

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

The progress of a nation is closely related to the quality of its education system. Education plays a crucial role in developing human resources who are capable of thinking critically, solving problems, and adapting to social and technological changes. In the context of 21st-century education, learning is no longer oriented merely toward the acquisition of knowledge, but toward the development of higher-order thinking skills and meaningful understanding (Al-Jannah & Aly, 2023; Savira, 2024). As the main foundation in the development of a nation, education should continue to adapt to the times in order to produce individuals who are not only academically intelligent but also have skills that are relevant to the needs of the modern world (Jaya et al., 2023; Pare & Sihotang, 2023).

A country should continue to evaluate its education system as a form of self-adjustment to achieve their goals. In Indonesia, the education system continues to innovate through various curriculum policies to address the times' challenges (Amalia, 2022). One of the main focuses in education development is the application of 21st-century skills, which include critical thinking skills, effective communication, collaboration, and creativity in solving problems (Mardhiyah et al., 2021). With the change in focus of education goals, a country's curriculum has changed as an educational framework.

Indonesia is using the Independent Curriculum (Kurikulum Merdeka), which has been implemented since 2022 at all levels of education, including Elementary School. Curriculum changes in Indonesia have always been an interesting issue in education, including English subjects in Elementary Schools. In the 2013 Curriculum, English was not included as a compulsory subject in Elementary Schools and was only used as local content that could be taught based on the policies of each school or region (Meisani, 2021). The discussion over the enhancement of English's role in primary education, in conjunction with the Independent Curriculum, is gaining prominence.

The curriculum provides opportunities for schools to design contextual learning experiences, the successful implementation of English learning is highly dependent on instructional components, particularly textbooks, which serve as the primary learning resources for teachers and students (Ghani et al., 2023). Several regions and schools have begun to consider making English a compulsory subject in elementary schools due to increasing global competitiveness and technological advances that require English language skills from an early age (Rofi'i & Susilo, 2022; Ummah et al., 2023).

The shift in curriculum policy regarding changes in the status of English subjects at the elementary school level has sparked debate among educators, parents, and education practitioners. Those who support this policy argue that early English learning can take advantage of children's golden age period in absorbing language more quickly so they can master it more naturally (Rahmi, 2023). In addition, in the era of globalization, English language skills are considered essential skills that can

increase students' competitiveness in academic and professional fields in the future (Hajmi et al., 2024). By mastering English since elementary school, students are also better prepared to face the challenges of technology and global communication (Iswara et al., 2024). In contrast, some argue that implementing English as a compulsory subject can reduce the focus on strengthening students' cultural identity and nationalism, especially in areas where regional languages are still intensely used in everyday life (Habibah et al., 2024). Based on the opportunities above, the limited number of teachers who are competent in teaching English in elementary schools, especially in remote areas, is an obstacle that should be overcome so that this policy can be implemented effectively (Anggraena et al., 2022). Therefore, although the obligation of English as a subject in the Independent Curriculum can provide benefits in improving students' competence in global competition, the challenges in its implementation should be considered carefully so as not to create gaps in the quality of education in various regions. Therefore, the quality of learning materials, including textbooks, plays a crucial role in achieving these educational goals (Haptanti et al., 2024).

In the teaching and learning process, nevertheless, several studies indicate that English textbooks tend to emphasize lower-order thinking skills, such as remembering and understanding, while providing limited opportunities for students to engage in higher-order cognitive processes. This condition potentially hinders the realization of curriculum objectives that prioritize meaningful learning. English textbooks are the main tool in supporting the learning process in elementary schools (Hardi & Rizal, 2020). In the context of elementary education, textbooks play an

important role in building the foundation of English language skills (Komariah & Halimah, 2022) which include receptive skills (listening and reading) and productive skills (speaking and writing) (Sulistiyaningsih et al., 2023; Susini & Ndruru, 2020). In addition, textbooks should also be able to stimulate students' cognitive development (Ali et al., 2024) by presenting challenges that are appropriate to their age and ability levels (Yulis et al., 2022). An ideal textbook should be structured based on an appropriate pedagogical approach (Inayati & Mulyadi, 2023), use language that is easy for students to understand (Ramadhani et al., 2022), and integrate interesting visual and interactive elements (Azhar et al., 2024). In addition, effective textbooks should also pay attention to the relevance of their content to students' daily lives (Marhamah et al., 2024), so that students can more easily connect the concepts learned with real experiences (Yolanda et al., 2024). Therefore, textbook developers need to ensure that the content, structure, and presentation methods are in line with curriculum standards and student needs (Fauziyah et al., 2025).

