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## Evaluation of English Textbook Exercises of Punjab Textbook Board for Grade 10 in the Light of Revised Bloom's Taxonomy of 2001

### Abstract:

*This research study discusses and records the analysis of the exercises of English Book 10 of the Punjab Textbook Board by the application of Revised Bloom's Taxonomy by Anderson and Krathwohl for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment. The nature of the study is analytical, and it critiques the concerned textbook to evaluate the conformity of its exercises of the book given at the end of each chapter against the various sub-domains of the Cognitive domain of the revised taxonomy. This research study also sheds light on the importance of evaluation, textbooks in the Pakistani context, and an overall view of the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy (RBT) with reference to the textbook exercises. On the whole, the research has presented a variety of practicable outcomes for carrying out further study/studies.*

### Key Words:

English, Textbook Analysis, Anderson and Krathwohl Model, Punjab Textbook Board, Grade 10

### Introduction

Education lays the foundation of a healthy society. Aristotle and Plato even considered education as a fundamental factor for the ethical contentment of folks and the ease of the society they reside in. The curriculum is the heart of education, and it is through a curriculum that we impart education. The term curriculum is about the substance of what should be taught. The curriculum is a wide phenomenon which deals with a variety of education imparting tools, out of which the most important ones are textbooks.

The term 'curriculum' can be, and is, used, for several various types of programs of teaching and instruction (Kelly, 2009, p. 2). According to Sultana, Khan, Ali & Rehman (2007), textbooks are a direct and the most widely acknowledged source of imparting education. In the classroom, they are the central medium for instruction.

In under developed countries like ours, textbooks are not only among the first books most children encounter; rather, at various places, they are, along with religious texts, almost the only books they encounter.

This makes textbooks a very important and sensitive entity that must be created with utmost care and responsibility because textbooks shape up the ideology, values, behavior, and attitude of the pupils. They must be prepared to meet the supreme intellectual, scholarly, and moral ends fundamental to a nation's prosperity. The secondary school grades demand extra attention because at

this level, the minds of the children are the quickest at absorbing all information that surrounds them. The textbooks taught at this level require a very mature and sensitive dealing. The children should be guided properly from their early stages, and a healthy worldview should be given to them, thus enabling them to be leaders, tolerant human beings, and critical thinkers.

In light of the above-mentioned facts, it can be stated that textbooks carry extreme value in school education. But establishing this fact alone is not sufficient. With the ever-changing times, these books need to

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be constantly revised, assessed, and evaluated. "The abilities of students should be viewed as malleable. They are not fixed and unchanging. Different abilities can be tapped in different courses and by different curricula." ([Lattuca & Stark, 2009, p. 141](#))

This evaluation process will have an effect on the learners, teachers, and overall educational system. A close analysis of the effects of this evaluation will lead to reliable solutions for the upgradation and improvement of the textbooks.

After analyzing the significance of curriculum, textbooks, and evaluation in an education system, one may make it relevant to the "Punjab Textbook Board's" English textbook for grade 10 at the secondary level. This textbook promises to meet the linguistic needs of secondary school pupils, although this appears to be a lie. The majority of kids who attend public schools have difficulty using and understanding the English language. The SSC level, especially the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, is a very critical stage in a student's life. For many 14- and 15-years-olds it is a make-or-break year as the cognitive, emotional, and physical aspects of the students are coming together.

The above discussion calls for a serious evaluation of the English textbooks against some well-recognized parameters such as Anderson and Krathwohl's "Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, & Assessing."

The aim of this research work is to bring into focus the "Learning Objectives" of the "Revised Bloom's Taxonomy" in general and its application on the English Textbook 10 of "Punjab Textbook Board" in particular. The English Book 10 of "Punjab Textbook Board" has been selected as the primary source of the data. The focus of the analysis is on the congruity of the exercises of English Book 10 of "Punjab Textbook Board" with the "Revised Bloom's Taxonomy." The above analysis will, on one hand, enable the researcher to look at the textbook with a fresh perspective, and on the other hand, awake in the authorities a critical awareness toward the curriculum.

