

# **ANALYSIS OF INSTRUCTIONAL QUESTIONS IN AN ENGLISH TEXTBOOK FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study aimed to analyze the extent of instructional questions for listening, reading, speaking, and writing activities in the course book, *Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas 1 Semester 1* emphasizing HOTS (High Order Thinking Skills) or LOTS (Low Order TS); and to investigate the most dominant cognitive dimension of the instructional questions in that textbook. Content analysis was applied for all 9 chapters of the textbook in order to answer the research questions. All the activities in the form of listening, reading, speaking and writing in the textbook became the object of analysis. Additionally, every instructional question defined as wh- question, yes/no question, multiple choice question, statement question, and true/ false question was taken as the units for analysis. The instructional questions were collected, listed, and analyzed according to Bloom's Taxonomy of cognitive domains. The researcher then calculated the percentage and frequencies of the questions on every level of cognition that appeared in each chapter of the textbook. Descriptive statistics was used to describe the basic features of the data in this study. The results showed that there were 227 instructional questions for listening, reading, speaking, and writing activities. Listening activities had the least instructional questions (11 questions); while the most dominant ones were found for reading activities (125); speaking and writing were in the middle with average frequencies (45 and 46). After the instructional questions in all the activities were categorized, it revealed that most of those instructional questions emphasized LOTS (198 questions).

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Moreover, the most dominant cognitive dimension focused on the level of knowledge (177 questions) which is the lowest level in Bloom's taxonomy.

Keywords: *Analysis, Instructional Questions, English Textbook.*

## INTRODUCTION

The new curriculum that was introduced into Indonesia, on 15 July 2013, is called the 2013 curriculum, abbreviated as K13. This curriculum is a revised version of the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) and of the 2006 School Based Curriculum (KBS) and puts greater emphasis on building the character of students. The main purpose of the curriculum is to shape individuals who believe in God, have good character and are confident and successful in learning (Kemdikbud I, 2013).

K13 has since been applied at many schools in Indonesia, consequently textbooks have been produced for the 2013 curriculum and teachers have to use such a textbook with the new curriculum. In order to improve the quality of English education, the Ministry of Education and Culture has spent a lot of money on funding some projects to produce textbooks for each level of education. One of the results of government projects to produce textbooks is one for the first year of senior high school entitled, "*Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas 1 Semester I*" which was designed to meet the needs of the new 2013 curriculum (Curriculum, 2013).

Furthermore, the regulation about textbooks in Indonesia is stated in *Permendikbud No. 71 of 2013 Article 1 verse 1 (Menetapkan Buku Teks Pelajaran sebagai buku siswa yang layak digunakan dalam pembelajaran tercantum dalam Lampiran I yang merupakan bagian yang tidak terpisahkan dari Peraturan Menteri ini)*. The Ministry of Education and Culture has declared that the textbook as a books for students is suitable to be used in schools for teaching-learning (Kemdikbud II, 2013). Related to the regulations, the government says that a textbook is important in the teaching-learning process as it helps both teachers and students to accomplish the goals of the lessons. Moreover, using a textbook is considered helpful because most of the goals and aims have already been prepared in sets of practices based on the needs of the students (Cunningsworth, 1995).

In designing instructional materials, the authors of textbook should consider the Principles of Language Teaching such as the materials designed for teaching should provide and help learners to be more mature, more critically astute, more creative, more constructive, more collaborative, more capable, and more confident as a result of the course (Harwood, 2010, p. 96). The aforementioned principles require authors to provide instructional materials that stimulate learners to be critical in thinking.

Critical thinking is the intellectual ability to analyze and judge something rationally. In Bloom's taxonomy (Bloom et al., 1956), critical thinking refers to analysis (the ability to break down material into its component parts in order to understand its organizational structure), synthesis (the ability to put elements and parts together again to make a new integral whole), and evaluate (the ability to make a judgment about a certain purpose) the material, which is commonly referred to as HOTS (high order thinking skills). These levels of activity are quite difficult because the students need to use their mind optimally. Therefore, the materials served in the classroom should stimulate critical thinking and encourage the students to mine the potential of their minds.

