

# Evaluating Straightforward Coursebook in Terms of Cognitive Processes Using Bloom's Revised Taxonomy

Theint Myat Noe<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

This study intends to evaluate Straightforward Coursebook Level 1A, which is prescribed for First Year non-English specialization students at Arts and Science Universities and Degree Colleges in Myanmar, in the case of six cognitive processes: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating, drawing on Bloom's Revised Taxonomy. The frequency and proportion of the six cognitive processes in this coursebook were calculated in terms of content analysis. Results revealed that the processes of remembering and understanding are prevalent, however, the creating process constituted the lowest percentage of processes in this coursebook. All in all, the results show that this coursebook which is intended for the basic user level groups didn't against expectations because the lower-order thinking skills were more frequently represented than the higher-order ones.

**Keywords:** Bloom's Revised Taxonomy, Cognitive Processes, Straightforward, Evaluation, Coursebook

## 1. Introduction

In the teaching of English as a foreign language, coursebook is a necessity. Coursebooks play a very significant role in the teaching and learning processes especially in developing countries where teachers and students can make use of them according to their needs (Mahmood, 2011). Coursebooks influence both the teachers and students as they provide pattern to the teachers for better teaching and aiding students' learning. Actually, coursebooks are the backbone of every educational system as they are a major source of providing instructions to the teachers and students.

In order to meet teachers' teaching and students' learning needs, it is extremely important to evaluate, select and adapt coursebooks. As there are many different and diverse ELT coursebooks on the market, there is a necessity for the evaluation of coursebooks in order to be able to recognize the advantages of one over the others and as a result, this will lead to the adoption of the coursebooks in turn. Cunningsworth (1995) and Ellis (1997) have suggested that there are three different kinds of material evaluation (the "predictive" or "pre-use"; the "in-use"; and the "retrospective" or "post-use").

Although there are a lot of different criteria and approaches to evaluate coursebooks, Bloom's revised taxonomy can be a good alternative to assess the basic skills and aligning teaching materials and learning activities with the cognitive thinking processes. According to Marzano and Kendall (2007), Bloom's revised taxonomy is a practical tool for course evaluation. Furthermore, as Hanna (2007) points out, Bloom's Revised Taxonomy "aligns learning objectives, curriculum, and assessment to link the complexity of learning with the cognitive...domains". Therefore, the present study aims at evaluating Straightforward Level 1A, prescribed for first year non-English specialization students in Myanmar, not based on evaluation frameworks which have been used widely by different scholars, but in terms of cognitive domains of language learning. The reason for choosing this framework is that it is effective in curriculum development and helps language teachers and administrators.

---

<sup>1</sup>Lecturer, Department of English, University of Co-operative and Management, Sagaing

## **1.1 Background of the Research**

In 1956, a cognitive psychologists team at the University of Chicago originally published Bloom's taxonomy which is titled after the committee's chairman, Benjamin Samuel Bloom (1913-1999). The taxonomy is a classification system used to define and distinguish different levels of human cognition. Various educators have typically used it to give a guidance on the development of assessments, curriculum, and instructional methods. In fact, the taxonomy was organized into three domains: Cognitive, Affective, and Psychomotor. However, educators have primarily focused on the Cognitive model, which includes six different classification levels: Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation. When the taxonomy was introduced, the term taxonomy was not familiar as an education term. But as readers saw its potential, it became widely known and cited. The system remains widely taught in undergraduate and graduate education programs throughout the United States, and it has also been translated into multiple languages and used around the world. The taxonomy would help researchers and educators understand the fundamental ways in which people acquire and develop new knowledge, skills, and understandings.

During the 1990s, another team of scholars hoped to add relevance for 21st century students and teachers and spent six years to finalize their work. The group was led by Lorin Anderson, a former student of Bloom's, and David Krathwohl, a colleague of Bloom who served as a member of the academic team that developed the original taxonomy. In 2001, they released a revised version of the original Taxonomy named Revised Bloom's Taxonomy. They intended to design it to be more useful to educators. In the revised version, all the categories were expressed as verbs rather than nouns. The revised version renamed Knowledge as Remember, Comprehension as Understand, Application as Apply, Analysis as Analyze, Evaluation as Evaluate, and Synthesis as Create.

## **1.2 Scope of the Research**

In this research, the data from Straightforward Coursebook Level 1A are analyzed in terms of cognitive processes using Bloom's Revised Taxonomy. First, the reason for choosing Straightforward Coursebook Level 1A among other Levels is that Straightforward Coursebook Level 1A is the very first and the most fundamental coursebook among Straightforward series as it is prescribed for first year non-English specialization students in Myanmar. Besides, although both Straightforward Level 1A and 1B are prescribed for first year\_\_\_ the former one is for first semester and the letter for second semester\_\_\_, only Level 1A was chosen in this research because of the length of the paper assigned and time constraint. Besides, Straightforward Level 1A includes student's book plus workbook. In this research, only student's book was chosen because it is impossible to analyze both of them within the length of paper allocated and time limit.

Furthermore, eight sections from each unit were randomly selected. The selected sections for the analysis included grammar section, vocabulary section, functional language section, pronunciation section, speaking skills section, reading skills section, listening skills section, and Did you know? section. However, in unit 6, there is no vocabulary section in isolation; thus, speaking plus vocabulary section was chosen. It is worth mentioning that the number of pages in each unit of the coursebook is the same. Therefore, although the number

of some sections in a unit is twice or more than twice, the findings can be generalized to other same sections in each unit and the progress of the students through different levels of cognitive processes can be depicted by analyzing different activities in each unit of the coursebook. Moreover, as this study aims to examine the extent to which the coursebook could demonstrate the six cognitive categories of the BRT in its activities, only the cognitive process dimension is used in this study.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The current study seeks to answer the following questions:

- Which levels of cognitive processes in Bloom's Revised Taxonomy are predominant in Straightforward Level 1A (Student's Book)?
- How is the coursebook, Straightforward Level 1A (Student's Book) evaluated in the case of lower-order and higher-order cognitive skills?

