided curriculum in relation to the prescribed textbooks. Therefore, the concept of RBT is one of the essential concepts to take in consideration as a main basis of analysis. Bloom et al. (1956) treated the taxonomy of knowledge by including communicability and comprehensiveness as well as two other properties or "criteria," those of provocativeness and acceptability. By the last two, the taxonomy must stimulate thought about educational problems and must be accepted by professionals in education. We can find the practices of textbook analysis researched from theoretical and practical aspects along with the teachers' feedback. In this regard, Nguyen (2015) conducted doctoral research of English language textbook grade 6: A case study from secondary schools in Vietnam. He focused on the theoretical and practical aspects of the exercises in a textbook based on teachers' and students' feedback. He found that the exercises were found to be satisfactory and suggested that the exercises need to be an activity-oriented and high level of application based on self-study materials. This research explores the perception of the learners in the teaching-learning process however it fails to incorporate the linkage between the taxonomic analysis and the objectives in the curriculum. The study of Tabari & Tabari (2015) is crucial in this regard who explored the issue of taxonomy in relation to the Gardener's multiple intelligence. They conducted a research entitled, 'Links between Bloom's taxonomy and Gardener's multiple intelligences: The issue of textbook analysis' based on Australian context and found that the cognitive domain was influential in the objectives of the curriculum and in the exercises of the textbook.

Mizbani & Clark (2017) conducted research on analysing listening and speaking activities of Iranian EFL Textbook Prospect 3 Through Bloom's Revised Taxonomy which aimed at analysing listening and speaking activities of the textbook Prospect 3 used for Junior High School third graders in order to investigate in which level of lower or higher of the learning objectives related to Bloom's (2001) Revised Taxonomy of Cognitive Domain. The findings revealed that all of the activities of listening and speaking skills were classified as the low level of cognitive complexity and could not train the students of this grade for high levels of learning objectives.

Kiksal and Ulim (2018) conducted a research on language assessment through Bloom's taxonomy and tried to investigate whether the exam questions of General English courses are based on both higher and lower-order thinking levels. This study was carried out through qualitative methods of data collection. The findings of the study suggested that the analysed exam papers lacked the higher level cognitive skills contained in Bloom's Taxonomy.

Aheisibwe, Kobusigye and Tayebwa (2021) conducted research to examine how Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives can be used in bridging the education gap in higher institutions of learning. A cross-sectional design was adopted with 180 participants selected purposely. Respondents described the cognitive domain as activities of the mind, affective domain as the ways in which people deal with situations emotionally and the psychomotor domain as the skills attained. The study suggests using cognitive, affective and psychomotor methods of teaching.

Tayyeh, Dehham & Muhammed (2021) conducted a research which aimed to analyse reading comprehension available in an English textbook, name it, "English for Iraq" for 2nd intermediate grade based on the cognitive domain of Bloom's taxonomy. Using content analysis, the study consisted of all reading 282 comprehension questions found in the textbook. The results revealed that the highest percentage of the questions were remembering (49.65%), and understanding (36.52%), and less for the other levels, applying (2.48%), analysing (4.26%), evaluating (6.38%), and finally, creating (0.71%). These results exposed that all the cognitive levels were covered by the reading comprehension questions. However, most of the questions were dominated by lower levels of cognitive processes.

From the review mentioned above the study of Bloom's taxonomy was found to be specific in exploring the use the knowledge into different levels of intellectual ability. It was found helpful even to bridge the knowledge in higher education. Therefore, this study will focus on the educational taxonomy in relation to the newly prescribed curriculum of grades 6, 9

and 11 in relation to the different levels of the cognitive domain.