In the field of book development, researcher have found many frameworks that compile a number of levels that should be achieved in learning. In this case, several taxonomies have been found that design learning through student ability levels. One of them is the Taxonomy Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1980), which was developed as a model of skill acquisition in 1980 (Rousse & Dreyfus, 2021). This taxonomy focuses on skill acquisition through instructions that describe the development from beginner to expert in learning with five levels of development, namely novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient and expert (McNew-

Birren & Kieboom, 2021). Apart from the Dreyfus taxonomy, according to Biggs & Collis (1982), student's level of understanding is classified based on the complexity of their responses to learning tasks; this framework is known as the SOLO Taxonomy (Structure of Observed Learning Outcomes) (Utami et al., 2020). The SOLO taxonomy consists of 5 levels, there is prestructural, unistructural, multistructural, rational, dan extended abstract (Marisa et al., 2020). This taxonomy has been used in several educational studies in Indonesia, especially in student cognitive assessment (Arico & Wahyudi, 2020). Another framework is Fink's taxonomy, developed by Fink (2003), which emphasises meaningful learning that has a long-term impact through six main dimensions, starting from foundational knowledge, application, integration, human dimension, caring, and learning how to learn (Gravett & Bach, 2024). Fink's taxonomy has been used in research related to curriculum design and experience-based learning (Dabney & Eid, 2024), especially used in character education and holistic learning (Canan et al., 2024). Meanwhile Marzano & Kendall (2007) developed Marzano's taxonomy, which is claimed to be a form of refinement of Bloom by taking into account the human information processing system (Irvine, 2020). This taxonomy divides learning into three processing and knowledge systems, namely cognitive, metacognitive, and self-systems. This model is suitable for compiling assessment rubrics to evaluate student learning outcomes (Betu, 2023).

Among these frameworks, Bloom's Taxonomy remains the most widely adopted in Indonesian educational contexts. However, limited studies have systematically examined how Bloom's cognitive levels are embedded in elementary

English textbooks within the framework of the Independent Curriculum, indicating a clear theoretical gap. Bloom's Taxonomy provides a systematic framework for measuring cognitive levels in the learning process (Jaya et al., 2025). This framework consists of six levels, namely remembering (C1), understanding (C2), applying (C3), analyzing (C4), evaluating (C5), and creating (C6), which reflect the development from simple to complex thinking (Anjani et al., 2024; Nafiati, 2021). This level helps educators in designing learning objectives, developing teaching strategies, and evaluating the process and learning outcomes of students (Marta et al., 2024). In evaluating learning materials, Bloom's Taxonomy is often used to assess whether the activities or tasks presented in textbooks are able to encourage students to achieve higher-order thinking skills (HOTS), such as analysis, evaluation, and creativity (Romadona & Abdurrahman, 2023), or are only limited to lower-order thinking skills (LOTS), such as memorization and basic understanding (Anjani, 2022). In the current Curriculum, although Bloom's Taxonomy is not always explicitly stated, its principles can be assumed to be part of the effort to create meaningful and in-depth learning (Hajaroh, 2022).

Most previous studies focus on secondary education and analyze textbooks in isolation. Consequently, empirical research that simultaneously examines textbook quality, cognitive level distribution, and alignment with classroom teaching practices at the elementary level remains scarce. Study by Hardi & Rizal (2020) indicates that textbooks are designed to facilitate students' understanding of learning materials; it also emphasizes that integrating book design with the learning needs of beginner-level students is crucial for achieving better educational

outcomes. Meanwhile, a study by Putri et al. (2021) outlines how Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) should be incorporated into various aspects of instruction—ranging from materials and assignments to assessments—particularly within English language learning. The analysis revealed that most (around 61.9%) of the reading comprehension questions in the textbook were categorized as HOTS. This study concluded that although the analyzed textbooks did include many HOTS-based questions, there is still room for improvement, especially in increasing the proportion of creative-level questions.

The study by Marhamah et al. (2024) highlights the importance of integrating local culture into English language learning at the secondary school level. The results of this study indicate that teachers and students require the inclusion of their local cultural context in textbooks to enhance relevance—for instance, by incorporating examples, stories, and references from Riau Malay culture. Consistent with the findings of Meliawati & Hamied (2020) and the standards established by the BSNP, the development of basic competencies in current language textbooks is satisfactory. The textbooks currently in circulation are easily understood by students, and their material presentation supports a learning process designed to be interactive, indicating that the quality of these textbooks meets established standards.

This study identifies a gap in existing research; while previous studies have focused on secondary and higher education, there is a scarcity of research regarding primary education. Furthermore, previous studies have not examined the alignment between textbook content and actual classroom teaching practices. Preliminary

observations revealed that, out of a total of 696 schools in Ponorogo, 34 primary schools—comprising 28 public schools and 6 \*madrasah ibtidaiyah\* (Islamic primary schools)—actively use English textbooks to support their instructional activities. Data analysis shows that English is most frequently taught as a local content subject (113 classes) or a compulsory subject (84 classes), with only a small number of schools offering it as an extracurricular activity or not teaching it at all. The data also indicates that English is most commonly implemented as either a compulsory or local content subject at the Grade 4 level.