### **1.4 Aims and Objectives of the Research**

Coursebooks stand as a necessity in many language classrooms as they are considered to be the next important factor after teacher in the second/foreign language classrooms. Thus, it is important to choose relevant and good coursebooks. Straightforward Coursebook published by Macmillan Publishers Ltd. was prescribed for the foundation course of undergraduate courses in arts and science universities in Myanmar to replace locally produced coursebooks. It is, therefore, necessary to see whether these teaching coursebooks are better alternatives, compared with other available coursebooks in Myanmar. Since developing learners' thinking is regarded as one of the goals of today's educational systems, Bloom's Revised Taxonomy might be an appropriate means to evaluate the coursebook developers' consciousness in order to take constructive steps towards developing learners' thinking through coursebooks. For these reasons, the current study aims at evaluating Straightforward Coursebook Level 1A (Student's Book) in terms of the six cognitive processes (i.e., remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating) drawing on Bloom's Revised Taxonomy.

The objectives of the present study are:

1. to investigate which levels of the revised taxonomy are more focused on in the above coursebook.
2. to evaluate the above coursebook in accordance with lower-order and higher-order cognitive skills.

## **2. Literature Review**

In this study, Bloom's Original Taxonomy, Bloom's Revised Taxonomy, overview of the teaching material, and related researches will be discussed.

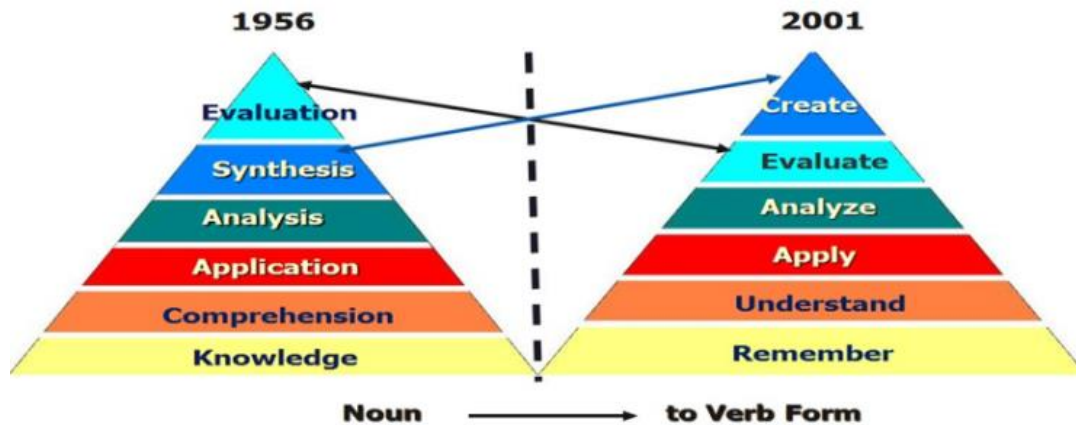
### **2.1 Bloom's Original Taxonomy**

According to Houghton (2004), educators have always been faced with the problem of seeking the improvement of human thinking. He suggests to define the nature of thinking as thinking is believed to be important in the processes of learning. Bloom's taxonomy emerged to develop a method of classification for thinking behaviors. It classifies thinking in

terms of six cognitive processes: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Each of these categories contains some subcategories with the exception of application. Moreover, the categories are ordered from simple to complex and from concrete to abstract. Furthermore, it is regarded that the original taxonomy represents a cumulative hierarchy; that is mastery of each simpler category is prior to mastery of the next more complex one. Besides, the six cognitive levels are classified into two levels: lower-order thinking skills and higher-order thinking skills. The lower-order thinking levels are regarded as knowledge, comprehension, and application while the higher-order thinking levels are analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

## 2.2 Bloom's Revised Taxonomy

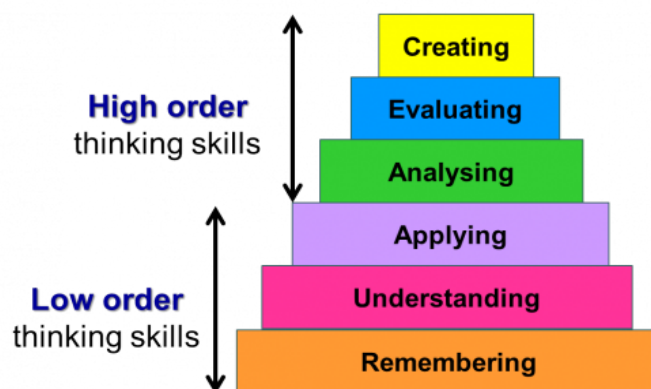
Bloom's Revised Taxonomy used in this study has been emerged out of Bloom's Original Taxonomy. The revised taxonomy includes two dimensions: knowledge dimension (the kind of knowledge to be learned) and cognitive processes (the kind of learning expected from students). The knowledge dimension in Bloom's Revised Taxonomy consists of four types of knowledge: factual, conceptual, procedural, and metacognitive. Further, the six categories in the cognitive process have changed from noun to verb forms. It is due to the fact that the authors defines cognition as thinking and since thinking is an active process, they prefer verbs because they believe that verbs can describe the action involved in thinking in a better way. All the six categories and their subcategories are called "cognitive processes". Figure 1 shows the changes of taxonomy from original version to revised version.