Literature Published at National Level

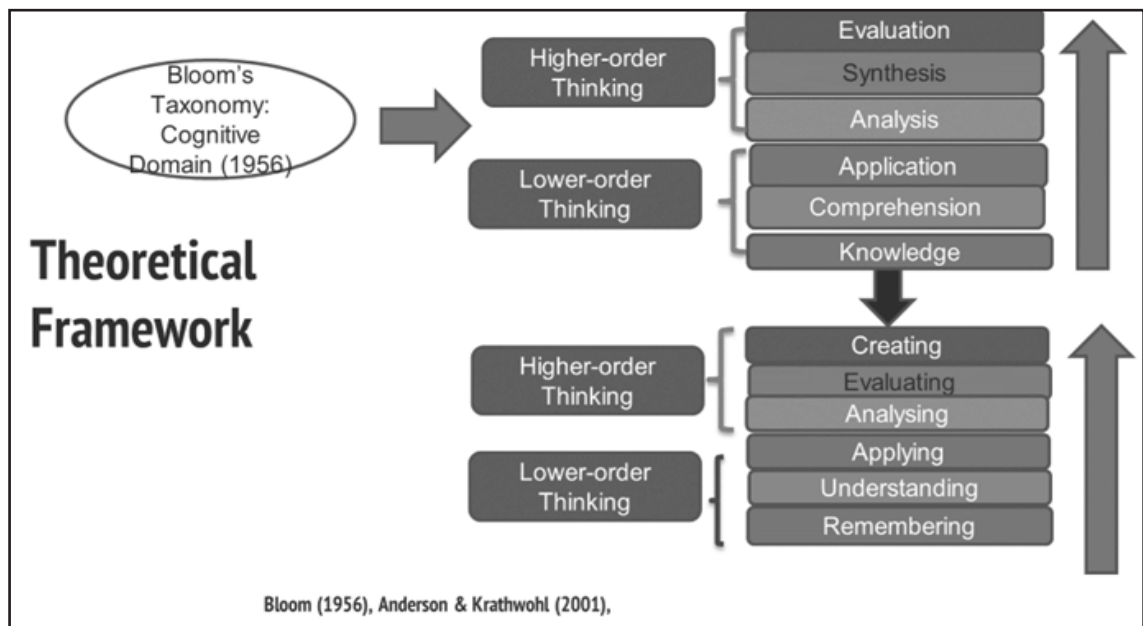
There are few researches (Sharma, 1995; Bhattarai , 2001, CWIN-Nepal, 2004; Rimal, 2062) conducted in Nepal which tried to focus on the relevance of textbooks based on the content of skills, physical aspects, content organisation, the feasibility of curriculum in an international context, and gender issues. In this regard, Sharma (1995) did his doctoral research in the primary level sample exercises. The research was based on the document analysis and found that the course book written in Nepal were more content-focused than on language skills. The major focus of those textbooks was on writing skills. Likewise, Bhattarai (2001) made an intensive review of textbooks of English at the primary level where he highlighted the physical aspects and contents of the textbooks. He found that the ideal textbook needs to relate the brain and the physical aspects of the textbook. In addition, the psychological aspect plays a significant role in exploring key elements of any textbook. The selection of content, gradation and sequence of language items, age, interest, teaching-learning activities, and reflection are the major elements in the selection of the content. Likewise, regarding physical aspects, paper quality, cover page, price, stitching and binding, print quality, units and the organisation of exercises are the major aspects to be considered. Similarly, Khadka (2002) did research on language research in Nepali textbooks on the sample exercises and found that the textbooks were found to be more focused on writing skills and less focused on creative exercises. CWIN-Nepal. (2004) conducted a research entitled ‘content analysis of curriculum and textbooks (Grade 1-12) from rights-based and child-centred perspective’. It found that the exercises of the textbooks were children-friendly, gender friendly, focused on skill based and oriented toward developing creative skills. Rimal (2062) conducted a research review on the findings of a report related to exercises used in Nepali language textbooks. He found that exercises were less related to the curriculum objectives. Likewise, he found that fewer exercises prescribed to the learners and the student's engagement in the exercises needed to be incorporated. Similarly, Khanal, Acharya, Dhakal and Sapkota (2016) made a feasibility study of Nepal's participation in international assessment and found that there is a significant overlap of content and domain of learning between the framework of international assessment and national curriculum. However, there is a lot more to be done to make the contents and domain of learning congruent. Two such tasks are - adaptation and alignment of the content of national curriculum in an international testing context and redesigning the existing examination system of schools to prepare students for internationally designed testing. From the analysis, we explored the issue of practicality and felt the gap in the analysis of curriculum objectives, textual exercises and level of thinking. The short need for new curriculum analysis of grades 6, 9 and 11 in relation to textual exercises designed is a pertinent issue to be explored.

