

Analysis of Class V English Textbook used by Schools under the Mizoram Board of School Education

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Abstract

The research is an analysis of Class V English textbook with special reference to teaching and learning of English grammar. The researcher used Revised Bloom's Taxonomy (2001) as a guideline for analysing the cognitive processes of the textbook. The findings include an analysis of the activities and exercises in the textbook where it was concluded that the textbook is appropriately organised and good enough for teaching and learning of English grammar. There are 577 activity items in the English textbook where it was found that the number of "Apply" level items is comparatively higher as compared to the other levels of learning.

Keywords: Mizoram Board of School Education, Revised Bloom's Taxonomy (2001), cognitive process.

Introduction

Textbook analysis has become an important assessment of curriculum. It is an indirect approach of articulating awareness for textbook developers since the textbook is an embodiment of language and grammar learning. The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) (2005) states, "Improved textbooks that are carefully written and designed, professionally edited and tested, offering not merely factual information but also interactive spaces for children are important." Assessing textbooks is a key step in creating useful teaching and learning resources. Because education is a dynamic process, educational materials and resources must be relevant and reliable.

Textbook analysis is not a new concept in the field of research in Mizoram. However, the scope of analysis is comparatively limited to an extent. There can be critical assumptions with regards to the approaches of teaching and learning English in government and private schools since English has now been commonly used by children; from pre-schoolers to elementary school students, not only in schools but also at home and among their peers.

The extent to which an English textbook is an instrument in learning English grammar is reflected in the study. Textbook analysis is a much needed process, especially in subjects which deal with facts, history, culture, science, economics, etc. Mukundan (2010) described the importance of textbook evaluation and how the right kind of evaluation is important for teaching and learning to be fruitful. The study provides content for understanding the curriculum in the field of teaching and learning of English grammar in Mizoram.

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Literature Review

Chawngthu and Chuaungo (2017) conducted an evaluative study of English Literature Reader for Class X under Mizoram Board of School Education where the contents of the book were quite appropriate. It was found that the primary textbook is suitable for development of the listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills of students.

Ayu and Indrawati (2018) analysed an English textbook which revealed that the textbook has a shortcoming towards the development of listening skill, but it is concluded that the textbook is suitable for learning English language. The study suggests teachers to be more critical and creative in overcoming the limitation of textbooks used by making their own materials which contain additional exercises for learning English.

According to Hestinationsih's (2016) research, students' understanding of grammar and vocabulary has no significant impact on their argumentative writing. This implies that writing skill is developed independently, through practice and reading, and knowledge of grammar and vocabulary skills are complementary.

Rationale

The study is an initiative in understanding the teaching and learning mechanism in Mizoram with regards to English grammar. English is a commonly used language for communication among school children in Mizoram. This is due to enforcement from the teachers especially in private schools. On the other hand, schools may not be the only source of knowledge or factor for learning in children in today's world. With the advancement of technology and access to internet among children in almost in every home, there is a notable increase in the use of English language among younger generations at home, among peers, school, and outside home environment. This shows that English is correctly or incorrectly, intentionally or unintentionally learnt not only in schools but is a result of children's interactions with the global world, and which happens mostly through mobile phones. Since most of the videos they watch and the games they play are of English content, the language is learnt easily and automatically.

The study is an implementation of the mentioned knowledge of the contemporary world in relation to the cognitive process of learning as developed in the realm of education. Children may not understand the real life application that the language they study in schools is the same language they listen to the most when they watch YouTube or play mobile/computer games. The study is an attempt to trigger further future studies about how mundane life activities promote language learning by finding out the cognitive processes contained in a textbook.

The present study is significant in understanding the role of the teachers and textbook developers in the teaching and learning of English- as a language and also as rules of grammar. Even though instructions for teachers are clearly given in the textbook, it may be difficult for all teachers to follow or comply with them. This is mainly due to differences in teaching methodology, teaching skills, and teaching materials. The findings are a component of knowledge which shows that the English textbook is made up of six levels of learning and that if teachers put enough effort, they would be able to inculcate grammar knowledge while learning language and vice versa.

Research Objective

The objectives of the research are given as follows:

1. To categorise the exercises and activities of Class V English textbook used by schools under the Mizoram Board of School Education using Revised Bloom's Taxonomy (2001)
2. To analyse the exercises and activities of Class V English textbook used by schools under the Mizoram Board of School Education with special reference to grammar.

Research Methodology

The research uses Descriptive Research Design where Qualitative Research is employed to analyse the English textbook.

Population and Sample

The population of the study comprises of Class V English textbook, *Marigold*, used by schools under the Mizoram Board of School Education. No sample was taken for the study and the Textbook is analysed in a qualitative manner.

Tools used

The researcher used Revised Bloom's Taxonomy (2001), a framework that organises the learning objectives into different categories of hierarchy of skills. (It is often used for construction of learning objectives as well as for assessment of learning) as a guideline for analysis in the present study. The Bloom's Taxonomy

In this study, the Bloom's Taxonomy has been used to identify the different skills required for students in executing the exercises and activities in their English textbook. The cognitive domain of Bloom's Taxonomy is used to identify the level of activity items in the English textbook. The hierarchy of levels in Bloom's Taxonomy are: Remember, Understand, Apply, Analyse, Evaluate, and Create. Each level subsequently requires higher order thinking; from recalling facts, grasping knowledge, executing knowledge, critical thinking, judging and comparing knowledge, to creating a new object from their own ideas respectively.