(Wilson, Leslie O. 2001; cited in <http://thesecondprinciple.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/changes-from-ppt.jpg>)

Figure 1. Exchange of Bloom's Taxonomy from Original Version to Revised Version

In the cognitive processes of the revised taxonomy, there are six major categories plus 19 subcategories. The six cognitive processes in Bloom's Revised Taxonomy mentioned above are also divided into two levels: lower-order thinking skills and higher-order thinking skills. For this reason, the Taxonomy is often graphically represented as a pyramid with higher-order thinking skills at the top. Figure 2 shows lower-order thinking skills and higher-order thinking skills of the six cognitive processes of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy.



(cited in; <https://sites.google.com/site/supersophomores675/1>)

Figure 2. Lower-Order Thinking Skills and Higher-Order Thinking Skills of the Six Cognitive Processes of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy

According to figure 2, lower-order thinking skills involves remembering, understanding, and applying whereas higher-order thinking skills involves analyzing, evaluating, and creating.

### 2.3 Overview of the Teaching Material

For the purpose of this study, Straightforward Coursebook Level 1A was selected. Straightforward is a new coursebook prescribed for non-English specialization students at Arts and Science Universities and Degree Colleges since 2011-2012 Academic Year. Straightforward Coursebook was published by Macmillan Publishers Ltd. Straightforward Coursebook Level 1A contains Student's Book plus Workbook. Student's Book of Straightforward Coursebook Level 1A selected in this study contains six units and each unit contains eight sections: grammar, vocabulary, functional language, pronunciation, speaking, reading, listening, and Did you know?. Furthermore, it is noted that in each unit, there are four lessons and most of the sections in each unit are more than one. This coursebook is designed for the basic user level group.

### 2.4 Related Researches

There has been an ongoing tendency to evaluate different areas in ELT coursebooks. But most studies carried out on coursebook evaluation employed such tools as questionnaires or checklists. There are some surveys evaluating coursebooks through Bloom's Revised Taxonomy with the aim of helping teachers understand their curriculum objectives better.

Riazi and Mosalanejad (2010) studied various kinds of learning objectives in Iranian senior high school and preuniversity coursebooks based on Bloom's Revised Taxonomy learning objectives. The findings showed the dominance of lower-order cognitive skills in all the grades. Furthermore, the preuniversity books contained more higher-order learning objectives to compare with senior high school textbooks.

In another study, learning objectives in the Interchange series was evaluated by Razmjoo and Kazempourfard (2012), using Bloom's Revised Taxonomy. The study revealed lower-order thinking skills including remembering, understanding, and applying are prevalent in these books. Moreover, the results revealed lack of metacognitive knowledge.

Next, Ali Roohani, Farzaneh Taheri and Marziyeh Poorzangeneh evaluated Four Corners Textbooks in terms of cognitive processes drawing on Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy. Results revealed the processes of remembering and understanding are dominant in these textbooks while creating process constituted the lowest percentage of processes in both textbooks. Furthermore, the lower-order categories were more frequently represented than the higher-order ones.

The present research studied Straightforward Coursebook Level 1A in terms of cognitive processes using Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy. This study examined the extent to which this coursebook could demonstrate the 6 cognitive categories of the Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy in its exercises and activities.

### 3. Research Methodology and Description of Data

This study was carried out both qualitatively and quantitatively. Setting Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy as the framework, this study collected the data from Straightforward Level 1A (Student’s Book) prescribed for first year non-English specialization students during first semester. The data for this study were mainly activities. Activities have been chosen because they are the cornerstones of Straightforward. Then, eight sections from each unit of the coursebook are randomly selected. The selected sections for the analysis includes *grammar* section, *vocabulary* section, *functional language* section, *pronunciation* section, *speaking skills* section, *reading skills* section, *listening skills* section, and *Did you know?* section.

In this study, content analysis was done to find out the frequency and proportion of the cognitive processes based on the cognitive domain in Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy. First, the frequencies of the six cognitive processes in Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy included in the activities of the coursebook are counted and then converted to percentage.

In this study, some of the activities were illustrated as the appendix in the CD according to the length of the paper assigned. Thus, this part includes some selected sample activities derived from the six units of the coursebook, along with some explanation for evaluating the activities.

#### 3.1. Data Analysis of the Eight Sample Activities Derived from the Six Units of Straightforward Level 1A (Student’s Book)

**GRAMMAR: too**

*Too* + adjective means 'more than we want'  
It's *too* *spicy*.

*Too* + adjective and *very* + adjective are different.  
The tea was *too* *hot*. I couldn't drink it.  
The tea was *very* *hot*, but I could drink it.

SEE LANGUAGE REFERENCE PAGE 12

1 Match the sentences in column A to the sentences in column B.

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
1 There's a lot of sugar in this coffee.	a You're too late.
2 I can't eat Mexican food.	b He's too short.
3 We can't move in this kitchen.	c It's too small.
4 Our baby needs to eat more.	d It's too spicy.
5 He can't reach the shelf.	e It's too sweet.
6 The film started ten minutes ago.	f He's too thin.

2 Rearrange the words to make sentences.

- in too it's here hot .
- tried very not I'm .
- easy too this is class .
- very food is expensive in country my .
- too for me chocolate is sweet .
- cloudy it's today very .

3 1.09 Listen to the recording to check your answers. Repeat if it's true for you.

Figure 3. A Sample Shot of Grammar Activity

The activity in Figure (3) includes three parts. In part 1, EFL students are asked to match the sentences using the previously taught grammatical rules and structures. To carry out the task, the students firstly need to recall and identify some previously learned rules and structures in the activity. Secondly, they are required to understand the content of the given sentences and the necessary structure. Thirdly, they should match the sentences in column A to the sentences in column B using the correct form and usage of the previously learned grammatical structures, which triggers applying process. Therefore, not only remembering and understanding but also applying is activated in this part.