Therefore, the link between the curriculum objectives and educational taxonomic analysis of the exercises in the language curriculum was felt as an important area to be researched. This helps to determine standardisation of the exercises and identify the elements that are presented in the textbooks in Nepal compared to international practices.

Theoretical Framework

The information collected from multiple sources will be analysed through the lens of revised taxonomy of educational objectives in cognitive domain Anderson (2001) and the original works of Bloom et al. (1956) Taxonomy of educational objectives. Bloom has specified six levels of learning beginning with lowest to highest, knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation however the revised Bloom's taxonomy. The focus on the exercises will be analysed both in terms of level of knowledge, learners' engagement in the new task, and level of energy or motivation of engagement in relation to the curriculum objectives specified using six levels of analysis beginning with remembering to create a body of new knowledge. The curriculum objectives and exercise in language curriculum and textbooks, therefore, will be analysed with the six levels of knowledge cognition.

The study includes the following theoretical framework:



Methods and Procedures of the Study

As the purpose of the study was to review and analyse the curriculum objectives of grades 6, 9 and 11 prescribed by Curriculum Development Centre, Sanothimi, Bhaktapur, the study is based on the document analysis which includes coding contents to themes (Creswell, 2009; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018) based of curriculum of grade 6, 9 and 11.

The study was delimited to the cognitive domain of revised Bloom's Taxonomy and all curriculum objectives of grade 6, 9 and 11 textbooks were specified based on the selected taxonomy and curriculum objectives in six levels of study on the cognitive domain and six elements analysis; remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating, creating in relation to the curriculum and textbook in the selected grades using a checklist and thematic analysis based on General Content Analysis Process Model (Flick, 2012). The curriculum objectives of both English Curriculum of grades 6,9 and 11, prescribed by CDC, Nepal were analysed on the basis of the language skills and order of thinking skills.

The research is based on the analysis of curriculum objectives of grade 6, 9 and 11 and a descriptive analysis on the aspects of cognitive domain aspects in relation to the curriculum objectives. Furthermore, the analysed data was categorised in relation to the language skills and aspects.

It is important to consider the ethical guidelines to protect the subjects chosen in the research process physically, socially, psychologically, and culturally. The researcher received consent from any subject participating in the research work to gather the required information for the study. As this research is based on document analysis, gender-issues, religious issues and the other issues that affect the learners' psychology were reviewed carefully. Moreover, a researcher used to safeguard the right to privacy of the informants and also honour the rights of anonymity (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018) to develop their confidentiality to a fuller extent possible. In this study too, the required information and document review maintained the balance without biasness to any content or text selection by any others nationally or internationally. As qualitative researchers, we were conscious of protecting the cultural issues, gender or child rights from any type of social, psychological and cultural harm, considering their rights to privacy to make this research work more ethical.

Discussion and Findings

This section includes the basic analysis of the English Language curriculum based on the

curriculum objectives, skills-wise analysis and the level of thinking of the learning outcomes of grades 6, 9, and 11.

Analysis of Basic Education Curriculum, Grade 6 English Curriculum

In the context of Nepal, English is taught as a compulsory subject from grade one and even in early childhood development. The curriculum of grade 6 has been developed to cater to the essential linguistic needs of the children learning English and aimed to incorporate recent trends and contemporary developments in language learning. The main aim of teaching English at this level is to enable the learners to communicate with confidence (CDC, 2020).

Taxonomic Analysis of Grade 6 English Curriculum Objectives

The curriculum aims to enable the students to exchange their ideas with people who speak or write English. Furthermore, it aims to expose the students to diversity in knowledge and pleasure available in both written and spoken English. The major focus of this curriculum is on language skills viz. listening, speaking, reading and writing and aims to develop communicative competence on the part of students. The students learning English in these grades will develop their linguistic base in English for their further studies.

Skills-wise Analysis of Learning Outcomes

The curriculum of Grade six has outlined the learning outcomes focusing on each skill: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Listening included five, speaking included ten, reading skills included eleven and writing included ten learning outcomes to enhance the overall language skills of the students. This study found that reading and writing skills were more focused among the other two skills in sub-components as well. It has aimed at the specific outcomes under each skill.

