The Analysis of Objectives of Grade 10 English Textbook for Ethiopia Using Bloom's Revised Taxonomy

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Abstract

The problem under this study was analyzing the objectives of Grade 10 English Textbook for Ethiopia. It was particularly targeted on finding out whether the objectives are measurable or not, and evaluating them in terms of Lower-Order and Higher-Order Thinking Skills. The study adopted purely descriptive quantitative research approach. The findings indicated that 85.1% of the textbook objectives are measurable, which are clear and achievable. The remaining 14.9% of the objectives are non-measurable, which are rather general and unclear. Regarding the cognition dimension dominating the objectives of the textbook, this study indicated that 78.47% of the textbook objectives are Lower Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) focused. The remaining 21.5% of the objectives are Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). Finally, the study recommends textbook developers to make all objectives measurable, and reconsider the proportion of Lower Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) and Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in the objectives they design in Grade 10 English Textbook for Ethiopia. More importantly, the English teachers have to give extra classroom activities related to HOTS.

Keywords: Bloom's taxonomy, Higher/Lower Order Thinking Skills, objectives

Introduction

One of the educational instruments and factors that need to be adapted and reviewed accordingly is textbooks; this is because, they are the vehicle that should reflect the philosophy of education in different disciplines and subjects, such as English language (Assaly & Samadi, 2015). Besides showing the viewpoint of the curriculum, textbooks serve as a guide for students and their teachers of any level of education to be actively engaged in classroom practices (Margana & Widyantoro, 2017). Learning in schools is viewed as synonymous with textbooks. According to McArthur (1996: 951), textbook is a manual which guides the teacher and the learner through the objectives of the subject. These all illustrations signify the degree to which textbooks are invaluable to undertake the teaching learning process effectively.

In Ethiopia, English language is taught as a subject starting from grade one up to the preparatory school and textbooks play a paramount significance in all levels. Grade 10 English for Ethiopia textbook is one of the primary teaching and learning tools in the respective level. This textbook is regarded as the main source of material that teachers give their students tasks such as vocabulary, grammar, listening, reading, speaking and writing. It also shows the ultimate benefits of taking the contents and what students are supposed to be benefited through objectives of each unit. Each unit has two parts: *Part A and Part B*; and each part has 10-13 stated objectives subsequent to the topic of the parts.

Objectives in textbooks are integral parts of the teaching learning process. They play a pivotal role in what and why learners learn. Some of the major significances, as Meskerem (2011) states,

are objectives in textbook determine the contents, methods, activities, materials, and assessment mechanisms teachers select. Besides, Lunenberg (2011) acknowledged that curriculum objectives make provision of assistance to the teachers to take decisions about the sequence in which the material is to be presented to the students. He also added that, the preparation of objectives is regarded to be the first and the foremost step in the formulation of curriculum development. As a frame, or organization for classifying classroom lesson objectives, bloom's taxonomy is recognized across the world.

Statement of the problem

Any aspects of the textbook, in particular the English textbook, should be continuously monitored and checked as one of continuous improvement (Anasy, 2016). One of the basic components of English textbooks, as Ethiopian context, is objectives of contents. The objectives are designed considering their immense significance for the teaching- learning process, and teachers are supposed to have a clear understanding and knowledge of these objectives. In this respect, Lunenberg (2011) discusses that objectives enable the teachers within the classroom setting to adopt effective teaching-learning methods. According to him, the objectives will generate a clear viewpoint amongst the teachers about the type of teaching-learning methods they should adopt in order to facilitate learning amongst the students. This view is also supported by Kizlik (2008) who states that the advantage of using behavioral objectives is that since learning cannot be seen directly, objectives provide a basis for making the best possible inferences about whether learning has occurred.

Objectives are more specific statements that include both a content reference and an action verb, and the action verbs should be free of vague or ambiguous words, or phrasing so that the intended learning outcome is concise, explicit, and easily measurable   (Anderson, Lorin W., and David R. Krathwohl, eds.2001). Currently, as Robert (2010) discussed, objectives are designed taking bloom's taxonomy in to account. As he stated, bloom's taxonomy is useful in two important ways: First, use of the taxonomy encourages instructors to think of learning objectives in *behavioral* terms to consider what the learner can *do* as a result of the instruction; and second, it indicates the best method of assessing the skills and knowledge taught.

