

Level of Question Used in English Textbook

Hayati¹, Djufri², Fitrawati³
English Department
FBS Padang State University
Email: ayaiealleia@yahoo.com

Abstract

This research had purpose to know the level of questions used in English Zone book. The data came from English Zone book grade X, XI, and XII. This research was conducted using content analysis method where the writer determined the instrument by herself. Based on the research, there were 5 levels of questions used in English Zone book, they are knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis and synthesis. The questions in level knowledge were 42.9 %, comprehension level were 30.4 %, application level were 3.4%, analysis level were 21.4 % and synthesis level were 1.5 %. The questions in level of evaluative were not used.

Keywords: level, questions, English Zone

A. Introduction

Questions play an important role in teaching and learning process. The definition of question itself based Ur (1999) is utterance which goal is eliciting oral response from others. In short, it can be said that a questions seeks for answer from listener. Besides, Cullin (2000) says that question is a person's curiosity about something will be expressed in a set of sentence that has purpose to get an information and it is usually ended by question mark. The question itself occurs because someone wants to get information and it also has function to develop process of thinking. Question is usually addressed to someone.

Through questions, teachers can get students' attention, know their knowledge and help them improving ideas and thoughts. Moreover, questions make students think that they are involved in the learning process. It helps them to focus on learning because the questions arise their curiosity. Questions can increase students' motivation in learning, express their ideas build communicative situation in teaching and learning process and check students' comprehension about materials taught.

Questions that are usually given to the students not only come from the teacher but also can be found in textbook. Questions that exist in the textbooks are various. They are formulated in multiple choice, fill in, true-false and WH form. Besides, questions that are found in the textbooks are also different in types. The questions in the textbook are arranged with different difficulties. Different level of

¹ Student of English Department graduated on September 2012

² Advisor, Lecturer of FBS Universitas Negeri Padang

³ Advisor, Lecturer of FBS Universitas Negeri Padang

difficulties of questions is needed to determine students' knowledge and comprehension. Based on Bloom (1956: 63), there are several levels of questions. They are knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

Abudi (2010) explains that Taxonomy bloom was developed in 1956 by Benjamin Bloom and a team of education psychologists. Bloom Taxonomy refers to a classification of the various learning objectives that are set for participants in a training program. Bloom Taxonomy identifies six categories (levels of learning) from simple to complex within the cognitive domain. Bloom's Taxonomy promotes a higher level of thinking which are above and beyond memorizing facts that enables the adult learners to be able to more effectively apply his/her knowledge

Furthermore, Wolf (1987: 121) states that questions have level of difficulties. The formulated of the questions categorize into six levels. They begin from the lowest level into the highest level. Besides, in his revised book, he explains that taxonomy bloom can be used to determine level of questions based on the key words that have been formulated. The difficulties of questions and the key words can be seen as follows:

a. Knowledge

This level of question require students to recognize or recall the information The key words of this level questions are arrange, define, describe, label, list, memorize, recognize, relate, reproduce, select, state.

b. Comprehension

This level of question requires students think on a low level such the knowledge that can be reproduced or communicated without a verbatim repetition. The level of this questions is identical in some verb like explain, reiterate, reword, critique, classify, summarize, illustrate, translate, review, report, discuss, re-write, estimate, interpret, theorize, paraphrase, reference, example

c. Application

This level of question requires the students to solve or explain a problem by applying what she/he has learned to other situations and learning tasks. This level of question has key words verb such as use, apply, discover, manage, execute, solve, produce, implement, construct, change, prepare, conduct, perform, react, respond, role-play

d. Analysis

This level of question requires the students to solve a problem through the systematic examination of facts or information. It can be seen in words such as analyze, break down, catalogue, compare, quantify, measure, test, examine, experiment, relate, graph, diagram, plot, extrapolate, value, divide

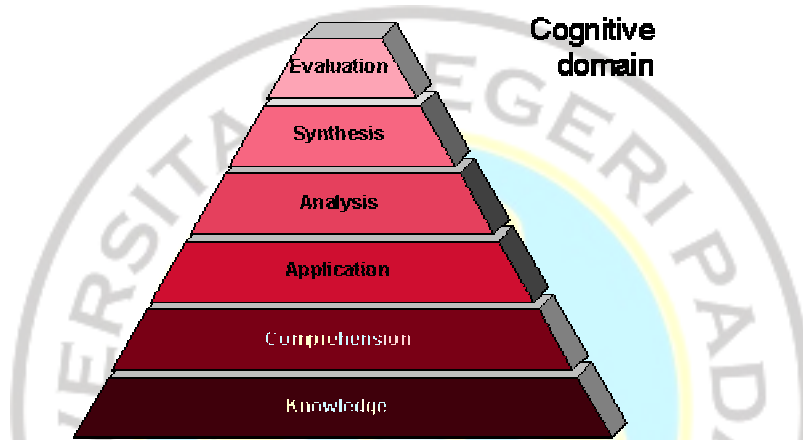
e. Synthesis

This level of question requires the students to find a solution to a problem through the use of original, creative thinking. This level of question are usually in form of verb such as develop, plan, build, create, design, organize, revise, formulate, propose, establish, assemble, integrate, re-arrange, modify.