Listening Skill

The English Curriculum of grade six has determined the five learning outcomes to be developed in the learners in listening skills after the completion of grade six. It includes understanding and extracting specific information from short and clearly articulated spoken English on everyday matters, understanding and picking out the main points from short audio materials, showing an understanding of conversations on predictable matters, following short and simple instructions, and understanding information from electronic media e.g. radio and television.

Speaking Skill

The English Curriculum of grade six has determined ten learning outcomes to be developed in the speaking skill after the completion of grade six. They include asking and answering simple questions in the areas of immediate need, exchanging information on familiar matters, expressing feelings in simple language, acting in short dialogues, describing pictures, describing charts, tables and diagrams, retelling short stories using simple sentences, describing oneself including the aspects of their background clearly in simple terms, speak with correct stress and intonation, describe people, places and things in simple terms.

Reading Skill

The English Curriculum of grade six has determined eleven learning outcomes to be developed in the reading skill by the completion of grade six. They include understanding short simple personal letters and very simple formal letters and emails, understanding and extracting specific information from simple everyday materials, understanding simple brief rules and regulations, understanding texts describing people, places, everyday life and culture, understanding and retrieving required information from graphic texts (charts, tables, graphs and maps), understand simple brief recipes and instructions, find the meaning of unfamiliar words from context, find out the main ideas and supporting details from short texts, understand a short simple biography of a national figure, read short poems and stories for pleasure and understanding and consult a dictionary (including e-dictionary) to learn the different aspects of words.

Writing Skill

The English Curriculum of grade six has determined ten learning outcomes to be developed in the writing skill by the completion of grade six. They include writing personal letters and simple official (school-related) letters, e.g. leave application, writing simple, brief instructions, interpreting charts, tables and diagrams, writing impressions and opinions about topics of personal interest (e.g. lifestyles and culture, stories), using basic everyday vocabulary and expressions, write short, simple biographies, write a series of simple sentences about their family, living conditions, and educational background, write simple stories based on the given picture or text or both, write very short, basic descriptions of events, past activities and personal experiences, write short simple essays on topics of interest and use punctuation correctly.

Analysis of Grade 6 curriculum based on Learning Level (HOTS and LOTS)

The research focused on the learning outcomes determined in the curriculum and the analysis of the Higher-Level Thinking Skills (HOTS) and Lower-Level Thinking Skills

(LOTS) in the learning outcomes. It was found that most of the learning skills included the components from the LOTs. There were very few skills that included HOTS.

Regarding listening skills, the English Curriculum of grade six has determined the five learning outcomes to be developed in the learners in listening skills after the completion of grade six. It includes understanding and extracting specific information from short and clearly articulated spoken English on everyday matters, understanding and picking out the main points from short audio materials, showing an understanding of conversations on predictable matters, following short and simple instructions, and understanding information from electronic media e.g. radio and television.

It can be inferred that among the five learning outcomes, the first three learning outcomes; understand and extracting specific information from short and clearly articulated spoken English on everyday matters, understanding and picking out the main points from short audio materials and showing an understanding of conversations on predictable matters, are related with the basic level of thinking: knowledge/remembering. Therefore, these learning objectives fall under the category of LOTS. The other two learning outcomes; following short and simple instructions, and understanding information from electronic media e.g. radio and television could be included under the LOTS level of thinking skills. Here, learning outcomes are related with applying the learnt knowledge in real life and exploring the information and searching on the web. There are so many HOTS levels of learning outcomes which requires learners to analyse, evaluate and create the things learnt in the classroom.

Regarding reading skills, the English Curriculum of grade six has determined eleven learning outcomes to be developed in the reading skill by the completion of grade six. They include understanding short simple personal letters and very simple formal letters and emails, understanding and extracting specific information from simple everyday materials, understanding simple brief rules and regulations, understanding texts describing people, places, everyday life and culture, and understanding and retrieving required information from graphic texts (charts, tables, graphs and maps), understand simple brief recipes and instructions. Among them, seven learning outcomes are related to the knowledge/remembering and understanding level of thinking. Therefore, these skills are included under LOTS skills. The other four learning outcomes are related to applying a level of thinking. They include finding the meaning of unfamiliar words from context, finding out the main ideas and supporting details from short texts, understanding a short simple biography of a national figure, reading short poems and stories for pleasure and understanding and consulting a dictionary (including e-dictionary) to learn the different aspects of words. Therefore, these learning outcomes are related to LOTS of skills. There

are no such HOTS skills mentioned in the curriculum.