Furthermore, one of the mindsets in curriculum 2013 emphasizes HOTS and the ability to make realistic assumptions (Mulyasa, 2014, p. 12). This means that the Government of Indonesia expects that students can acquire HOTS. Instructional materials served in the classrooms are important materials for guiding students to develop HOTS in the teaching-learning processes. Moreover, Questions provided in the activities are important for measuring the achievements of students' and in diagnosing all aspects, all strengths and weaknesses in the teaching-learning processes. AL-Zahrani (2003) cited in Al- hasanat (2016) addressing the role of questions in stimulating creative thinking says that this can only be achieved by using techniques where the quality of questions is so good that they lead to more insightful thinking. This implies that questions should be very well designed in order to lead students to be creative and to use critical thinking. However, most textbook questions, as research has indicated, emphasize only LOTS (lower order cognitive skills) (Razmjoo & Kazempourfard, 2012; Iqbaria, 2013; Nurisma, 2010).

Hence, the writer wants to explore and analyze the content of the *Bahasa Inggris* textbook which was produced and published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of The Republic of Indonesia

(Kemdikbud, 2014) in order to know to what extent it contributes to developing the thinking skills of students; and whether its instructional questions can provoke the thinking skills of these students to be HOTS or LOTS as one of the mindsets of the 2013 curriculum puts emphasis on developing HOTS (Mulyasa, 2014).

Furthermore, in the preface to the *Bahasa Inggris* textbook, the Minister of Education and Culture states “as the first edition, this textbook is not perfect. Therefore we invite readers to give inputs, criticism and suggestions in order to upgrade the quality of the textbook in the next edition” (Kemdikbud, 2014). Obviously, our government expects all citizens of Indonesia to be able to participate in giving their ideas to improve the quality of materials in the textbook. Therefore, the writer wants to analyze it’s contents to assess it’s potential contribution to the educational system in general and to the developing cognitive skills of students in particular.

### **Research Questions**

1. To what extent do the instructional questions for activities in this English textbook emphasize HOTS (high order thinking skills) or LOTS (low order thinking skills)?
2. What is the most dominant cognitive dimension of the instructional questions for activities in this English textbook?

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Since textbooks play an essential role in language classrooms in all types of educational institutions such as schools, colleges and language schools all over the world, the students who use a textbook as their resource should feel secure and develop a sense of progress and accomplishment. Textbooks can be a resource for independent learning, an effective source for introducing materials to the teachers, a source of ideas and activities, a reference source for students, a syllabus that reflects preset learning objectives, and a support for novice teachers who lack experience in selecting efficient language teaching-learning materials as noted in Tomlinson (2012).

Furthermore Allwright (1990) views textbooks as resource books for ideas and activities rather than for instructional materials. They provide various activities that can be adapted and modified by teachers based on their syllabus need. In addition, O’Neil (1990) believes that course books may meet students’ needs although they were not

specifically designed for any particular group of students and therefore benefit both the instructor and the learners. It can be concluded that a textbook becomes an important asset for a teacher in order to provide meaningful activities and also to help learners study by themselves.

Moreover, according to Bloom's taxonomy an ideal textbook should provide 22% of the instructional materials at knowledge level, 20% at comprehension level, 18% for application level, 17% at analysis, 13% at synthesis, and 15% at evaluation level. Those percentages, also called standards from Bloom's taxonomy (Alzu'bi, 2014). Bloom et al (1956) have defined six levels of cognitive domain in Bloom's taxonomy as follows:

### **Knowledge**

Knowledge as defined here includes those behavior and test situations which put emphasis on remembering, either by recognition or recall of ideas, material, or phenomena. In a learning situation, the student is expected to store in his mind certain information and the behavior expected later is the remembering of this information. Knowledge represents the lowest level of learning outcomes in the cognitive domain. It is defined as remembering previously learned material from specific facts to complete theories. This level involves remembering material without any additional thinking processes. Operational verbs commonly used are as follows: list, define, tell, describe, identify, show, label, collect, examine, tabulate, quote, name, who, when, where, etc. Examples of the activities involved in this level are such as: *Label the parts of a plant. Group together all the four syllable words. List the freedoms included in the Bill of Rights. Identify the food group to which each of these foods belongs.*

### **Comprehension**

Comprehension is the ability to grasp the meaning of material. This level involves translating material from one form to another such as words to numbers, interpreting material by explaining or summarizing, or predicting consequences or effects (Bloom et al., 1956). Comprehension represents the next level after memorizing material and also the lowest level of understanding material. Operational verbs used include: summarize, describe, interpret, contrast, predict, associate, distinguish, estimate, differentiate, discuss, extend. The following are examples of activities that are commonly done at comprehension level: *Give reasons for the energy crisis. Explain why we have bus safety*

*rules. Outline the steps necessary for an idea to become a law. Restate the reasons for weather changes. Summarize the story. Give examples of a recount text and Retell a story.*

### **Application**

The third level is application, it is the ability to use learned material in new and concrete situations. It includes applying rules, methods, concepts, principles, laws, and theories in appropriate situations (Bloom et al., 1956). Learning outcomes at the application level requires a higher level of understanding than those at the level of comprehension. Operational verbs used include the following: apply, demonstrate, calculate, complete, illustrate, show, solve, examine, modify, relate, change, classify, experiment, discover. Samples of activities at this level include: *Put this information in graphic form. Organize the forms of pollution from most damaging to least damaging. Sketch a picture that relates your feelings of recess. Use knowledge from various areas to find a solution to the problem of X.*

### **Analysis**

Analysis is the ability to break down material into its component parts in order to understand its organizational structure. This Analysis level involves identifying parts, analyzing the relationships between parts, and recognizing the organizational principles involved (Bloom et al., 1956). The operational verbs used include: analyze, separate, order, explain, connect, classify, arrange, divide, compare, select, explain, infer, break down, contrast, create a diagram to show, deconstruct, differentiate, discriminate between, distinguish between, identify, illustrate, infer, outline, relate, select, separate, investigate, discover, determine, observe, and examine. The activities involved at this level include those such as; *Read a non-fiction book then divide the book into its parts. Tell why the parts were placed in the order they were. Inspect two presidential speeches. Compare and contrast them in writing. Distinguish between facts and inferences.*

### **Synthesis**

Synthesis is the ability to assemble components together to form a new whole. This level involves the production of unique communications, a plan of operation such as a research proposal, or a scheme for classifying information such as a set of abstract relationships. Learning outcomes in this area stress creative behaviors,

with major emphasis on the formulation of new patterns or structures (Bloom et al, 1956). The operational verbs that apply include: combine, integrate, modify, rearrange, substitute, plan, create, design, invent, compose, formulate, prepare, generalize, rewrite. categorize, compile, devise, design, explain, generate, modify, organize, plan, reconstruct, relate, reorganize, revise, summarize, tell, write, synthesize, imagine, conceive, conclude. The following activities are examples of those done at synthesis level: *Create a new song for the melody of “twinkle twinkle little star”.* *Combine elements of drama, music, and dance into a stage presentation.* *Develop a plan for your school to save money.*