## Literature Review

According to W.T. Harris (as cited in [Buckingham et al., 1952](#)), "you can take your textbook wherever you please...you cannot select the time for hearing the great teacher talk as you can for reading the book...nearly all the great teachers have embodied their ideas in books."

President Thwing (as cited in [Buckingham et al., 1952](#)) called the textbook "a teacher of teachers." Hall-Quest (as cited in [Buckingham et al., 1952](#)) listed among the benefits of the textbooks its "compact arrangement of material", its "availability for ready reference," and the provision which it affords for a national culture.

The role of the textbooks cannot be denied, whether at the planning or implementation stage of the curriculum, the reason being a large portion of time investment on textbooks. Schau (1985) states that the learners use almost 90% of their learning time in acquiring one or the other source of information. According to [Cunningsworth \(1995\)](#), textbooks are considered as the most beneficial source in the context of ELT teaching. They assist in achieving the goals set for the learners.

Richards (2001) says that textbooks save time and provide help to the learners in supplementing the learning. They may carry information about the various structures and functions of language, hence improving the learners' ability to imbibe the concepts.

In Pakistan, English is treated as a second language and enjoys the status of the formal and official mode of communication. This process has taken a lot of time, but the desired results have not yet been achieved. There is a variety of ways by which English has been taught, but textbooks still remain as the fundamental factor. It is seconded by [Hamza \(2004\)](#) that largely English language teaching relies on textbooks in Pakistan.

Due to a lack of assessment of the textbooks, the in-time adjustments in the textbooks have not been made which has affected the effectiveness of the curriculum. This is further supplemented by Shah (2007) that evaluation has a significant role in obtaining the achievement of the students. Furthermore, the examination system of Pakistan only gauges the memorizing skills of the learners and not their language skills.

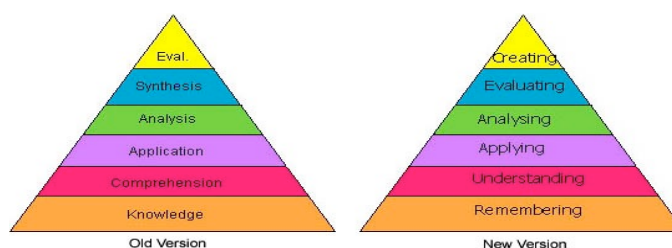
The word curriculum carries many meanings. Among them, the loosely connected are the 'syllabus, list of subjects, categorizing teaching-learning methods, course of study, timetable' and so on. Curriculum, an important factor in the system of education, literally means a pathway. On a larger scale, it means all the activities and experiences which are performed in an educational institute or outside it.

The above discussion suggests that curriculum does not only mean the formal program of teaching the textbooks within a classroom setting rather, it includes co-curricular and extra-curricular activities as well. Textbook evaluation, in a broader sense, means to judge the benefits and efficiency of the textbooks and other teaching materials.

[Bloom \(1956\)](#) explains the taxonomy comprising of six different stages. The six categories in the form of stages comprised an organized system proceeding from the earlier stage of "Comprehension to Application" and then "Analysis, Synthesis" till the last one, which is "Evaluation." It was agreed upon that a simple behavior joined with another simple set of behaviors prepares the learner to enter the complex set of behaviors, and in this way, cognitive development of the learners takes place ([Bloom, 1956, p. 18](#)).

In 1990, it was Lorin Anderson, a former student of Bloom, who tried to bring to the forefront the relevancy of the taxonomy to the teachers and students by heading a group of scholars. The taxonomy was revised and given the title of Theory into Practice. [Anderson et al. \(2001\)](#) depict it as a revision of the original framework which was built 45 years ago in the same directions. The resultant revised version of the taxonomy in 2001 showed minor changes at the surface, but deep down, they were significant.

Apparently, the most visible and complicated at the same time were the changes in terminology. The earlier form of taxonomy was based on: "Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation." The revised version was: "Remember, Understand, Apply, Analyze, and Evaluate and create". Following are the images for comparing both structures.



**Figure 1**

The taxonomy is widely followed in educational setups where it is giving results as well. The new version was titled as "Revised Bloom's Taxonomy" or RBT in short. The taxonomy will thus gauge the comprehension levels-from the most basic to the most complex that is being employed in the exercise questions. Thus, we will be able to find out where exactly does the Punjab textbook 10 of English stand in its use of the different sub-levels of the Cognitive domain.