In part (2), EFL students are asked to rearrange the words given to make sentences. To accomplish this task, the students need to recall their previously learned grammar rules and structures and understand them and also, they should apply the correct form of their previously learned grammatical rules and structures to analyze how these words are related to each other and to rearrange and construct sentences. Thus, this part includes remembering, understanding, applying and analyzing.

In part (3), EFL students are asked to listen to check their answers. For accomplish this, they need to compare their written answers with the oral ones. Thus, they have to understand the oral message to check whether their answers are right or wrong. Moreover, translation, that is, changing the form of communication, might take place by changing the oral message into the written one, therefore, understanding occurs. Besides, as the students are asked to repeat the sentences that are true for them, remembering occurs.

**1A | Miracle diets?**

**VOCABULARY: food 1**

1 Match the words in the box to the photos A-K.

fish chicken potatoes lettuce  
ice cream bananas bread  
apples milk eggs cake

2 Complete the information for the Nutrition Reference Guide with words from exercise 1. Check you know the meaning of the other food words.

**Nutrition Reference Guide**

1 pasta	A oranges
2 steak	B lemons
3 carrots	C tomatoes
	D cheese
	E milk
	F chocolate

3 **1.01** Listen to the recording to check your answers.  
Say the words.

4 Work in pairs. Find out if your partner likes. Ask questions.  
A: Do you like pasta?  
B: Yes, I do.  
A: Do you like eggs?  
B: No, I don't.

Source: Taken from Straightforward Level 1A, Unit 1, p. 4

Figure 4. A Sample Shot of Vocabulary Activity

Figure (4) shows the activity in the vocabulary section from Straightforward Level 1A. The activity displayed contains four parts. In part (1), EFL students are asked to match the presented words with the appropriate pictures. Through doing this part, some relevant knowledge from long-term memory is to be retrieved by looking at the pictures and the words

in the box. This part activates remembering process because students are expected to recall and remember some relevant knowledge from their long-term memory.

In part (2), EFL students are asked to complete the blanks using the previously taught words and to check whether they know the meaning of other words or not. To carry out the task, the students need to go through the first, second, and third phases of the cognitive domain, represented as remembering, understanding, and applying, respectively. First, the remembering process is activated because the students are required to recall and then identify some previously learned information in the activity. Second, they are required to understand and classify the words in the previous part. Finally, they should complete the blanks in the picture using the correct words of the previously learned words, which sets off the third category of cognitive dimension, that is, applying.

In part (3), EFL students are asked to listen to check the answers. For accomplishing this, they need to compare their written answers with the oral ones; therefore, they have to understand the oral message to know whether the answers are right or wrong. Moreover, translation, that is, changing the form of communication, might take place by changing the oral message into the written one. Besides, the students are asked to say the words, which entails remembering. Therefore, this part can activate both remembering and understanding processes.

Finally, the activity in Figure 4 invites students to work in pairs. Students are encouraged to ask questions to find out the kinds of foods their partner likes. They need to ask questions by following the examples of questions given in the activity and by substituting the words they have learnt in the previous parts, which entails applying process. Also, they are invited to exchange questions for more information, involving remembering because they have to retrieve information from their long term memory to answer the question. Besides, as students need to substitute the words from their previous study by learning the examples of questions given in the activity, they have to show their understanding, too. For these reasons, the final part receives remembering, understanding and applying.

<p><b>FUNCTIONAL LANGUAGE: in a shop</b></p> <p><b>1</b> Complete the dialogues with the phrases in the box.</p> <p><b>Dialogue 1</b></p> <p>You're welcome. I can't see a price. can I help you?</p> <p><b>Shop assistant:</b> Hello, (1) _____</p> <p><b>Customer:</b> Yes, please. How much is this book? (2) _____</p> <p><b>Shop assistant:</b> Just a minute. It's £7.95.</p> <p><b>Customer:</b> Thank you.</p> <p><b>Shop assistant:</b> (3) _____</p> <p><b>Dialogue 2</b></p> <p>No, I'm sorry we don't. OK, thanks. Do you have any keyrings?</p> <p><b>Customer:</b> (4) _____</p> <p><b>Shop assistant:</b> Yes, we do. There are silver ones and these black ones.</p> <p><b>Customer:</b> Do you have any with the cathedral on it?</p> <p><b>Shop assistant:</b> (5) _____</p> <p><b>Customer:</b> (6) _____</p>	<p><b>Dialogue 3</b></p> <p>How much are they? The book and these postcards then, please. Anything else?</p> <p><b>Shop assistant:</b> (7) _____</p> <p><b>Customer:</b> Yes, I'd like some postcards please.</p> <p><b>Shop assistant:</b> They're over here.</p> <p><b>Customer:</b> (8) _____</p> <p><b>Shop assistant:</b> They're four for a pound.</p> <p><b>Customer:</b> Fine. (9) _____</p> <p><b>Dialogue 4</b></p> <p>Would you like a bag for that? Bye. Here you are.</p> <p><b>Shop assistant:</b> That's £8.95.</p> <p><b>Customer:</b> (10) _____ Ten pounds.</p> <p><b>Shop assistant:</b> Here's your change. (11) _____</p> <p><b>Customer:</b> No, thanks, that's alright. Goodbye.</p> <p><b>Shop assistant:</b> (12) _____</p> <p><b>2</b> 🎧 <b>1.41</b> Listen and check your answers. Choose one dialogue and practise it in pairs.</p>
--	---



Source: Taken from Straightforward Level 1A, Unit 4, p. 41

Figure 5. A Sample Shot of Functional Language Activity

This activity displayed in Figure (5) contains two parts. In the first part, EFL students are asked to complete the dialogues with the phrases in the box. Through doing this, both remembering and understanding are activated because the students need to recall relevant information about the phrases in the box and they also need to understand the meaning of these phrases as well as the content of these dialogues.