### **Evaluation**

The highest level in the cognitive domain is Evaluation. It involves the ability to judge the value of material for a given purpose, based on definite criteria determined by students or teachers. These criteria may be internal organizational criteria, or external criteria that are relevant to the objectives. The category of evaluation involves thinking processes from all the previous ones and is therefore the highest in the hierarchy of thinking processes (Bloom et al., 1956). The operational verbs used include: assess, decide, rank, grade, test, measure, recommend, convince, select, judge, explain, discriminate, support, conclude, compare, summarize, appraise, contrast, criticize, critique, discriminate, evaluate, interpret, justify, relate, support, calculate, estimate, consult, criticize, decide, discuss, and evaluate. Examples of activities involved at this level include: *Decide which person would best fill the position.* *Decide which proposed plan is the best.* *Read the two different accounts of an incident and decide which story is most logical in its portrayal.* *Judge the posters your class has just prepared.* *Justify the actions of your favorite historical figure.* *Determine the necessary criteria for a good resource.* *Evaluate the speeches.*

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research is categorized as content analysis since this study scrutinized and analyzed a textbook as the main source of data. The object of analysis in this study were the activities in the textbook that cover listening, reading, speaking and writing of EFL. The unit of analysis was each single instructional question defined as Wh-questions, yes/no questions, multiple choice questions, statement questions, and true/false questions. To collect the data from the

textbook, the writer used a guide for the level of the questions based on the cognitive domains in Bloom's Taxonomy. This instrument was designed with high validity and reliability by Iqbaria (2013, p. 210).

The data were collected in two stages. In the first stage, the writer analysed and scrutinized every chapter in the textbook to collect the instructional questions of activities. Then, those instructional questions were located in a four-column table. This table listed all the activities in serial order, the activity, its level, and its page number. In the second stage, the writer categorized all the instructional questions of activities by using a research tool based on the cognitive domains in Bloom's Taxonomy. The coding categories were labeled as follows: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Then, the number of activities in the lists for each of the categories in the research tool was counted, and the frequency of each level of activity that appeared was also calculated, then listed in the table. Quantitative data analysis was used in this study. Furthermore, the writer used descriptive statistics such as percentages (%) and frequencies (F) as basic data analysis techniques.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After categorizing all the questions based on the activities, viz.: listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills; it was seen that listening skills had the least activity in the textbook; there were only 11 questions provided from all the chapters. By contrast reading had the most activities, there were 125 questions in total distributed throughout the textbook. Whilst, speaking and writing activities were in between with 45 questions for speaking and 46 questions for writing.

### Listening Activity

From the data, it was found that the questions for listening focused on the *knowledge* level of cognitive domain. Most of them were in the form of "listen and repeat after your teacher, reading these words". This showed that the listening activities mainly accentuated the pronunciation, and stress of words; only 1 activity of listening on the other hand, was found at *comprehension* level. The table below shows some sample questions found for listening activities in the *Bahasa Inggris* textbook.



**Table 1. Sample Questions for Listening Activities**

No.	Question	Level of Thinking
1.	Listen to your teacher reading these words. Repeat after him/her.	Knowledge
2.	Listen to your teacher reading an announcement. Refer to these questions while listening. Who is the announcement for?	Knowledge
3.	Where do you think you will hear that kind of announcement?	Knowledge
4.	What is the announcement about?	Comprehension

Most of the questions for listening activities trained the students to recall and remember materials which had just been learnt (“Listen to your teacher reading these words. Repeat after him/her”); asked the students to identify specific information from a monologue text (“Who is the announcement for?”); and finally to comprehend the text in order to get specific information (“What is the announcement about?”). No activities were found for the levels of *application*, *analysis*, *synthesis*, and *evaluation*. In summary, the level of thinking in the listening activities was focused on the lowest level in the cognitive domains.