In an attempt to study papers on textbook evaluation according to bloom's taxonomy, the researcher got a number of articles. One is a study conducted by Margana and Widyantoro (2017). Their study on *the analysis of Higher Order Thinking Skill (HOTS) in Compulsory English Textbook for the Twelfth Grade of Indonesian Senior High Schools*, showed that remembering and understanding are dominants and creating, applying, evaluating and analyzing follow them orderly . Similarly a study on *Evaluation of Learning Objectives in Iranian High-School and Pre-University English Textbooks Using Bloom's Taxonomy* by Mehdi and narjes M (2010) reveal that lower-order cognitive skills, that is, knowledge, comprehension, and application are the most frequent leaning objectives. On the other hand, Qasrawi and Beni (2020)   undertook a study on *The Higher and Lower-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS and LOTS) in unlock English textbooks (1st and 2nd editions) based on bloom's taxonomy.* They confirmed that the books do enhance both HOTS and LOTS. As a matter of fact, all these aforementioned studies were conducted by foreign researchers in their particular areas.

English is given as a foreign language in Ethiopian schools, and textbooks play a significant role in classroom. Grade 10 English for Ethiopia text book is the one which is the issue of this study. The textbook was written by a native speaker, named Donna Bailey, and evaluated by a number of Ethiopian experts. Though the book is the official textbook that has been in use since 2004 G.C., there is no available empirical evidence whether the problem regarding objectives encompassed are studied in Ethiopia. According to the literature available and to the knowledge of the researcher, various researchers have evaluated Ethiopian English Textbooks; however, most of these analyses were

carried out focusing on beliefs/ perspectives of teachers and students (e.g. an article entitled *English Textbook in Ethiopia from Teachers' and Students' Perspectives: The Case of Grade Twelve Students' Textbook* conducted by Abebe Tilahun (2016)) , general feature of textbooks (as in conducted by Hailu Abera(2008), entitled *A Study* on *the English for Ethiopia Grade 11 Students Books: The Case of Weldu Nugus Secondary School–Quiha*), or analysis of specific skill (a study by Geleta Gugassa and Eba Mijena(2015) entitled *analysis of the design of grade 9 listening lessons in the students book and teacher's guide of English for Ethiopia*). Thinking that these abovementioned researches are still inadequate, researcher of the present study examined objectives of textbook under the framework of revised bloom's taxonomy in resonance with the research questions, which are:

      1.   How are objectives of Grade 10 English textbook for Ethiopia evaluated in terms of measurability?

      2.   How are objectives of Grade 10 English textbook for Ethiopia evaluated in terms of lower-order and higher-order cognitive skills?

Significance of the study

The researcher thinks that this article is the first of its kind that evaluates Secondary level English for Ethiopia textbooks with the framework of Bloom's revised taxonomy. The findings of the study will, therefore, help stakeholders in education like the curriculum developers, and teachers to reconsider the nature of the objectives and explore the missing objectives in Bloom's Taxonomy.

Delimitation

The researcher delimited the scope of the study on Grade 10 English for Ethiopia textbook, which was published in 2011/12 G.C. The analysis area of the book is only objectives of the lessons which appeared next to the title of each unit.

Review of literature

Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom's taxonomy is a classification of lower to higher order thinking (or learning) skills centering upon the cognitive domain, which is the most commonly used domain in education(Churches, 2010). This taxonomy, since after Benjamin Bloom devised it in 1956, has been adopted as the backbone of the teaching process; particularly the learning objectives, the lesson plans and the assessment (Qasrawi and Beni Andelrahman, 2020). It is widely accepted that familiarity with Bloom's terminology used in learning objectives and outcomes will support learners when they are in a position to apply higher order thinking skills and prior knowledge. More specifically, Case (2013) highlights that the Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives has been regarded for a long time as an important tool for cognitive development. It has influenced many teaching philosophies around the globe especially in promoting rational thinking, and Aviles (2000) believes Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives is a tool that can be used in the wider context of education to help both new and experienced educators to think more precisely about what it means to teach and test for critical thinking. As Bloom (1956) stated, the competence (level of the taxonomy) and skills demonstrated are put as follows:

      1. Knowledge: remembering or recalling appropriate, previously learned information to draw out factual (usually right or wrong) answers. Use words and phrases such as: how many, when, where, list, define, tell, describe, identify, etc., to draw out factual answers, testing students' recall and recognition.

2. Comprehension: grasping or understanding the meaning of informational materials. Use words such as: describe, explain, estimate, predict, identify, differentiate, etc., to encourage students to translate, interpret, and extrapolate.