In the second part, EFL students are asked to listen and check their answers. To accomplish this, the students need to compare their written answers with the oral ones; thus, they have to understand the oral message to recognize whether their answers are right or wrong. Besides, translation is needed to change the oral messages into the written one. In this part, therefore, understanding process occurs.

**PRONUNCIATION: /h/**

**1** **1.31** Listen to the words in the box. Tick (✓) the words that begin with a /h/ sound.

house hot hospital what whose hair  
happy have his has hamburgers who  
her hour

**2** Complete the sentences with words from exercise 1.

1 Helen and Harry work in a \_\_\_\_\_.

2 They \_\_\_\_\_ lunch together every day.

3 He has \_\_\_\_\_ and she has \_\_\_\_\_ soup.

4 Helen's \_\_\_\_\_ with Harry.

5 But Helen \_\_\_\_\_ a problem.

6 She hardly ever remembers \_\_\_\_\_ name.

**3** **1.32** Listen to the recording to check your answers.

**4** **1.32** Listen again and repeat.

Source: Taken from Straightforward Level 1A, Unit 3, p. 29

Figure 6. A Sample Shot of Pronunciation Activity

The activity displayed in Figure 6 contains four parts. In part 1, EFL students are asked to listen to the words given in the box and put a tick next to the words that begin with a /h/ sound. To accomplish this, translation, changing the form of communication is needed because the students need to compare the written words in the box and the oral ones. Therefore, understanding occurs. Besides, as the students also need to recall what they have previously heard in the listening activity, remembering process occurs. Furthermore, differentiating within analyzing domain is activated when the students differentiate the words that begin with a /h/ sound from the words that begin with other sounds.

In part 2, EFL students are asked to complete the sentences with the words from part 1. Through doing this, both remembering and understanding processes occur because the students need to recall some previously learned grammatical rules and structures to make the

sentences correct and then, they also need to understand the content of the sentences as well as the necessary structures.

In part 3, EFL students are asked to listen to the recording to check their answers. To accomplish this, the students need to compare their written answers with the oral ones; therefore, they need to understand the oral message to recognize whether their answers are right or wrong. Besides, translation occurs when the students change the oral message into the written one. This part, therefore, activates understanding process.

In part 4, EFL students are asked to listen again and repeat what they have heard in the listening. By doing this, the students confirm their understanding by recognizing the pronunciation of the words. Therefore, understanding and remembering occur

**SPEAKING**

**1** Work in two groups, Group A and Group B. Imagine there is no English class next week. What would you like to do?

**A:** Think of a suggestion for something to do. Use the ideas below to help you. When you are ready, make your suggestions to the students in Group B.

go to the cinema      go to a restaurant  
go to a museum  
go shopping      other – (your idea)

**B:** When a student from Group A makes a suggestion, ask him/her questions. Use the questions below to help you.

*Is it expensive?*  
*Where is it?*  
*How do we get there?*

Source: Taken from Straightforward Level 1A, Unit 2, p. 21

Figure 7. A Sample Shot of Speaking Activity

The activity displayed in Figure 7 contains two parts. In part 1, EFL students are asked to work in pairs and are separated as group A and B. Then, the students are asked to imagine the things that they would like to do if there is no English class next week. The students should design and plan the things they would like to do in their mind, which entail creating process. Furthermore, each of these groups is given some instruction. For group A, the students are asked to think of a suggestion for something to do using the ideas given as an aid and to make their suggestions to the students in group B. To accomplish this, the students firstly need to recall previously learned information about usages of making suggestion and then, they need to exemplify the ideas given to make suggestions. Therefore, both remembering and understanding processes are activated.

In part 2, EFL students are asked to ask and answer some questions to their partners by using the questions given. To accomplish this, the students need to interpret their partners'

questions and answers and answer the questions by recalling their prior knowledge. Thus, remembering and understanding processes occur.

**READING**

**1** Read the magazine article and put the events in the correct order.

- The writer talked to a psychologist.
- The writer visited his brother in Hong Kong.
- The writer went on a course for people afraid of flying.
- The writer talked to a pilot.

**2** Read the article again and answer the questions.

- 1 How many Americans hate flying?
- 2 Did the writer travel by plane before the course?
- 3 Why was the writer's phobia a problem?
- 4 Who taught the writer how to relax on a plane?
- 5 What did the people do when the flight started?
- 6 What did the writer do after his flight?

**3** Work in pairs. What about you? What do you think of flying? Do you know someone who is afraid of going on a plane?

**FEAR OF FLYING**  
PERSONAL STORY

If you don't like flying, you are not alone. Fear of flying is one of the most common phobias in the world. More than 10 million British adults are afraid of flying. In America, this number is more than 25 million. Many famous people hate or hated flying: Ronald Reagan, Aretha Franklin, Mohammed Ali, Cher and Billy Bob Thornton are only some examples.

I hated flying. I knew that planes were very safe, that they were safer than cars (about 29 times safer), and the chances of being in a plane accident were about 0.0000000004%. But every time I was at the airport, I felt terrible. I couldn't get on the plane. The only problem was that I loved travelling. And if you love travelling and hate flying, that is a problem.

After many years, I decided to do something. A friend told me about a special course for people like me. It was a one-day course at the airport. There were more than 100 people on this course. The first part of the course was a class with a pilot. He explained exactly how a plane works, and showed us all the different parts. I liked that because it helped me a lot. Then we had a long talk with a psychologist. She gave us information about phobias and taught us a relaxation technique.