f. Evaluation

This level of question requires the students make an assessment of good or not so good, according to some standards. These types of questions also usually require sophisticated levels of cognitive and/or emotional judgment. In attempting to answer evaluative questions, students may be combining multiple logical and affective thinking process, or comparative frameworks. An answer is analyzed at multiple levels and from different perspectives before the answerer arrives at newly synthesized information or conclusions. The key word of this level question are review, justify, assess, present a case for, defend, report on, investigate, direct, appraise, argue, project-manage.

Bloom Taxonomy itself can be seen in this chart below:



Picture 1. Cognitive domain of Bloom

The questions in each level need different strategy to answer them. The questions that include low level questions do not need much critical thinking rather than the high ones. The questions that are *varied and challenging will make students* motivated and interested in learning.

Based on the data which had been obtained from pre-observation to some books (*English Zone, Look Ahead* and *Informational English*) and based on interview to some English teachers, the level of questions that exist in textbook were still not provided various levels of question. They were still in low level questions. A lot of questions were asked around knowledge and comprehension. Meanwhile, the questions that include high level questions such as application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation are still in minimum used. Ideally, the students in senior high school level should get a lot of exercises in answering difficult question to improve their critical thinking. It is needed because they will face harder challenged in higher level of education. In the university level, they will face questions that include high level questions.

Brainerd (2004: 100) explains that higher-level questions, which mean the students are learning to think more critically and not just repeating literal information. When students are regularly asked questions at the higher levels, they develop a more positive self-concept. They realize that their opinion counts. Such questions encourage students to think deeply and critically. Higher-level questions cause the students to connect their own background knowledge and experiences

with what is being read, which leads to a deeper level of comprehension. Students need to think about what the author is really trying to say in order to truly comprehend. Repeating what the author says does not explain the meaning of the selection. Students learn that answers to questions are not always right there on the page. Sometimes they have to think about what they read and infer the answer. So it is important to train their critical thinking.

Based on the explanation above, the purpose of the research is to know the levels of questions in English textbooks and to know level question that are mostly used in English textbook.

B. Research Methodology

This research was conducted by using content analysis because the data that were collected came from the textbooks. According to Krippendorff (2004: 37), content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (printed matter, recorded speech, visual communications, works of art, artifacts) or other meaningful matter to the contexts of their use. From definition above, in this research, the writer collected, analyzed and interpreted the printed matter in this case, questions, that were used in English Zone textbook.

The data that were analyzed in this research were questions that occurred in each chapter of book. The questions from the textbooks would become the source of data. The book that was observed was *English Zone*.

Data was collected through observing the questions in each of the chapter and making list the questions that occurred. After making list, the questions categorized into levels of questions based on Bloom's taxonomy. Next, to know the percentage of each levels questions, they were counted with formula. Arikunto (2006: 123) shows the formula to know the percentage of each level of questions as follows:

$$p = \frac{f}{N} \times 100\%$$

Note:

P: percentage

F: Frequency

N: Number of questions

The techniques in analyzing the data as follows:

1. Data managing
The data were managed accordingly in order to get good result and easy to be analyzed
2. Reading
The writer read all the data that had been collected deeply
3. Classifying
The data were classified to be understandable
4. Interpreting
After classifying the data, the data were interpreted to get general conclusion

C. Discussion

As the result of the instrument of the data collection which had been taken from the questions in *English Zone* Books. Each of them could be seen through the tables which have been attached in appendixes. There were 147 questions that were provided in *English Zone* grade X, 165 questions provided in *English Zone* grade XI and 128 questions provided in *English Zone* grade XII. *English Zone* Book grade X has 6 chapters, grade XI has 7 chapters and grade XI has 6 chapters. The totals of question that were provided in English textbooks are 440 questions. The percentage of knowledge and comprehension were 42,9% and 30,4%. Meanwhile the questions in level of application, analysis and synthesis have percentage 3,4%, 21,5% and 1,5%.