Regarding speaking skill, the English Curriculum of grade six has determined ten learning outcomes in the learning to be developed in the speaking skill after the completion of grade six. They include asking and answering simple questions in the areas of immediate need, exchange information on familiar matters, express feelings in simple language, act in short dialogues, describe pictures, describe charts, tables and diagrams. These seven learning outcomes can be included under LOTS skill. They require the level of knowledge and understanding skill to be developed among the learners. The other three outcomes; retell short stories using simple sentences, describe oneself including the aspects of their background clearly in simple terms, speak with correct stress and intonation, describe people, places and things in simple terms, are included under HOTS skills as they require the synthesising the information skills and creating skills. They need to describe the context and the topic they live in.

The English Curriculum of grade six has determined ten learning outcomes in the writing skill. They include write personal letters and simple official (school-related) letters, e.g. leave application, write simple, brief instructions, interpret charts, tables and diagrams, write impressions and opinions about topics of personal interest (e.g. lifestyles and culture, stories), using basic everyday vocabulary and expressions, write short, simple biographies, write a series of simple sentences about their family, living conditions. These seven outcomes can be included under the LOTS skills of thinking. They require the basic skills of knowledge and understanding in order to achieve the outcomes required. The other three learning outcomes require the basic educational background, write simple stories based on the given picture or text or both, write very short, basic descriptions of events, past activities and personal experiences, write short simple essays on topics of interest and use punctuation correctly. The outcomes require the demonstration skills among the learners to be acquired. Therefore, the require skills such as inferencing, description, and other creative skills. So, these skills are included under HOTS skills.

Taxonomy of Grade 9 English Curriculum Objectives

This curriculum aims at enabling students to communicate their ideas in English. It also aims to expose students to the vast treasure of knowledge available in both written and spoken English. Competencies and learning outcomes appropriate to level and grade, language functions, the learning facilitation process and assessment procedures are systematically organised in the curriculum. It was found that the curriculum of grade 9 focused more on the reading and writing skills elements, however the learners were explored to the different engaging activities in the speaking skills to develop language skills.

Skills-wise Analysis of Learning Outcomes

The curriculum of Grade nine has outlined the learning outcomes focusing on each skill: listening, speaking, reading and writing. It has aimed at specific outcomes under each skill.

Listening Skill

The English Curriculum of Grade nine has determined six learning outcomes for the listening skill. They include: understand the intended meaning of the text and respond accordingly, follow standard and clearly articulated talks, announcements and speeches, comprehend and follow the main points of extended discussion in a speech, understand and extract specific information from short and clearly articulated spoken English, understand and pick out/identify the main ideas and supporting details from news bulletins and simple recorded materials about familiar subjects delivered at normal speed and understand and follow multi-step instructions and detailed direction.

Speaking Skill

The English Curriculum of grade nine has determined twelve learning outcomes under speaking skill. They include: express and respond to feelings such as surprise, happiness, sadness, interest and indifference, express belief, opinion, agreement and disagreement appropriately, give and seek personal views and opinions in discussions, give detailed accounts of experiences, feelings and reactions, present and defend opinions with relevant explanations in discussion, participate actively in routine and non-routine formal and informal discussion, deal with situations likely to arise in public places, explain problems with reasons, give and follow detailed instructions and directions, describe pictures, maps, charts, tables and diagrams, narrate stories, events and experiences and give a presentation on a familiar topic.

Reading Skill

The English Curriculum of grade nine has determined ten learning outcomes under reading skill. These include: understand texts that consist of high-frequency everyday language, understand straightforward factual texts, understand the description of events, feelings and wishes, extract relevant information from texts, understand and identify main ideas and supporting details from the texts, understand and identify the gist from argumentative texts, understand the information from texts on contemporary issues, scan longer texts in order to locate desired information, and gather information from different parts of a text, extrapolate the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases from the contexts and deduce sentence meaning and read literary texts for pleasure and understanding.