Then we had the most difficult part, a 45-minute flight. We were all still very nervous. Some people held hands, and some people cried. But we all did it. At the end of the flight, I felt nervous and tired but very happy. I could get on a plane and survive. The next day, I booked a ticket to see my brother in Hong Kong. It was the first time I visited him.

That was three years ago, and I don't mind flying now. But I don't like eating on planes, and no course can help me with that!

Source: Taken from Straightforward Level 1A, Unit 2, p. 14

Figure 8. A Sample Shot of Reading activity

Figure (8) shows the activity in the reading section from Unit 2, Straightforward Level 1A. The activity displayed contains three parts. In part 1, EFL students are asked to read the article and order the events in the article. Through doing this part, the students required to recall some relevant knowledge from their memory and understand the whole content of the article by building a connection between the new knowledge to be gained and the prior knowledge. Then, the students are also needed to analyze the events, that is, they are intended to detect how these events are related to each other and which events come first. This part, thus, activates not only remembering and understanding but also analyzing.

In part 2, EFL students are asked to read the article again and answer the questions concerning the article. The students make sure their remembering and understanding of the messages in the article by rereading it. Also, the students need to recall some previously learned information to find the relevant answers for these questions, therefore, remembering process occurs.

In part 3, EFL students are asked to work in pairs and to answer some questions about their feelings for flying. Through doing this, both remembering and understanding processes

are activated because the students need to recall some previously learned information and interpret their partners' answers.

**LISTENING**

**1** Read the description of the TV documentary programme *Behind the Scenes*.

**Behind the scenes**

Every week, *Behind the Scenes* visits a big organization and talks to the people who do the invisible jobs, the work behind the scenes. This week, we visit a \_\_\_\_\_ in England and talk to a \_\_\_\_\_ and an \_\_\_\_\_.

**2** 🎧 **1.47** Listen to the programme and complete the description in exercise 1.

**3** 🎧 **1.47** Listen again and decide if the sentences are true (T) or false (F). Correct the false sentences.

- 1 Janet works with two men.
- 2 Janet got the job two years ago.
- 3 Janet's father likes her job.
- 4 Michael works with two people in the accounts department.
- 5 Michael got his job last year.
- 6 Michael thinks his job is boring.

**4** Work in pairs. Think of two or three people you know. Discuss the questions.

- What are their jobs?
- Do they work behind the scenes?

Source: Taken from Straightforward Level 1A, Unit 5, p. 45

Figure 9. A Sample Shot of Listening Activity

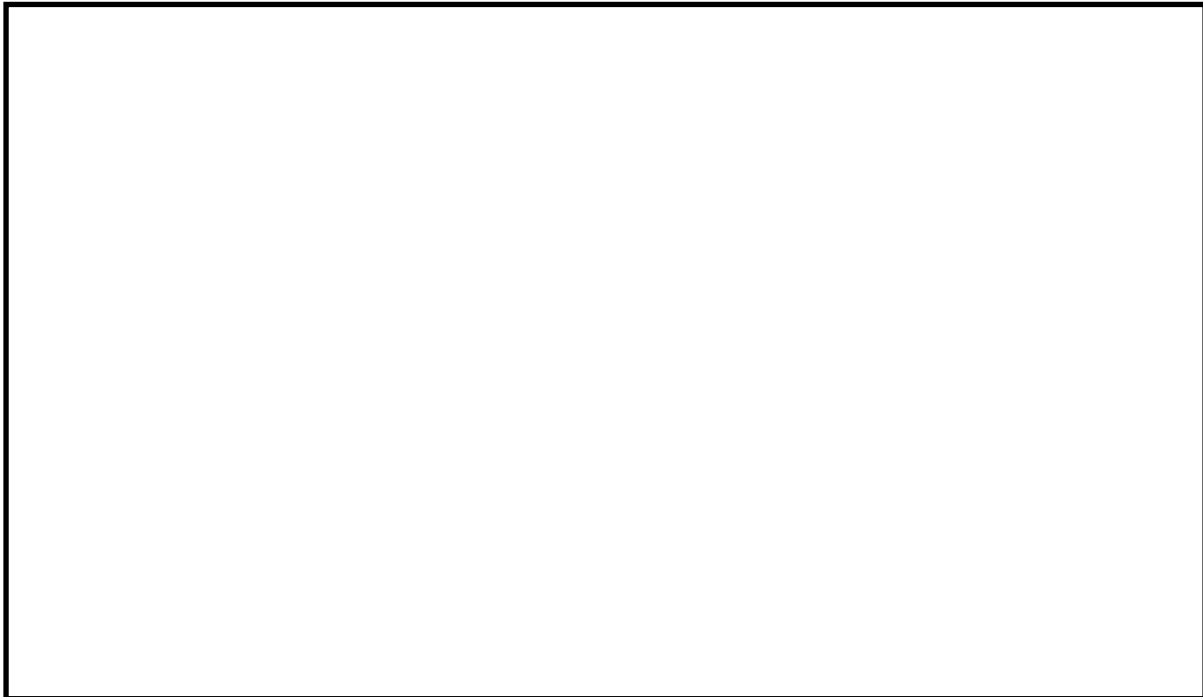
This activity displayed in Figure 9 contains four parts. In part 1, EFL students are asked to read the description of the TV documentary programme. Through doing this, the students need to recall some relevant knowledge and build a connection between the new knowledge to be gained and their prior knowledge while reading. Therefore, both remembering and understanding processes are activated.

In part 2, EFL students are asked to listen and then complete the gaps in the previous part. To accomplish this, the students need to interpret the oral messages to understand them and also need to understand the content of the written description. Then, they need to recall previously learned information to complete the gaps. Thus, in this part, remembering and understanding processes occur.