## Research Methodology

The English Textbook 10 of "Punjab Textbook Board" has been selected as the primary source of the data. There are thirteen lessons included in the textbook carrying a diverse content and multitude of question items provided within the end of each of the lessons in the form of exercises. The thirteen lessons were divided into three divisions: the first two divisions comprising four-lesson lessons each, and the third division carries the last five lessons. The data under scrutiny were the question items given at the end of each of provided lessons in the English Textbook 10 of "Punjab Textbook Board." The question items at the end of the lessons were analyzed against the "Revised Bloom's Taxonomy" of learning, teaching, and assessing.

## **Data Analysis**

In the "Revised Bloom's Taxonomy" for learning, teaching, and assessing by Lorin Anderson and David Krathwohl, "Cognitive Domain" is the only domain discussed and evaluated. This domain functions to comprehend information, organize ideas, evaluate information and actions, and monitor, measure, and improve the thinking and intellectual faculties of the students. The remaining spheres of taxonomy i.e., "Affective and the Psychomotor," were not touched by Anderson and Krathwohl. It can be suggested that in our educational scenario, the curriculum and syllabi are designed by focusing on the "Cognitive Domain." The prime point of concern of textbooks focuses on the enhancement of cognitive skills.

The Cognitive domain includes is made of six levels; i.e., "Remembering, Understanding, and Applying"; these skills being of lower order and "Analyzing, Evaluating, and Creating," which need an advanced level of cognitive dealing and evaluating. A comprehensive overview of all the exercises in the light of each level of the "Cognitive Domain" is as follows:

Fill in the blanks; multiple choice questions under reading comprehension come under the "**Remembering**" domain. The Remembering questions also teach the students to locate the correct information and identify it among the multiple options in questions like 'choose the correct option.' Also, questions that demand mere retaining the information of the remembering level is found too, i.e., 'then fill in the blanks' queries. One way or the other, the abilities of the students' minds to retain facts, significant factors, and easy solutions is enhanced by such activities.

"Understanding" can be tagged as the second sub-category in the "Cognitive Domain." In the Understanding level, the students develop the thinking and concepts acquired at the Remembering category and thus proceed further. During this level, the students are provided information, and they recycle it. The information can be transformed and extrapolated. The students are expected that after going through the textbook, they should be able to understand and write about the important points like 'Whether antibiotic cream or ointment is good in healing the wound.' or 'What should be done if we find our task hard?' or 'Writing the précis of a paragraph.' etc. The above information enhances the understanding of the students and makes them able to apply it in new situations. This level also makes use of the first level of Remembering to some extent.

Here are a few more examples of questions that test the ability to understand. In the lesson 5, items like 'What according to the poet is a sweet noise?' or 'What will happen after the rain stops?', or in lesson 6, the item which 'asks to give the meaning of each word as used in the lesson or asks 'How is a newspaper more convenient medium of news?' or 'How does a viewer get restricted while watching TV news?', are the questions which makes the students use not only their remembering skills but also invoke the mental processes to understand and explain items in their own words. The students are also expected to not only go through the text completely but also understand the context and infer meanings accordingly. In lesson 7, the explanation of the content in the lesson and translation of paragraph 1 of the lesson into Urdu and in lesson 8, the questions about the central idea or paraphrasing of the poem are activities which make the students utilize their higher understanding skills employ their translation faculties and use the remembering skills too in various circumstances.

The last five lessons for the understanding category of the "Cognitive Domain" contain questions that look for the inquisitive eye of the students for reading the textbook, retaining the information in memory, and afterward rewriting the expressions in their original writing. The questions in lesson 9 like 'provided with the meaning of each of the words as employed in the lesson, or in the next lesson, i.e. lesson 10, questions like 'give an explanation of each phrase or asking the students questions like 'how does a book connect the reader and the writer and it's slow food in a world given over to fast food. Explain.' makes the students not just understand the information but reword or reproduce it too using their cognitive abilities of understanding. Similarly, the next items of lesson 11 that asks for answers about 'who looked after Pip after the death of his parents and asking who Joe was and how he treated Pip' demands that the students not just grasp the lesson content completely but render quality solutions in their own words which will further strengthen their understanding

abilities. Furthermore, in lesson 12 and 13, the exercise items like 'provided with the meaning of each of the words as employed in the lesson, write a précis of the paragraph, translation of a paragraph into Urdu, and writing a character sketch of the villager' enrich the students' capacity to understand and comprehend things on a deeper level and write or reword the details in their own words.