3. Application: applying previously learned information (or knowledge) to new and unfamiliar situations. Use words such as: demonstrate, apply, illustrate, show, solve, examine, classify, experiment, etc., to encourage students to apply knowledge to situations that are new and unfamiliar.

4. Analysis: breaking down information into parts, or examining (and trying to understand the organizational structure of) information. Use words and phrases such as: what are the differences, analyze, explain, compare, separate, classify, arrange, etc., to encourage students to break information down into parts.

5. Synthesis: applying prior knowledge and skills to combine elements into a pattern not clearly there before. Use words and phrases such as: combine, rearrange, substitute, create, design, invent, what if, etc., to encourage students to combine elements into a pattern that's new.

6. Evaluation: judging or deciding according to some set of criteria, without real right or wrong answers. Use words such as: assess, decide, measure, select, explain, conclude, compare, summarize, etc., to encourage students to make judgments according to a set

These categories are listed in order from starting from simplest behavior to the most complex. For this reason, they can be thought as degree of difficulties.

Bloom's revised taxonomy (taxonomy of cognitive objectives)

The nomenclature of Bloom's taxonomy was changed by his student, Lorin Anderson, in 1990s and made some change, with perhaps the two most prominent ones: 1) changing the names in the six categories from noun to verb and 2) slightly rearranging them (Anderson, 2001). Bloom's revised taxonomy shows the progression from lower order to higher order thinking skills, and it is a useful starting point for considering active learning and the progression to higher order learning skills (Bonwell, C. and Eison, J. (1991). The changes of the taxonomy, according to Anderson (2001), are presented as follows:

1. Remembering: Retrieving, recognizing, and recalling relevant knowledge from long term memory.

2. Understanding: Constructing meaning from oral, written, and graphic messages through interpreting, exemplifying, classifying, summarizing, inferring, comparing, and explaining.

3. Applying: Carrying out or using a procedure through executing, or implementing.

4. Analyzing: Breaking material into constituent parts, determining how the parts relate to one another and to an overall structure or purpose through differentiating, organizing, and attributing.

5. Evaluating: Making judgments based on criteria and standards through checking and critiquing.

6. Creating: Putting elements together to form a coherent or functional whole; reorganizing elements into a new pattern or structure through generating, planning, or producing.

These six levels of the domain are divided into two levels of thinking skills:

1. Lower-Order Thinking Skills (LOTS): Knowledge, Comprehension and Application

2. Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS): Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation (Crossland, 2015).

Lower Order Thinking is the foundation of skills required to move into higher order thinking. These skills are taught very well in school systems including activities like reading and writing (Husen, 2014). According to him, if a person is unable to achieve all lower order thinking skills and move up to higher order thinking, then this person will not be prepared for real life situations. This

skill, as Wills (2012) affirmed, doesn't need to be applied to any real life examples, it only needs to be recalled and slightly understood. On the other hand, Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) are types of learning that require higher cognitive processing and have more generalized benefits than Lower Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) (Richards, 2012).

This view is further stated by Alptekin (2002) who highlights that teaching of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) becomes attested due to its important role in education, and students having HOTS claimed will be more successful than those having Lower Order Thinking Skills (LOTS). For this reason of, LOTS require students to move beyond recalling information and memorization.

In the study of Chun and Yen (2019), it is pointed out that the teaching of HOTS is a kind of student-centered learning activity, and some practices that can be applied in teaching HOTS are constructivist learning, brainstorming, inquiry teaching, problem-based learning, and thinking map.

Methodology

This study aimed to analyze the learning objectives of Grade 10 English textbook for Ethiopia in accordance with verbs of revised bloom's taxonomy. To analyze the data, purely descriptive quantitative research approach was adopted .i.e., statistical calculation was used to determine frequency of measurable and non measurable objectives, and Higher Order and Lower Order Thinking Skills in the specified textbook. Nanda (2019) states that quantitative analytical allow the reporting of summary results in numerical terms to be given with a specified degree of confidence. For the purpose of this study, the researcher collected and listed all of the objectives in each unit of Grade 10 English textbook for Ethiopia. As an instrument of this research, the researcher used a checklist to record and tallies the cognitive levels of these objectives. The checklist was built based on Bloom's revised Taxonomy of the cognitive domain, in which the key words (verbs of the objectives in each unit) were extracted and used taking the context in the full statement of the objectives into consideration. For this, the researcher has used OPAR (2012) table to label the action verbs vis-à-vis bloom's revised taxonomy. Finally, in this study, the steps of data analysis used were classifying the documents, coding, tabularizing, analyzing, and reporting.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. **Number of cognitive learning objectives in each unit of Grade 10 English for Ethiopia textbook**