In part 3 of this exercise, EFL students are firstly asked to listen again and decide if the sentences are true or false. The students confirm their remembering and understanding by listening again. Then, as the students are asked to decide whether the sentences are true or false by recalling relevant knowledge, remembering occurs. They also need to analyze relevant from irrelevant information of the sentences, thus, analyzing occurs. Secondly, the students are asked to correct the false sentences. To accomplish this, the students need to recall relevant information and the necessary structure to reconstruct the sentences, which entails remembering process. Besides, the students also need to understand the content of the programme as well as the necessary structure, which entails understanding process. Furthermore, the students need to apply the necessary structure to construct the correct sentences, which entails executing, one of the sub-categories of applying.

In the last part, EFL students are firstly asked to recall some people they know from their long-term memory. Thus, remembering process takes place in this part. Then, they are

asked to discuss the questions with their partners. To do this, the students need to interpret their partners' questions and answers, which entails understanding process.



Source: Taken from Straightforward Level 1A, Unit 6, p. 57

Figure 10. A Sample Shot of Did You Know? Activity

In this activity, EFL students are firstly asked to read the magazine and then, discuss the questions with their partners. To accomplish the first task, the students need to retrieve some prior knowledge and build a connection between the new knowledge to be gained and their prior knowledge, which entail both remembering and understanding. To accomplish the second task, the students need to recall relevant information from their long-term memory to answers the questions and interpret their partners' questions and answers. Thus, both remembering and understanding processes occur again.

### 3.2 Data Collection of the Six Units from Straightforward Level 1A (Student's Book)

The following table shows the frequencies of the six cognitive processes of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy found in the selected activities from the six units of Straightforward Level 1A (Student's Book).

Table 1. Frequencies of the Six Cognitive Processes of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy in the Six Units of Straightforward Level 1A (Student's Book)

Six Units from Straightforward Level 1A (Student's Book)	Six Cognitive Processes of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy					
	Remember -ing	Understand -ing	Applying	Analyzing -ing	Evaluating -ing	Creating -ing
Unit 1	26	23	6	5	-	-
Unit 2	21	19	4	2	2	1
Unit 3	27	21	3	3	-	1

Unit 4	26	24	8	2	1	1
Unit 5	22	22	6	2	1	2
Unit 6	31	34	5	-	-	1
Total	153	143	32	14	4	6

Source:Own compilation

According to table 1, the frequencies of the six cognitive processes found in the selected activities from Unit 1 of Straightforward Level 1A are remembering (26), understanding (23), applying (6), analyzing (5), and no evaluating and creating processes. For Unit 2, the frequencies of remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating are 21, 19, 4, 2, 2, and 1 respectively. Besides, the frequencies of these six cognitive processes found in Unit 3 are remembering (27), understanding (21), applying (3), analyzing (3), no evaluating, and creating (1). And for Unit 4, the frequencies of these six cognitive processes are remembering (26), understanding (24), applying (8), analyzing (2), evaluating (1), and creating (1). For Unit 5, the frequencies are remembering (22), understanding (22), applying (6), analyzing (2), evaluating (1), and creating (2). Finally, the frequencies of these six categories found in Unit 6 are remembering (31), understanding (34), applying (5), and creating (1) with no analyzing and applying processes. Further, the total frequencies of each cognitive processes found in all the six units are remembering (153), understanding (143), applying (32), analyzing (14), evaluating (4), and creating (6).

#### 4. Findings and Discussion

In this study, not only qualitative but also quantitative research procedures were employed. To answer the research questions, investigating the dominant cognitive categories in Straightforward Level 1A (Student's Book) by drawing on Bloom's Revised Taxonomy and evaluating this coursebook in terms of lower-order and higher-order thinking skills, the frequencies and percentages of all six cognitive categories were calculated. Furthermore, to provide a better display of cognitive processes, the results are summarized in terms of lower-order and higher-order cognitive processes in Table 2.

Table 2. Frequencies and Percentages of the Six Cognitive Levels of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy

Cognitive Process	Straightforward Level 1A		
		Frequency	Percentage
Lower Order	Remembering	153	43.46
	Understading	143	40.62
	Applying	32	9.09
Higher Order	Analyzing	14	3.97
	Evaluating	4	1.13

	Creating	6	1.7
Total		352	100

Source: Own compilation Lower Order

As Table 2 displays, both remembering and understanding processes received the highest percentages of cognitive processes in this coursebook with the frequencies of (43.46%) and (40.62%). The evaluating and creating processes received the lowest percentages of cognitive processes in this coursebook with the frequencies of (1.13%) and (1.7%) respectively. Moreover, the frequencies of the lower-order categories in this coursebook were 153, 143, and 32 for remembering, understanding, and applying respectively, which constitute a large proportion (about 90%) of the all processes. This suggests the predominance of lower-order cognitive processes over the higher-order ones in this coursebook. Furthermore, the frequency of applying process is lower than the other two processes of the lower-order cognitive processes.

As for higher-order categories, the coursebook yielded the frequencies of 14, 4, and 6 for analyzing, evaluating, and creating categories respectively, with analyzing receiving the highest percentage (about 4%) and evaluating the lowest percentage (about 1%).

The results of the current research indicates that the lower-order categories of cognitive domain within Bloom's Revised Taxonomy are more frequently represented than those of higher-level ones in this coursebook. Remembering, a lower-order domain constitutes the majority of the cognitive processes. Therefore, it is not against expectation that remembering as a lower-order cognitive process is frequently demonstrated in this coursebook. Higher-order skills such as problem solving and critical thinking cannot be carried out in a vacuum, but they must be based on past knowledge of one's realities, that is, what one remembers (Marzano & Kendall, 2007).