"Applying", is the last sub-domain of the lower-level thinking skills. The students, at this stage, become an expert of implementing things in the new circumstances not seen and understood earlier in the previous stages. At the Applying level, a theoretical or technical possibility is needed; moreover, it is desirable that the applying practice may be applied in different new situations not previously encountered.

The pre-requisite for applying level is the comprehension of the context and application of the acquired material. The 1<sup>st</sup> set of lessons, i.e., 1-4 lessons contain numerous questions belonging to the applying level. In lesson 1, use of 'phrasal verbs in sentences' and identification of the words as a 'concrete or an abstract noun' and in lesson 2, the task of internet surfing 'to find names of the animals Chinese years are named after' are questions that make the students use already learnt knowledge and apply it in new situations. In lesson 3, the students are required to read the definition of alliteration and its example and then find out more examples from the poem; likewise, in lesson 4, they are required to go through the examples of gerunds and infinitives and then identify them in the textual sentences.

In the second set of lessons, i.e., lesson 5-8; the first 3 lessons contain questions related to applying level. Lesson 8; however, does not have any question of the aforementioned level. In lesson 5, the students, after reading the poem 'The Rain' are required to write a paragraph on 'the rainy day' and get cuttings of newspapers headlines, articles, and letters to the editor on recent monsoon rains. Such questions require the students to use the knowledge imparted by the poem as well as their previous knowledge about rain and apply it in new situations. In lessons 6 and 7, the questions related to the applying level include forming nouns from the given words and using them in sentences and getting 'a cutting of an interview of any famous personality from a magazine' and analyzing 'the questions and answers of that interview' respectively. In lesson 7, the students are also required to use their knowledge of co-curricular activities learnt from the text and write an essay after applying that knowledge with the help of a mind map.

In the last set of lessons, i.e., lesson 9-13; many question items explore the applying skills of the students. In lesson 9, question like 'make a list of professions mentioned in the lesson and also write the qualification required for each profession' and in lesson 11, the question about making new words from the given root word and then using those words in sentences and arrangement of 'the events from the story into the graphic organizer' are questions that demand the students to properly go through the text and then utilize the textual knowledge in new situations given in these questions. Reading the text and putting required information into the graphic organizer in lesson 12 and writing down 'five verbs with the prefix en' and using those words in sentences in lesson 13 are again questions that make the students apply what was learned in the classroom into novel situations. Another way, the applying level is demonstrated can be seen in this question of lesson 13, 'summarize the story with the help of mind map given below.

These questions of applying level will prepare the students for the higher-order skills of analyzing, evaluating, and creating.

"Analyzing", the fourth level in the Taxonomic objectives, is equally significant. This level strengthens the students' creative schema and enriches their faculty of splitting the internal as well as external information thus judging the relationship the facts have within the body of a text. After mastering the Analyzing level, students should be able to conduct a micro-level analysis of various elements and their relationships to the whole, gain a detailed understanding of the rules that form the foundation for a specific piece of information, break larger pieces of information into smaller pieces, and finally review all of this information without making any evaluative comments. No question of analyzing level is found in the first set of questions, i.e., 1-4 lessons; although, in the second set of questions i.e., 5-8 lessons, there are only two question items which state; 'Which

object is being personified in the poem and which human traits are given to that object.' The students can reply to these questions only if they deeply know the text and its context.

In the above group of the last five lessons, questions in lesson 9 like 'identify the difference between these terms after consulting the dictionary or read the text again and put relevant information into the graphic organizer showing problem and solution', or in lesson 10, the queries such as 'in what way books are better than radio, TV and internet or why should people be given more opportunity to read books' make the students look deep into the text, ponder over the content, understand it, and then finally analyze it before giving the answers. The question 'analyze elements of the story "Great Expectations" with the help of following story map' also makes the students make use of their analyzing abilities.