### **Reading Activities**

The materials for reading skills involved personal letters, short stories, describing people and places and announcements. Some of the instructional questions presented in the textbook are listed in the table that follows:

**Table 2. Sample Questions for Reading Activities**

No.	Question	Level of Thinking
1.	Based on the text, can you guess what ecotourism is?	Knowledge
2.	As one of ecotourism destinations, what does Tanjung Putting National Park offer to tourists?	Knowledge
3.	How long have the writer and Dinda been friends?	Knowledge
4.	What does Dinda look like?	Knowledge

5.	What are her favourite clothes?	Knowledge
6.	What kind of t-shirts does she like?	Knowledge
7.	Describe Dinda's personality briefly.	Knowledge
8.	Why do many friends enjoy Dinda's company?	Knowledge
9.	What is Dinda's bad habit?	Knowledge
10.	What is Dinda's hobby?	Knowledge
11.	Identify the main ideas of the paragraph, and then write the most important details in your own words.	Comprehension
12.	What is the writer's opinion about the person being described?	Comprehension
13.	Identify the main ideas of the paragraphs, and then sum-marize the most important details in your own words.	Comprehension
14.	Why do you think so?	Analysis
15.	Tourists probably bring food and snacks in paper or plastic packages when they visit a tourist destination. What should they do with the wastes?	Analysis
16	What do you think about the place described below?	Analysis

It is evident that most of the questions for reading activities were concentrated on recalling the materials which had just been taught (knowledge) such as “Based on the text, can you guess what ecotourism is?; and finding specific information (“What is Dinda's bad habit?”). Those questions involved remembering material without any additional thinking processes. In addition, some questions needed the ability to grasp the meaning of material (comprehension) such as: “Identify the main ideas of the paragraph, and then write the most important details in your own words”, and “What is the writer's opinion about the person being described? Therefore, the aforementioned activities were regarded as LOTS not HOTS.

Furthermore, in the reading activities they were also some questions that required the ability to break down material into its component parts in order to understand its organizational structure such as: “Tourists probably bring food and snacks in paper or plastic packages when they visit a tourist destination. What should they do with the wastes?”, and “Why do you think so?”. Those instructional

questions were categorized into analysis level. This involved identifying and analyzing the relationship between parts in order to give a rationale or reason. This level of thinking is referred to as HOTS. Also instructional questions related to reading activities were not found for the levels of *application*, *synthesis*, and *evaluation*.

### **Speaking Activities**

The authors of the textbook provided questions for five levels of cognitive domain in the speaking activities, there were 30 questions at *knowledge* level, 8 questions at *analysis* level, 4 questions for *application* level, 2 questions for *synthesis* level, and 1 question for *evaluation* level; only comprehension level was missed out. The table below lists some of the speaking activity questions found in the *Bahasa Inggris* Textbook.

**Table 3. Sample Questions for Speaking Activities**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Level of Thinking</b>
1.	Do you like painting?	Knowledge
2.	Do you like music?	Knowledge
3.	May I know your name please?	Knowledge
4.	Identify which numbers are compliments and which are expressions of care/sympathy.	Knowledge
5.	Have you ever visited a waterfall or other natural tourist objects?	Knowledge
6.	Try to remember one interesting place you've visited. Tell your friends about the place.	Knowledge
7.	Act out one of the dialogues for the class.	Application
8.	Why do you think we are created differently?	Analysis
9.	Why do you think so?	Analysis
10.	Will you recommend that place to your friends? Why	Analysis
11.	Imagine that you are the captain of your class. You just had a meeting with OSIS. During the meeting, you took the following notes. Use your notes to make an announcement to your classmates.	Synthesis
12.	Make up a short dialogue for the following situations	Synthesis

13.	Suppose we all looked alike. Would it be better?	Evaluation
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It is obvious that several of the questions for speaking activities were put in merely to help students remember the materials that had just been taught such as “Identify which numbers are compliments and which are expressions of care/sympathy”. Learners were expected to understand and remember what was an expression of sympathy and what words made a compliment in order to make them easy to distinguish those expressions. Therefore, the aforementioned question was categorized as *knowledge*.