Unit	Title	Number of cognitive learning objectives		
		Part A	Part B	Total no. of objectives in the unit
1	Sport and fitness	11	11	22
2	Health- first aid	13	12	25
3	I like reading	13	12	25
4	Moral education and personal responsibility	10	10	20
5	Advertising	11	13	24
6	Drugs	11	10	21
7	Natural disasters	11	10	21
8	Education	10	10	20
9	Seas and rivers	10	9	19

Unit	Title	Number of cognitive learning objectives		
		Part A	Part B	Total no. of objectives in the unit
10	Energy	10	11	21
11	Applications for job and college	12	11	23
12	Births, weddings and funerals	11	10	21
Total number of objectives in the text		133	129	262

The above table shows that grade 10 English textbook for Ethiopia includes 12 units. Each unit is divided in to two parts: Part A and Part B. as seen in the table, the distribution of number of cognitive objectives in the units is not the same. The total number of cognitive learning objectives in the book is 262. However, not all these objectives are measurable.

The results related to the first question

Table 2. **Features of the objectives in Grade 10 English for Ethiopia textbook under the criteria of measurability according to OPAR (1012) action verbs vis-à-vis bloom's revised taxonomy**

Unit	Number of objectives stated in the book	No. of ambiguous/ non-measurable objectives in the book	Number of measurable objectives
1	22	2	20
2	25	5	20
3	25	3	22
4	20	6	14
5	24	4	20
6	21	4	17
7	21	2	19
8	20	1	19
9	19	5	14
10	21	2	19
11	23	3	20
12	21	2	19
Total	262	39 (14.9%)	223 (85.1%)

The first research question of this paper is about whether the objectives in the textbook are measurable or not. In the table above, of the 262 stated objectives in the textbook, 223 (85.1%) of them are measurable (observable), which contain action (specific) verbs. Only these objectives are acknowledged and labeled under OPAR (2012) table, and in the classification of Bloom's taxonomy. The remaining 39(14.9%) of the objectives are general, which are goals, from them specific objectives are deduced. In many of these objectives, the verbs such as *listen, improve, know, think, understand, learn and enjoy,* are recurring verbs.

Examples of non-measurable objectives taken from each unit (either in part A, or part B) of the textbook are stated as follows:

Objectives

By the end of this part of unit one, you will be able to:

- Listen to a newsletter report about Derartu Tulu. (unit 1)
- Improve your vocabulary about accidents and injuries. (unit 2)
- Know about the difference between formal and informal letters. (unit 3)
- Understand warning signs and labels. (unit 4)
- Enjoy a brainteaser. (unit 5)
- Learn about modal verbs. (unit 6)
- Listen to a text about a flood in Bangladesh. (unit 7)
- Listen to a passage on education in Ethiopia. (unit 8)
- Improve your listening skills. (unit 9)
- Learn some different collocations of *get.* (unit 10)
- Improve your study skills. (unit 11)
- Listen to a description of two African weddings. (unit 12)

The results related to the second question

Table 3. The distribution of cognitive domains in the objectives of Grade 10 English for Ethiopia textbook

Units	measurable cognitive objectives in each unit	Cognitive types					
		Remembering	Understanding	Applying	Analyzing	Evaluating	Creating
1	20	4	4	10	2	-	-
2	20	5	2	11	-	-	2
3	22	5	4	10	2	-	1
4	14	3	3	5	1	1	1
5	20	4	3	6	4	1	2
6	17	3	3	7	1	1	2
7	19	4	5	2	3	3	2
8	19	3	8	7	1	-	-
9	14	4	2	5	2	-	1
10	19	2	2	10	1	-	4
11	20	4	2	9	2	-	3
12	19	2	6	6	-	1	4
Total	223	43 (19.28%)	44 (19.73%)	88 (39.46%)	19 (8.5%)	7 (3.14%)	22 (9.9%)
Cognitive dimension		LOTS			HOTS		