The fifth level of the taxonomic objectives, the Evaluating level is the second last level of the "Cognitive Domain". This sub-domain requires a strong mental approach but is still practiced at school and college levels. The students at this stage are expected to evaluate any text by keeping in mind different factors. They should be able to put forth valid conclusions and judgments about the content they study.

In the second set of lessons, i.e., 5-8, evaluating questions are found in only lesson 5 and 6. Questions like identification of the use of metaphor in the poem and answering questions like what do the rich leaves symbolize and which medium do you prefer for news and why make the students think deep and come up with their own judgment or justification. Furthermore, in lesson 6, Television, cinema, electronic, and print media are all evaluated and judged by students. 'People are impacted by what they see on television and in movies,' for example. Do you agree with me? Use relevant examples to back up your answer.' 'Write a comparison essay on the impact of electronic media on print media is another assignment.

The question items in the last set of lessons, i.e., from lesson 9-13 require the students to engage in an independent quest of inquiry and then answer the questions. Questions like 'Nowadays non-traditional careers are more appealing to young minds.' or 'Why and is there any need of proper career counseling department?' or 'Why and choosing a career is one of the most important decisions in life?' or 'What are the factors that will influence your choice?' will enable the students exercise free thinking. With the help of questions like 'Which book has inspired you the most, why?' and 'Do you know a person who achieved success in life through his hard work?' they are able to relate with their personal experiences and justify and defend their choices and that of others. The above questions exemplify personal opinion. The students, after going through the content, can see all the significant points related to the facts, their principles, and then convey their point of view. Such textbook questions enhance the students' confidence for learning and developing independent thinking and point of view about different things that they experience in their academic life.

Creating level is the highest domain where the students use the already acquired faculty to split open, analyze, and evaluate the parts and their connections to create a fused whole. The emphasis of this highest category of educational objectives is on creating a whole by putting together different parts with a focus on creating a new meaning or structure. Practice and then mastery of this category enables the students to develop creative writing skills and become independent students.

In order to accomplish the creating level, text is of prime importance. In order to reply to a specific question, a particular part of the text needs to be carefully analyzed and then converted into a coherent whole. This is clear from the set of questions from the above selected group of lessons, i.e., 1-4. The query asks about the reforms that Holy Prophet (ﷺ) brought to the judicial system of Arab and asks the students to use certain expressions to explain their point of view clearly. Such question and essay writing on topics like 'Hazrat Muhammad (ﷺ) as an exemplary Judge and our cultural festivals' make the students rearrange facts in a novel way and probe the creative writing skills of the students. Furthermore, in lesson 3 and 4, questions like 'give an example of struggle from your life and write a paragraph on how to take care of cuts and scrapes' and writing a paragraph in past tense on how they (students) gave themselves first aid if they got cuts and scrapes will make the students delve deeper into their life experiences but come up with original ideas and expressions. Such

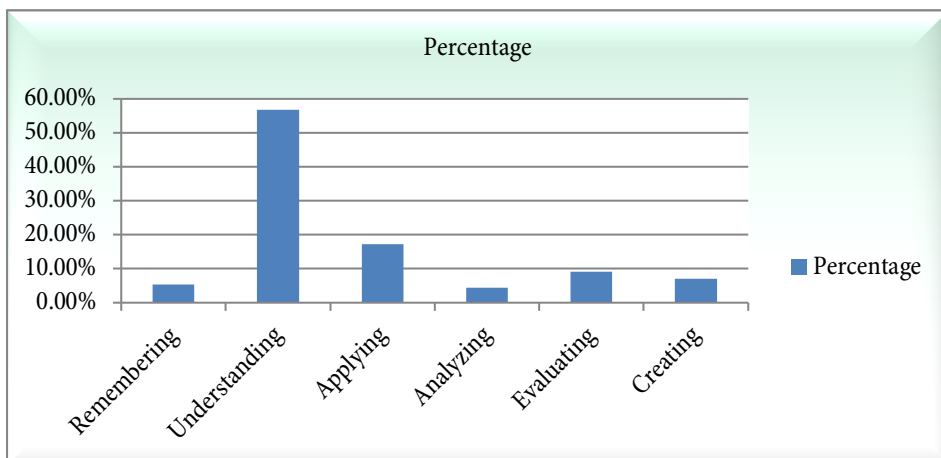
question items demand that students write answers in a way that shows their abilities in creating new structures and giving new meanings to experiences.