Moreover, the understanding process, ranked second among the six cognitive processes has greatly contributed to predominance of lower-order skills in this coursebook. As for understanding, one can agree with Bloom (1956) that it is perhaps the largest and most common intellectual ability to be emphasized in schools and colleges (Forehand, 2005); when learners face a special discourse, they are supposed to make sense of its content and the ideas expressed within it. To get involve in more complex thinking processes, they should first be able to get the meaning embedded in different parts of a communication and, thereby, demonstrate an in depth understanding of it.

Besides, the frequencies of applying process are much lower than those of other lower-order cognitive processes. Besides, examples of classroom activities that aligned with the higher-order: fourth, fifth, and sixth cognitive domains are still infrequent and are less observed in the coursebook.

In sum, the findings of this study revealed the prevalence of the processes of remembering and understanding in this coursebook. In other words, lower-order cognitive skills were mostly paid attention to in this coursebook. This is indicative of the fact that the three categories at the bottom of the Taxonomy, i.e. "remembering, understanding, and applying" were the most prevalent categories in this coursebook.

## 5. Conclusion

The current research attempted to evaluate Straightforward Coursebook Level 1A (Student's Book) in terms of cognitive processes using Bloom's Revised Taxonomy.

The results obtained in the present study have indicated positive effort. This is because the lower-order skills were more significantly represented than the higher-order skills in this coursebook. Actually, it is expected to have many activities representing lower-order thinking processes in this coursebook because this coursebook is written for the basic user level groups. Therefore, it is natural to expect more basic information and lower-order thinking processes in this coursebook. This way, the learners are equipped with a strong backbone to face the problems and more complex thinking processes in the next level.

Furthermore, a very interesting result of the current study was that higher-order cognitive skills were not totally absent in this coursebook. Therefore, it can be regarded that higher-order cognitive processes were introduced in this coursebook in order to be familiar with these complex cognitive processes that will hopefully be included more in other Straightforward Coursebooks at more advanced levels.

To sum up, the results of this investigation will support the fact that Straightforward Coursebooks have been suitably chosen as teaching material. Besides, it is hoped that the other Straightforward Coursebooks will prove to be equally suitable for undergraduate students in Myanmar.

### **Acknowledgements**

First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge and give my warmest thanks to Dr. Moe Moe Yee, Rector, University of Co-operative and Management, Sagaing for her kind permission to submit this paper. Secondly, I would like to give my special thanks to Daw Khin Myint Yi, Professor and Head, Department of English, University of Magway for her supervision to complete this paper. Thirdly, I would like to thank Dr. Aung San Oo, Professor and Head, Department of English, Pakokku University for his valuable guidance and advice. Then, I would like to express my gratitude to Daw San Thawdar Oo, Lecturer and Head, Department of English, Co-operative University, Sagaing who made this work possible. Finally, a special thank goes to the non-teaching staff from the Department of Research and Development, Co-operative University, Sagaing and my college for their efforts and encouragement to complete this paper successfully.

### **References**

- Clandfield, L., & Tennant, A. (2012). *Straightforward Level 1A* (2<sup>nd</sup>ed.). Macmillan.
- Cunningsworth, A. (1995). *Choosing your coursebook*. London: Heinemann.
- Ellis, R. (1997). The empirical evaluation of language teaching materials. *ELT Journal*, 51(1), 36-42.
- Hanna, W. (2007). The new Bloom's taxonomy: Implications for music education. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 108(4), 7-16.
- Hutchinson, T., & Torres, E. (1994). The textbook as agent of change. *ELT Journal*, 48(4), 315-328.
- Krathwohl, D. (2002). A revision of Bloom's taxonomy: An overview. *Theory into Practice*, 41(4), 212-218.
- Mahmood, K. (2011). Conformity to Quality Characteristics of Textbooks: The Illusion of Textbook Evaluation in Pakistan. *Journal of Research and Reflections in Education*, 5(2), 170 -190.
- Marzano, R., & Kendall, J. (2007). *The new taxonomy of educational objectives* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Razmjoo, S., A., & Kazempourfard, E. (2012). On the representation of Bloom's revised taxonomy in interchange coursebooks. *The Journal of Teaching Language Skills (JTLS)*, 4(1), 171-204.
- Riazi, M., & Mosalanejad, N. (2010). Evaluation of learning objectives in Iranian Highschool and preuniversity English textbooks using Bloom's taxonomy. *TESL-EJ*, 3(4), 1-16.



- Roohani, A., Taheri, F., & Poorzangeneh, M. (2014, March 2). Evaluating Four Corners Textbooks in Terms of Cognitive Processes Using Bloom's Revised Taxonomy. *RALS*, *4*(2), 51-67.
- Sheldon, L. (1988). Evaluating ELT textbooks and materials. *ELT Journal*, *42*(2), 237-246.

### **Internet References**

- Retrieved October 21, 2014, from <http://edglossary.org/blooms-taxonomy/>
- Retrieved October 21, 2014, from [http://www.odu.edu/educ/roverbau/Bloom/blooms taxonomy.htm](http://www.odu.edu/educ/roverbau/Bloom/blooms%20taxonomy.htm)
- Retrieved October 25, 2014, from <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/4719>
- Retrieved December 3, 2014, from <http://www.techlearning.com/printablearticle/8670>
- Retrieved January 1, 2015, from <http://www.uwsp.edu/education/lwilson/curric/newtaxonomy.html>
- Retrieved January 12, 2015, from <http://www.ceap.wcu.edu/Houghton/Learner/think/bloomsTaxonomy.html>.