The second pertinent question is related to how objectives of Grade 10 English textbook for Ethiopia treat lower-order and higher-order cognitive skills. As displayed in the above table, the total number of measurable objectives categorized under revised bloom's taxonomy is 223. Applying is the dominant learning objective in the text book with 88 (39.46%) objectives; whereas the least represented was related to evaluating with 7 (3.14%) objectives. Understanding (19.73%), remem-

bering (19.28%), creating (9.9%), and analyzing (8.5%) appeared between this continuum. Again if we categorize the six cognitive levels into "lower" and "higher", According to Table 3, attention in the textbook was mostly paid to LOTS (Lower Order Thinking Skills). Of 223 measurable objectives, 175(78.47%) of them are LOTS. It consists of remembering (19.28%), understanding (19.73%) and applying (39.46%). The remaining 48(21.5%) objectives, which are from analyzing (8.5%), evaluating (3.14%), and creating (9.9%), rest on HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills).

Discussion

Regarding the first research question, scholars affirmed that objectives in textbook should be measurable. A well designed objective spells out what the students can do at the end of a specific period of instruction. It is concerned on what the recipient of knowledge can do and the change in behavior by the end of the length of time spent on teaching (Farrell, T. S. C. (2002). As it is shown in table 2, from 12 units in the textbook having 262 objectives, 39 (14.9%) of them are not measurable. Many of these objectives have been designed with verbs like *listen, improve, know, think, understand, learn and enjoy.* The manifestation of this is that these words (verbs) in the stated objectives of the textbook are broad and intangible. Scholars like Anderson, Lorin W., and David R. Krathwohl (2001) strictly advise to avoid words like *appreciate believe, comprehend, conceptualize, experience, explore, feel, hear, know, learn, listen, perceive ,realize ,see , self-Actualize, think, understand* from objectives of learning . These words are general (non-measurable), and they cannot be quantified; for this reason, it makes it harder to determine the level of success of the students.

The second question dealt with the existence, the rate of recurrence and proportion of HOTS and LOTS in Ethiopian Grade 10 English textbook. As the study reveals, the most frequent cognitive type used in the instructional objectives of grade 10 English for Ethiopia text book is applying, which is 44.9% of all objectives. The second and the third are understanding (19.73%) and remembering (19.28%) respectively. These three levels are all categorized under the LOTS (Lower Order Thinking Skills) cognitive dimension, which totally covers 78.47% of the total objectives. The HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills) cognitive dimension (analyzing, evaluating and creating in together) covers 21.5% of the total objectives. The implication of more LOTS in textbook than HOTS is that in the educational system of English for Ethiopia, the major emphasis is on rote learning and memorization rather than constructing higher levels of cognitive skills. Noting that both levels of thinking are essential for every student, educationalist and scholars across the world, for example Yen (2019), believe that LOTS is considered and very important as it helps the students develop problem-based learning, enhance their line of thoughts, and apply the knowledge effectively problem-based learning.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study was content analysis research that aimed at evaluating the measurability of objectives in Grade 10 English for Ethiopia Textbook, and measuring to what extent Grade 10 English for Ethiopia Textbook entertains higher and lower order thinking skills. Features of revised Bloom's taxonomy learning objectives and OPAR (2012) classification of verbs were used as checklists. Regarding the first question, which is 'How are *objectives of Grade 10 English textbook for Ethiopia evaluated in terms of measurability*?' the finding revealed that 85.1% of the textbook objectives are measurable, and the remaining 14.9% of them are not. This result indicated that the notion of designing objective in the way that the students can do at the end of a specific period of instruction looks underrated to some extent. As to the second question: *How are objectives of Grade 10 English textbook for Ethiopia evaluated in terms of lower-order and higher-order cognitive skills?'* ,

results showed that 78.47% of the objectives are designed in the way it favored LOTS; of this, applying cover 44.9%, understanding 19.73% and remembering 19.28%. The remaining 21.53% of the objectives are categorized under HOTS. The proportion looks creating weights 9.9%, analyzing 8.5%, and the least represented is evaluating, with 3.4% of the total objectives. The conclusion for this could be, since the focus of the textbook is on the development of Lower- Order cognitive skills, there is imbalance of LOTS and HOTS in the objectives of Grade 10 English textbook for Ethiopia. To solve this concern, textbook developers should balance the number of the two cognitions. And as an immediate solution, English teachers have to give extra classroom activities that are related to HOTS. Finally, it is recommended ongoing evaluative studies of textbook focusing on the objectives of the contents should be held.

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