Some example of questions that include knowledge level can be seen through table below:

No	Questions
1	Who wrote the letter?
2	Who is the addressee?
3	How does the sender open the letter?
4	How does the sender close the letter?
5	What is the response to the invitation in dialogue A?
6	What is it in dialogue B?
7	Who is the addressee of the invitation? Who is the sender?
8	Who introduced you to her?
9	How long have you been living here?
10	Which name tag is yours?
11	When did you meet my brother?
12	How many siblings do you have?
13	Where did you live?
14	Why did your family move here?
15	Whose teacher is Mrs. Sianturi?
16	What did she ask Rudi to do?
17	How did she feel when the committee announced that band festival was cancelled?
18	What went wrong when she took a jitney home?
19	When did the incident happen?
20	What was Sadewa's problem?

The questions that are stated above including to knowledge level. This level of question requires the students to answer the question that have been stated in dialogues or texts. Based on Bloom (1956) the key words for knowledge level are arrange, define, describe, label, list, memorize, recognize, relate, reproduce, select, state, mention. The questions in table above are basically used the keywords that have been determined by Bloom such as examples below:

- *Can you mention some important events after the start/ the orientation part?*
- *Who wrote the letter?*

- *Who is the addressee?*

The examples above used keyword mention and the next two examples ask the students to answer the questions that have been stated in the letter. The students do not need to think to find the answer because the answer has been stated.

Some of questions that include comprehension level can be seen through this table:

No	Questions
1	What does the first paragraph tell about?
2	What is the main idea of the second paragraph?
3	What is so interesting about the writer's hometown?
4	What is the even described in the invitation?
5	What is the purpose of the invitation?
6	How should the addressee respond to the invitation?
7	How did you meet her?
8	How much information do we have to give in the first introduction?
9	Why did Cantika decide to walk to school yesterday?
10	What happened when she was halfway from school?
11	Why did she have to run around the soccer field?
12	Can you summarize what happened in a chronological order?
13	What would be the color of the sauce? Why do you think so?
14	Why do we have to slice the beef, pepperoni, and sweet red and green peppers?
15	How do we know that the pizza is done?
16	What is the goal of the text?
17	What made the baby stronger and stronger?
18	How could Gatokaca fly?
19	Why did the king get rid of them that night?
20	What did not happen when she opened her eyes?

The questions that are stated above including comprehension. The key words for comprehension are such as reiterate, reword, critique, classify, summarize, illustrate, translate, review, report, discuss, re-write, estimate, interpret, theorize, paraphrase, describe and reference. In comprehension level, the students just be asked or required to finish the problems that have been simply stated. Comprehension questions also ask students to take several bits of information. These questions go beyond simple recall and require students to combine data together.

The questions in table above are basically used the keywords that have been determined by Bloom such as examples below:

- *What does the word "we" in the chorus refer to?*
- *What does paragraph 2 imply?*
- *How would you describe adrian?*

The examples above require the students to paraphrase and imply the answer from the texts or dialogues. The answers for the questions are not stated in

the texts or dialogues but the answer can be found by paraphrasing or resumming from a bit of information.

The questions that include application level can be seen through table below:

No	Questions
1	Susan's pen pal may not understand the measurements in this letter. For example, how could you express one mile using this metric system? Write some other changes that Susan should make to her letter before she sends to Indonesia
2	What should you do with the eggs before you cut them into small pieces?
3	What should you do with cucumber and tofu?
4	When do we dress them with the peanut sauce?
5	Can we use any cheese to make pizza?
6	Why do we have to divide the dough in half?
7	What happened during the search of the weapon to cut the umbilical cord?
8	Could you continue each dialogue with two more compliments?
9	Can you underline the expressions in Dialog A and Dialog B that show request?
10	Why did the man ask if she would fall down during the race?
11	Think of a sport. What do you think about that sport?
12	If you were the students, what would you write on your protest banners?
13	In what condition we can say that petroleum is of the little use?
14	What device did Sam wish he could have discovered?
15	What will happen to the boys if they learn too much while visiting the future?

This level of question requires the students to apply the new material that they learned in the form of a measurable activity. The keywords for this level are apply, demonstrate, interpret, practice, solve, use, illustrate. The example can be seen below:

Susan's pen pal may not understand the measurements in this letter. For example, how could you express one mile using this metric system? Write some other changes that Susan should make to her letter before she sends to Indonesia

The question above asks the students to make other changes that should be sent to Indonesia. Susan, in the example above, should apply the theory about writing a letter in different condition.

Moreover, the questions that include analysis level can be seen through table below:

No	Questions
1	Where does the dialogue take place?
2	What is the speaker's relationship in dialogue A? How about in dialogue B?
3	Which sentence shows an invitation in dialogue A? How about in dialogue B?
4	Who would probably read the text?

5	What is the genre of the text?
6	How are the two dialogues different?
7	What kind of text is this?
8	What does it offer?
9	In what kind of hotel will the participants stay?
10	Why is the tour package named 'New Year Holiday Package'?