Writing Skill

The English Curriculum of grade nine has determined ten learning outcomes under writing

skill. These include: describe experiences, feelings and events, write stories, letters, emails, notes, notices, advertisements, recipe and instructions, write accounts of experiences describing feelings and reactions in simple connected text, write short descriptive, narrative, expository and persuasive essays, interpret charts, tables and diagrams, write short biographies, write short news articles and news stories, write short reviews of books and films, paraphrase short written texts and write formal messages of condolence, sympathy and congratulation.

Analysis of Grade 9 curriculum based on Learning Level (HOTS and LOTS)

The research focused on the learning outcomes determined in the curriculum and the analysis of the Higher-Level Thinking Skills (HOTS) and Lower-Level Thinking Skills (LOTS) in the learning outcomes. The study found that the majority of the skills were included under the LOTS that the HOTS order of development.

Listening Skill

The learning outcomes based on the level of thinking skills, all the learning outcomes can be categorised under the knowledge and understanding level of thinking skill, such as: understand the intended meaning of the text and respond accordingly, follow standard and clearly articulated talks, announcements and speeches, comprehend and follow the main points of extended discussion in a speech, understand and extract specific information from short and clearly articulated spoken English, understand and pick out/identify the main ideas and supporting details from news bulletins Majority of the thinking skills fall under the understanding the content knowledge, following the talks, extracting the specific information, identifying the main ideas and understanding the information. Therefore, these skills are categorised under LOTS skills. All six outcomes fall under this category.

Speaking Skill

Regarding speaking skill, when we analyse them based on the revised bloom's taxonomy perspective and thinking skills, the seven learning outcomes are included under the LOTS skills; knowledge, understanding and applying level. The learners are expected to express and respond their feelings in the speaking skills, express their experiences and participate in the routine and non-routine activities. They are expected to express and respond to feelings such as surprise, happiness, sadness, interest and indifference, express belief, opinion, agreement and disagreement appropriately, give and seek personal views and opinions in discussions, give detailed accounts of experiences, feelings and reactions,

The other five skills are included under the HOTS skills, like analysing, evaluating and

creating level of thinking. Here, the learning outcomes include both participation and discussion along their viewpoints, explain the respective problems with proper logic, narrate stories and relate their experiences, and finally be able to present in the familiar topic. The final learning outcome is a form of creation level to deliver what they have experienced or learnt.

Reading Skill

The English Curriculum of grade nine has determined ten learning outcomes under reading skill. Analysing the reading skill learning outcomes determined in the grade nine English ten learning outcomes based on the level of thinking skills, there are six learning outcomes which could be categorised under the LOTS skills. Here, the learners are expected to understand the texts that consist of high frequency everyday language and the factual texts. The learners are expected to extract the information from the texts and understand the main points from the text. These kinds of outcomes fall under the category of knowledge and understanding level of thinking. When the learners are able to comprehend the reading and be able to answer the question. This is related to the analysis level of thinking.

The other four learning outcomes are included under the HOTS skills. The level of skills like analysing, evaluating and creating a level of thinking are also included in the learning outcomes. Here, in the outcomes of the reading skills, the learners are expected to extract information from the text and deduce the meaning, extrapolate the meaning of unfamiliar words and the context it is used. In addition, they are expected to read the texts for pleasure.

Writing Skill

Analysing the writing skill learning outcomes determined in the grade nine English, there are eight learning outcomes which could be categorised under the LOTS skills. The learning outcomes include the level of thinking like describing their experiences, feelings, events; writing stories, letters, emails, notes, notices, advertisements, recipes and instructions. Furthermore, the curriculum expects them to write accounts of experiences describing feelings and reactions in simple connected text, write short descriptive, narrative, expository and persuasive essays, interpret charts, tables and diagrams, write short biographies, write short news articles and news stories, write short reviews of books and films, paraphrase short written texts. Therefore, these skills fall under the category knowledge/remembering, understanding and applying level of thinking.

There are two learning outcomes which could be included under the HOTS skills. The skills such as analysing and evaluating skills are expected to be developed in the learners as well. The learners are expected to develop interpreting charts, tables and diagrams and prepare the formal examples of the texts such as, messages of condolence, sympathy and congratulation based on their context. This form of writing could be included under the

creating stage of writing.