In addition to this speaking activity, the third level in cognitive domains; the *application* level was also discovered in the textbook. At this level, the learners were able to stimulate and use learnt materials in new and concrete situations. This includes applying rules, methods, concepts, principles, laws, and theories in appropriate situations. Role-play was usually occupied with this activity, for example “Act out one of the dialogues for the class”. Apart from their higher frequency of activity, both *knowledge* and *application*, belong however to LOTS.

The fourth level in cognitive domain was analysis. This is referred to as HOTS. At *analysis* level, the learners were stimulated to analyze and break down the materials into some parts for the purpose of knowing the reason (cause/effect). This level is more complicated than the previous one (*application*). The questions found for speaking activities related to this level, include for example “Why do you think we are created differently?”. Here, learners have to analyze the functions of heterogeneity of human beings.

Furthermore, at synthesis level, learners needed the ability to put some parts together to form a new whole. There were only 2 questions found at this level, viz: “Imagine that you are the Captain of your class. You have just had a meeting of OSIS. During the meeting, you took the following notes. Use your notes to make an announcement to your classmates”, and “Make up a short dialogue for the following situations”. Those questions asked the learners to create a new thing by combining components that have been learnt before. This level is more complicated than that of *analysis* level because it includes the production of new ideas.

The authors did not pay much attention to the highest level of cognitive domain. The examination found only 1 question at the level of evaluation. At this level, learners need the ability to judge the value

of material for a given purpose. This can be seen in the following question, “Suppose we all looked alike. Would it be better?”. This instructional question asked the learners to analyze what would happen if all humans looked the same, and so the students have to make a judgment based on their analysis of this new situation. These higher thinking processes are essential for mental health, high achievement, and professional success. As a result, students should be encouraged to give opinions about what they read, to analyze the materials, to form creative ideas, to evaluate, to compare and to contrast different choices and also to relate what they read with their own experiences. Based on the findings from the data, it can be concluded that most of the questions for speaking activities only required LOTS.

### **Writing Activities**

Fortunately, after the others skills, the writing activities found in the *Bahasa Inggris* Textbook were varied. The authors of the book designed these materials to provoke students to use all of the six levels of cognitive domain. Similar to the previous activities, the *knowledge* level dominated the writing activities; examples of sample questions related to writing are set out in the table that follows:

**Table 4. Sample Questions for Writing Activities**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Level of Thinking</b>
1.	What do you write to start your response to an email/a letter?	Knowledge
2.	What details do you write in your email/letter?	Knowledge
3.	What do you write to end your letter/email?	Knowledge
4.	Does the writer use correct paragraphing?	Knowledge
5.	Are there any misspelled words?	Knowledge
6.	Does she begin all sentences with capital letters?	Knowledge
7.	Complete the following chart to understand the structure of the descriptive text in the reading comprehension	Comprehension
8.	Using your own words, rewrite the above paragraphs.	Comprehension
9.	Your friend is going to describe an imaginary friend that he/she has met from outer space. Draw a sketch based on his/her description in the box below. Show the picture to your friend	Application

	and check if your picture matches his/her description.	
10.	If you were to divide the text into some paragraphs, how would you do it?	Analysis
11.	Write a paragraph about your holiday plan. Use <i>I would like to ...</i> , <i>I will ...</i> <i>I am going to.....</i> and <i>would rather ...</i> in your paragraph	Synthesis
12.	Write a short letter for the following situations. The people in the situations below live far away from you.	Synthesis
13.	Rewrite your description by adding words, phrases or sentences. Change it into a descriptive essay telling your reader about an interesting place to visit.	Synthesis
14.	What is your overall impression about the place?	Evaluation

As for the level of comprehension, the authors of the textbook asked their learners to write a display paragraph by using their own words (“Using your own words, rewrite the above paragraphs”). Furthermore, there were questions such as: “Your friend is going to describe an imaginary friend that he/ she has met from outer space. Draw a sketch based on his/ her description in the box below. Show the picture to your friend and check if your picture matches his/her description” was categorized into *application* because it required the ability to use learned material in a new and concrete situations. This includes applying rules, methods, concepts, principles, and laws in appropriate situations. These aforementioned levels were again, referred to as LOTS.