The second and third sets of lessons, i.e., 5-13, also contain questions that invoke the creative writing abilities of the students. In lesson 8, ‘writing an account of a natural disaster’ and in lesson 9, ‘writing an essay on my favourite career’ are the questions that ask the students to build a new creative structure or pattern from diverse elements scattered either in their surrounding or mind. Also in lesson 10 and 11, the students are asked to write an argumentative essay on ‘TV is taking away the habit of reading books and the character sketch of Pip respectively after taking help from mind maps. Such questions give the students the practice to put together different parts to form a unified, coherent whole and this practice makes them analyze different situations with different angles. Writing an essay on ‘over population’ also requires the same from the students as the questions in the lessons discussed above in the same section.

The above questions require a focused attempt in order to understand, analyze, and create knowledge. “Critical Evaluation” of a text or lesson, analysis of its different parts, and finally creation of a unified inter-related structure requires students to be independent thinkers. Once mastered, the last and final level of “Cognitive Domain” in the “Revised Bloom’s Taxonomy”, the “Creating Level” turns the students into independent thinkers and students of knowledge.

**Table 1.** Showing the No. of Questions in Cognitive Domain

Cognitive Levels	No. of Exercise Questions	Percentage
Remembering	10 Question items	5.40 %
Understanding	105 Question items	56.75 %
Applying	34 Question items	18.37 %
Analyzing	8 Question items	4.32 %
Evaluating	17 Question items	9.18 %
Creating	11 Question items	7.02 %
Total Count	185	100 %



**Figure 1:** Percentage Analysis of the Six Levels of the “Cognitive Domain”

The result, after analyzing the data mentioned in table 1, shows that the sub-level Understanding forms a major percentage of the exercises given at the end of each lesson in the concerned textbook, while a minimum number of questions comprise the sub-level Analyzing. The ratios of the six sub-levels of the “Cognitive



Domain” of “Revised Bloom’s Taxonomy” is as follows: the sub-level Remembering has a ratio of 5.40 %, Understanding 56.75 %, Applying 17.29 %, Analyzing 4.32 %, Evaluating 9.18 %, and finally, Creating with a ratio of 7.02 %.

### **Findings/Discussion**

The findings clearly indicate that the exercises in the textbook put a heavy emphasis on questions requiring only determining the meaning of instructions, objectives that fall in the Understanding category. However, it is the queries that would fall in the more complex categories that have an insignificant ratio in the exercises. The textbook exercises in the textbook when analysed against the “Revised Bloom’s Taxonomy” for learning, teaching, and assessing do not fall uniformly in the six categories of the “Cognitive Domain”. There was no congruency found in the exercises of the textbook regarding the six levels. Among the total of 185 queries, 10 were of the Remembering level, 105 of the Understanding level, 32 of Applying, 8 of Analysing, 17 of Evaluating, and 13 of Creating (see table 1). The data clearly shows that no real effort has been made for equal distribution of different levels of “Cognitive Domain” and question items have just been randomly created. The “Understanding and Applying Levels” are present to the maximum while the rest of the levels have an insignificant ratio.

The study indicates an alarming learning and teaching situation which calls for a thorough re-evaluation and re-writing of the exercises of the textbooks.

### **Conclusion**

After a thorough analysis, it can be safely stated that many exercise queries are not in accordance with the content of the lessons and the learning, teaching, and assessing levels as proposed by Anderson and Krathwohl’s model are not integrated properly in the exercise question items of the concerned textbook.

[Razmjoo and Kazempourfard's \(2012\)](#) study of mammalian taxonomy is a significant crossroads for consideration, and one that can only help a systematic examination of text books and other teaching resources if it is used correctly.

Students from low-income families may struggle to learn and use the English language through textbooks. According to Shahnawaz and Rizwan, textbooks should be up to date in order to bring about a fundamental and lasting transformation in society.



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