Taxonomy of Grade 11/12 English Curriculum Objectives

This curriculum has been revised and developed in line with the aims and objectives of the National Curriculum Framework for School Education, 2076 BS. This grade 11 and 12 English curriculum has been developed in line with the spirit of the new National Curriculum Framework (NCF), 2. The curriculum addresses all four language skills with prime focus on reading and writing skills. It focuses on the types of reading and writing skills that are necessary for the students in their real life. In addition, it includes the language functions which the students need for their further studies and the world of work. This curriculum is based on the principle that learners learn language when they get sufficient opportunity to use it in appropriate contexts. It relates content and the use of language. It was found that the curriculum focused on interlink between content and language in an integrated form. Therefore, the curriculum has focused not only on language and language functions, but also on a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts which provide a meaningful context for language learning. For some students, secondary education serves as a basis for preparation for university education, whereas for some other students, it may be a preparation for entry into the world of work. This curriculum tries to address the linguistic requirements of both types of students.

Skills-wise Analysis of Learning Outcomes

The curriculum of Grade eleven and twelve has outlined the learning outcomes focusing on each skill: listening, speaking, reading and writing. The focus is provided on reading and listening skills. However, listening and speaking skills have been focused both in the textbook and external evaluation in this revised curriculum. It has aimed at specific outcomes under each skill.

Listening Skill

There are eight major listening constructs mentioned in the curriculum regarding listening skill. They include: identify and discriminate stress and intonation patterns, listen to the spoken text and understand its gist and retrieve specific information from it, make inference while listening, listen to the spoken text and critically analyze and evaluate the information in it, Listen to the spoken text and take note of important information, participate actively and effectively in an interaction, listen to instructions, directions and announcements and follow them, gain knowledge and understanding of target culture (s) through listening.

Speaking Skill

There are twelve major speaking constructs mentioned in the curriculum regarding writing skill. They include: Participate effectively in interactions and conversations, participate effectively in an informal discussion, participate effectively in a formal discussion, give and take an interview. use telecommunications effectively, narrate a sequence of events or process, use suprasegmental features like stress, tone and intonation for expressing a range of meanings and emotions, make effective presentation, describe, people, objects, events, etc, seek and provide a wide variety of information and speak with critical analysis and evaluation and understand and demonstrate inter-cultural understanding.

Reading Skill

There are ten major reading constructs mentioned in the curriculum regarding reading skill. They include: read the texts intensively for information and understanding, read a variety of literary texts for pleasure, appreciation and interpretation, read the texts and critically analyse, interpret and evaluate the information, read the texts closely and understand the structure and organisation of the text, read the texts and predict the content and make inference, read the texts and take notes, interpret the paraorthographic texts, read texts and deduce the meaning of unfamiliar lexical items from the context, use an authentic English dictionary, thesaurus, encyclopaedia, and academic reference material, read and identify the practices and values of national and target cultures.

Writing Skill

There are sixteen major writing constructs mentioned in the curriculum regarding reading skill. They include: compose well- formed paragraphs, write different kinds of letters and emails with appropriate format and layout, write well organised essays on the given topics and the topics of own interest, write news articles on current issues, write formal reports in an appropriate style and format, narrate a sequence of events and personal experiences, describe a person or event appropriately, summarise a text, Write a book/film review, transfer information from tables, graphs and charts to prose and vice versa, prepare communiqué and press release, use the mechanics of writing properly, use various strategies for generating and organising ideas for writing, apply process approach to writing for producing a variety of creative writings and use an authentic English dictionary, thesaurus, encyclopaedia, and academic reference material.

Analysis of Grade 11/12 curriculum based on Learning Level (HOTS and LOTS)

The research focused on the learning outcomes determined in the curriculum and the analysis of the Higher-Level Thinking Skills (HOTS) and Lower-Level Thinking Skills (LOTS) in the learning outcomes.

Listening Skill

There are eight major listening constructs mentioned in the curriculum regarding listening skill. When we analyse them on the basis of the levels of thinking. Majority of the listening outcomes could be included under the LOTS level of thinking. There are four learning outcomes that can be included in the LOTS level. They include: identify and discriminate stress and intonation patterns, listen to the spoken text and understand its gist and retrieve specific information from it, make inference while listening, listen to the spoken text and critically analyse and evaluate the information in it, listen to the spoken text and take note of important information. These learning outcomes fall under the category of knowledge, understanding and applying the content knowledge as a form of regular activities in the teaching and learning procedures.