At the *analysis* level of the writing activities, the learners needed the ability to break down material into its component parts in order to understand its organizational structure as can be seen in the following example “If you were to divide the text into some paragraphs, how would you do it?”. This question required deep analysis of components of the text.

From the textbook, there were also some questions discovered in this writing activity belonging to *synthesis* level, such as: “Write a short letter for the following situations. The people in the situations below live far away from you”; “Rewrite your description by adding words, phrases or sentences. Change it into a descriptive essay telling your

reader about an interesting place to visit”. Here, learners were asked to assemble components together to form a new whole. Learning outcomes in this area stress creative behaviors, with major emphasis on the formulation of new patterns or structures (Bloom et al., 1956).

The least questions in the textbook were at the highest level of *evaluation*. The instructional questions at this section asked learners to give rational reasons to a certain topic and then they have to make a judgment based on their analysis, for example “What is your overall impression about the place?”. This required analysis of the condition and location of that place in order to make a judgment about a bad/good and an interesting/ uninteresting place.

### **Level of Thinking - LOTS or HOTS**

The findings showed that the activities presented in the new *Bahasa Inggris* textbook involved both LOTS and HOTS. Most of the activities in listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills emphasized LOTS. Moreover, the authors were not successful in greatly varying the cognitive levels of the listening, reading, and speaking activities. Only the writing activities were varied to include all six levels of educational objectives of cognitive domains in Bloom’s taxonomy. It was good that the authors of the textbook presented some materials which could generate and attract learners to use all their mental processes optimally. The numbers of questions requiring high cognitive domain in all chapters of the textbook implied that the authors took that into consideration in stimulating the learners to use HOTS even though the amount of such questions did not yet reach the standard for the educational objectives.

In line with the mindset of curriculum 2013, the Ministry of Education and Culture has emphasized that students need to learn to use HOTS (higher order thinking skills) and develop the ability to make realistic assumptions (Mulyasa, 2014). However, the authors of the *Bahasa Inggris* textbook found it hard to accomplish the job to provoke learners to be HOTS, because 87% of the activities in the textbook merely focused on LOTS. They were obviously oblivious to the mindset of the K13 curriculum which was supposed to build the higher thinking skills of students .

This result was also supported by studies conducted by Razmjoo and Kazempourfard (2012), Iqbaria (2013), and Alzu’bi (2014). Their studies showed that the authors of English textbooks designed materials which emphasized LOTS rather than HOTS even though the goals of

the curricula were to develop the thinking of students to be more creative, innovative, and competent.

## CONCLUSIONS

The findings revealed that most of the instructional questions for listening, reading, speaking, and writing activities put emphasis on LOTS. Listening activities had the lowest frequency in the textbook. Speaking and writing activities had average frequencies but they still did not fulfill the expectations of frequency for each level of the cognitive domains. By contrast with the other skills, reading had the highest frequency of activity provided by the authors of the textbook.

In addition, the second research question about the most dominant cognitive dimension of instructional questions in the *Bahasa Inggris* textbook, the analysis showed that the activities for all the skills were dominated by the *knowledge* level according to Bloom's Taxonomy. In summary, it can be asserted that the activities in the textbook focused on the lowest level of cognitive domain (*knowledge*) and on LOTS.

## SUGGESTIONS

The team of material designers under the Ministry of Education and Culture should be more selective, innovative, and evaluative in producing a textbook to be used in the teaching-learning processes for ESL. Moreover, the authors should consider varying activities in designing a textbook. It is better not to focus on reading skills only. The other skills such as listening, speaking, and writing especially the creative skills of speaking and writing also need to be explored more to encourage students to be more communicatively competent. Furthermore, the authors should provide instructional questions that provoke the thinking capacity of learners above their *knowledge* level to reach HOTS.

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