Analysis and Interpretation

Objective no. 1: To categorise the exercises and activities of Class V English textbook used by schools under the Mizoram Board of School Education using Revised Bloom's Taxonomy (2001)

The table below shows the category of exercises and activities found in Class V English textbook.

Table no. 1.1

Sl. No.	Taxonomy Level	No of items (N=577)	Percentage
1	Remember	89	15.42%
2	Understand	191	33.10%
3	Apply	272	47.14%
4	Analyse	11	1.91%
5	Evaluate	4	0.69%
6	Create	10	1.73%

The above table shows that there are 577 activity items in the textbook where 89 items fall under "Remember" level which is 15.42 percent of the total items. There are 191 items in the "Understand" level which is 33.10 percent of the total items. There are 272 items in the "Apply" level that owns majority of the Taxonomy Level in the textbook which is 47.14 percent of the total items. The "Analyse" level has 11 items which is 1.91 percent of the total items. The least item in the textbook belongs to the "Evaluate" level which is only 0.69 percent of the total items in the textbook. In "Create" level, there are 10 items which is also only 1.73 percent of the total items. There is a significant gap in the number of items in the textbook as shown in the above table, Table 1.1.

Objective no. 2: To analyse the exercises and activities of Class V English textbook used by schools under the Mizoram Board of School Education with special reference to grammar

The NCF 2005 recommends language learning using various learning materials, where the textbook is only a supplementary component among the different approaches used by the teacher (Pal, n.d.). Separate English grammar book is not developed by the State Council of Educational Research and Training, Mizoram and the *Marigold* textbook is the sole English textbook prescribed for Class V. Teaching and learning of English grammar should be inclusive in learning the language where the teachers have to be active facilitators towards students' acquisition of knowledge. This means that teachers have to be dynamic in their teaching methodology and in their assessments of students learning. However, a question can be raised as to whether the English teachers feel the need for an English grammar textbook for teaching grammar.

The item distribution of exercises and activities in the textbook is found to be suitable for elementary school students. The "Apply" level in Bloom's Taxonomy owns majority of the items which reflects an appropriate assessment of learning in the elementary stage of education. Majority of the "Apply" level in the textbook consist of grammar exercises. This enables students to understand grammar as well as their applications to real life situations. Since elementary school students are keen to discover new things and try out their own unique ways of applying new knowledge, the textbook serves a good purpose to a great extent. It is important for teachers to effectively teach so as to enable students to apply their new learning in different situations.

The item distribution of "Remember," "Understand," and "Apply," being higher as compared to the "Analyse," "Evaluate," and "Create" is suitable for Class V English textbook in essence that students at this stage of education are in the process of developing curiosity and how to express their feelings. The NCF-SE 2023 also identifies the middle school stage as 'a key phase for developing clear thinking, expression, storytelling ability, and readiness for future learning challenges' (National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2023).

Major Findings

The major findings of the present research include the following:

- Majority of the items in Class V English textbook are under "Apply" level of Bloom's Taxonomy.
- The least items in Class V English textbook are under "Evaluate" level of Bloom's Taxonomy.
- The distribution of items in Class V English textbook is found to be suitable for teaching and learning of English grammar.

Discussion

The study is an attempt to understand the activities and exercises of Class V English textbook used by schools under the MBSE. The intellectual rigour of the textbook developers is revealed from the findings as majority of the items is under "Apply" level of Bloom's Taxonomy. Through items in the "Apply" level, students are given opportunity to execute their comprehension abilities through activities which is appropriate for the age level of class V students. The activities are mostly filling blanks, making sentences, or writing correct answers items. Although they may be simple, they are equally important for the teachers for formative evaluation of students' performance.

In general, the majority of Class V students belong to the pre-adolescent age group who tend to process information more slowly than adolescents. They are in the stage of developing their cognitive processes. In this stage of development, the number of "Evaluate" levels of items in the textbook marks an appropriate distribution of assessment of knowledge for Class V students. The students are in the stage of learning how to analyse their own decisions and evaluate the options

available, which would be in their best interest. They will then be able to apply these skills in evaluating abstract ideas provided in the Textbook.

The findings show the suitability of English textbooks developed by the SCERT. However, the study is an analysis of only one textbook, and the quality of English textbooks cannot be generalized from one finding. The findings of the study do not represent the diversity of English textbooks used in Mizoram.

Conclusion

From the discussion, conclusions can be drawn from different perspectives with regards to teaching and learning of English grammar as well as understanding the potentials and credibility of middle school students in various aspects. Middle school students especially Class V students who are entering their pre-adolescence stage, tend to be highly sensitive in absorbing knowledge. Students can be oblivious to certain approaches of knowledge acquisition despite the fact that they are developing meta-cognition about their learning. However, their grammar knowledge can be developed through activities and exercises which are present in their textbook.

Looking at the way the textbook is developed, English grammar is meant to be learned in an implicit manner while learning the language itself. It can also be learned in a systematic and elaborative manner if the teachers wish to teach grammar explicitly. The study shows that teachers are not forced to follow one guideline in teaching English grammar. It is not known whether the teachers are given full authority and independence in adopting the approach that works the best for their school, classroom, and students; or whether they are neglected to be provided with the teaching material they need. The absence of a separate English grammar textbook says it otherwise.

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