There are four learning outcomes that could be included in the HOTS level of thinking. They are: participate actively and effectively in an interaction, listen to instructions, directions and announcements and follow them, gain knowledge and understanding of target culture (s) through listening. These four learning outcomes focus on analysing, evaluating and creating a level of thinking. Here, the learners are required to analyse, classify and connect and demonstrate their skills by creating the knowledge.

Speaking Skill

There are twelve major speaking constructs mentioned in the curriculum regarding writing skill. Among them, there are six learning outcomes that are included under the LOTS level of thinking. They include: participate effectively in interactions and conversations, participate effectively in an informal discussion, participate effectively in a formal discussion, give and take an interview. These skills require the learners in remembering, understanding and applying the knowledge in the formal or informal discussions.

There are other six learning outcomes which could be categorised under the HOTS skills. They include; use telecommunications effectively, narrate a sequence of events or process, use suprasegmental features like stress, tone and intonation for expressing a range of meanings and emotions, make effective presentation, describe, people, objects, events, etc., seek and provide a wide variety of information and speak with critical analysis and evaluation and understand and demonstrate inter-cultural understanding. These skills require the learners to analyse the content and context, have a self-assessment of what they have learnt and finally be able to create the new knowledge in the respective level.

Reading Skill

There are ten major reading constructs mentioned in the curriculum regarding reading skill. There are eight learning outcomes which could be included under LOTS level of thinking. They include: read the texts intensively for information and understanding, read a variety

of literary texts for pleasure, appreciation and interpretation, read the texts closely and understand the structure and organisation of the text, read the texts and predict the content and make inference, read the texts and take notes, interpret the paraorthographic texts and read texts and deduce the meaning of unfamiliar lexical items from the context. These learning outcomes include skills like understanding the text, defining the lexical items, recognizing the difficult vocabulary and making use of the unfamiliar lexical items.

The other three learning outcomes which could be included under the HOTS skills of thinking. They include: read the texts and critically analyse, interpret and evaluate the information, use an authentic English dictionary, thesaurus, encyclopaedia, and academic reference material, read and identify the practices and values of national and target cultures. These learning outcomes require the skills of analysis, inferences, critical understanding of the text and creating and constructing the authentic use of language in developing reading skills.

Writing Skill

There are sixteen major writing constructs mentioned in the curriculum regarding reading skill. Among these learning outcomes, the seven learning outcomes could be included in the LOTS level of thinking. The learners are expected to compose well- formed paragraphs, write different kinds of letters and emails with appropriate format and layout, write well organised essays on the given topics and the topics of own interest, write news articles on current issues, write formal reports in an appropriate style and format, narrate a sequence of events and personal experiences, describe a person or event appropriately, summarise a text, write a book/film review based on the text. These learning outcomes are related with the knowledge or remembering, understanding and applying level of knowledge in developing writing skills.

The other eight learning outcomes could be included in the HOTS skills. It requires the learners to transfer information from tables, graphs and charts to prose and vice versa, prepare communiqué and press release, use the mechanics of writing properly, use various strategies for generating and organising ideas for writing, apply process approach to writing for producing a variety of creative writings and use an authentic English dictionary, thesaurus, encyclopaedia, and academic reference material. These skills rate the learners level of competence and confidence in analysing the text, evaluating themselves in preparing the different forms of writing and creating new pieces of writing.

Pedagogical Implications

The major pedagogical implications that could be drawn from the curriculum analysis were

on the integration of the language skills to be focused on the learning outcomes of the curriculum design. The major focus in the need analysis needs to be taken into consideration in the incorporation of the sub-skills in each language skill. On the other hand, the sub-skills help to select the textual exercise while preparing the textbooks followed by the exercises. When the learners engage with the exercises, they are supposed to full the learning outcomes laid by the curriculum and develop the HOTs and LOTs skills based on the exercises they engage in. Furthermore, the critical thinking skills are to be outlined based on the curriculum objectives, the achievement level of the students and the life skills they demonstrate in their life.

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