The questions that are stated above include to analysis level. This level of question requires the students demonstrates their ability to analyze a situation using the knowledge learned by applying it to a case study. The keywords for this level of questions are analyze, break down, catalogue, compare, quantify, measure, test, examine, experiment, relate, graph, diagram, plot, extrapolate, value, divide

. The students will use their learned skills to understand the situation of the case study, determine cause and effect, and develop a solution to the problem. They demonstrate their knowledge by taking a systematic approach to analyzing the situation and developing a solution based on the analysis such as examples below:

- *What is the effect of temperature imbalance within clouds?*
- *How different this story is this story with the previous one?*

From the examples, students are asked to differentiate a story with previous story. It means that they are asked to analyze a problem and try to solve the problem based on the information and knowledge that they have.

Moreover, the questions that include synthesis level can be seen through table below:

No	Questions
1	What is the title of the fable?
2	How did you expect the story ended?
3	Who might deliver the speech?
4	What reaction is expected from this text?
5	What happened to her at the end of the story?
6	Can you guess where they are?
7	What do your friends think about twitter?

The questions that are stated above include to synthesis level. This level of question requires the students to demonstrate a further command of the knowledge/skills by using a case study. The students will demonstrate an advanced capability by developing a creative, unique solution to the problem by applying what they have learned in a new and different way. The keywords for this level of questions are form of verb such as develop, expect, build, create, design, organize, revise, formulate, propose, establish, assemble, integrate, re-arrange and modify.

This level of question requires the students to find a solution to a problem through the use of original, creative thinking such as examples below:

- How did you expect the story ended?
- What reaction is expected from this text?

From the examples, students are asked to use their critical thinking to know the end of the story. They are asked to find the solution with the new way based on what they have learnt.

From the data, the questions include high level questions are rarely used in English textbook. The questions in level of synthesis are in low percentage even evaluative level is not used in the textbooks. The questions that exist in the textbooks can be answered easily by students by checking the text or dialogues that stated in the books. Furthermore, the questions in level of comprehension do not train students to build their critical thinking.

Furthermore, refer to Abudi (2010) says different level questions will make students not only focuses stated information but also make students enable in using their mind to think critically. For example, through role playing, students are able to practice the information that they have gotten in different problems and situations. Students should be able to negotiate with an understanding of how they would apply the information that they have learned to fit with situation that are asked.

High level questions push students to tend to read and think based on the kinds of questions they anticipate receiving from the teacher. If students are constantly bombarded with questions that require only low levels of intellectual involvement, they will tend to think accordingly. The result is students will involve a little creative thinking taking place. If students are given questions based on higher levels of thinking, they will tend to think more creatively and divergently.

In short, it can be concluded that questions that are used in English textbooks include low level questions such as knowledge and comprehension level that just require students to check the information that have been stated and just repeating literal information in the textbooks. These two level questions are provided in high percentage in each grade.

D. Conclusion and Suggestion

The percentage of questions in each level of taxonomy bloom in each grade of senior high school is different. Number of questions in each level is also increasing each grade. In grade X, percentage of knowledge is higher than grade XI and XII. In contrary, in comprehension level is mostly occurred in grade XII. However, for analysis question, they mostly occurred in grade XI.

The questions that include low level questions are provided in high percentage in English` textbook of senior high school. These two level questions have percentage 42,9% and 30,4%. Meanwhile the questions in level of application, analysis and synthesis have percentage 3,4%, 21,5% and 1,5%.

The questions in high level of question such as the questions in level of application, analysis, and synthesis and evaluative are important to students in senior high school. They have to get extra exercises in answering these levels of questions to create and train their critical thinking which is important for them in high level education.

Note: This article was written based on Thesis of writer with her advisors drs. Jufri, M.Pd and Fitrawati S.S., M.Pd

Bibliography

Abudi, Gina. 2010. *Using Bloom's Taxonomy: Teaching Adults to Learn Effectively*. Retrieved on July 3, 2012 from

http://www.learningandteaching.info/learning/behaviour_mod.htm

Arikunto, Suhaimi. 2006. *Metodologi Penelitian: Suatu Pendekatan*.

Jakarta: Asta Suhasatya

Bloom, Benjamin S. (1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*. Chicago: Chicago University Press. Available from library.nu.

Brainerd, Kellogg. 2004. *Graded Lessons in English*. Chicago: Chicago University Press. Available from en.bookfi.org.

Cullin. 2000. *Effective Questioning Strategies and Effective Feedback*. Retrieved on June 25th, 2012, from <http://www.bygpub.com/eot/eot2.htm>

Krippendorff, Klaus H. 2004. *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*. London: Sage Publication.

Ur, Penny. 1999. *A course in Language Teaching: Practice and Theory*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Wolf, Dennis Palmer. 1987. *The Art of Questioning. Academic Connection*. Vol 5.