Based on these findings, this study aims to address the existing research gap by examining English textbooks used in primary schools within the framework of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* (Independent Curriculum), utilizing Bloom's Taxonomy. Consequently, the study seeks to analyze these textbooks based on the cognitive domain of Bloom's Taxonomy within the context of the Independent Curriculum. This study will integrate textbook evaluation, Bloom's Taxonomy analysis, and classroom teaching practices at the primary school level within the context of the Independent Curriculum.

## **1.2. Statements of the Problem**

The researcher formulated the research problems as follows.

1. How is the content of the elementary English textbook evaluated based on McDonough and Shaw's framework?
2. How are Bloom's Taxonomy cognitive levels (C1–C6) represented in learning activities and the textbook's materials?
3. What is the level of alignment between the English textbook content and the teaching process based on Bloom's Taxonomy in the Independent Curriculum?

## **1.3. Purpose of the Research**

Based on the research questions, the objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To evaluate the content of elementary school English textbooks based on the textbook evaluation framework developed by McDonough and Shaw.
2. To analyze the representation of Bloom's Taxonomy cognitive levels (C1–C6) contained in the activities and learning materials in the English textbooks.
3. To identify the level of alignment between the English textbook content and the learning process designed based on Bloom's Taxonomy in the Independent Curriculum.

#### **1.4. The Objective of the Study**

The researcher formulates the research objectives as follows.

##### **A. Teoritical**

1. To provide new insights into the integration of McDonough and Shaw's textbook evaluation framework with Bloom's Taxonomy in analyzing English textbooks at the elementary level.
2. To deepen theoretical understanding of how Bloom's cognitive domains are represented in textbook activities and how they support students' cognitive development within the context of the Independent Curriculum.
3. To contribute to academic literature on the implementation of the Independent Curriculum by linking textbook content evaluation and teachers' application of Bloom's Taxonomy in classroom practices.

##### **B. Practical**

1. To provide guidance for English teachers in designing and implementing classroom activities that align with Bloom's Taxonomy and complement the cognitive levels presented in textbooks.
2. To offer publishers and textbook developers valuable input for producing materials that better reflect Bloom's cognitive domains and meet the learning goals of the Independent Curriculum.
3. To inform educational policymakers and institutions about the degree of alignment between textbook content and teaching practice, supporting more effective material selection and curriculum implementation.

### 1.5. Operational Definitions

The operational definition in this study aims to explain the main concepts used so that they can be measured objectively. This operational definition is used as a guideline in this study.

1. **Elementary School English Textbooks:** Official textbooks used in learning English in elementary schools in accordance with the Independent Curriculum, published by the government or related parties (Shouldafiyanti et al., 2023).
2. **Bloom's Taxonomy:** A cognitive level classification framework consisting of six categories, namely C1 (remembering), C2 (understanding), C3 (applying), C4 (analyzing), C5 (evaluating), and C6 (creating), used as a reference for assessing thinking targets in textbook materials (Saputri, 2021).
3. **Independent Curriculum:** The national curriculum implemented in Indonesia since 2022 emphasizes competency-based learning, flexibility, and development of student potential as the context of this study (Hayat et al., 2025).

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1. Theoretical Framework**

##### **2.1.1. Curriculum in Indonesia**

###### **A. Definition of Curriculum**

The curriculum has various definitions but shares a common core—namely, it concerns the planning of student learning activities to achieve specific educational goals. It includes components such as objectives, content, teaching methods, media, and evaluation (Aprianto & Wahyudi, 2023; Patimah et al., 2024; Sakdiah & Syahrani, 2022). The curriculum serves as a guideline for teachers and a reference for students in attaining the intended competencies and learning outcomes.

According to Tyler, the curriculum is a set of planned learning experiences organized to achieve educational objectives. His Tyler Rationale emphasizes four key questions regarding goals, learning experiences, organization, and evaluation (Herdiansyah et al., 2025; Betu, 2023). On the other hand, Dewey views the curriculum as a continuous learning process aimed at fostering student development through interaction with the environment. This perspective highlights the relevance of learning to actual experiences (Maulana et al., 2025; Sipahutar et al., 2023). Meanwhile, Beauchamp describes the curriculum as a formal written plan encompassing objectives, content, and evaluation procedures, emphasizing aspects of structure and measurability (Usdarisman et al., 2024).

In the Indonesian context, the curriculum is legally defined as a set of plans and arrangements covering objectives, content, and learning materials, as well as methods for organizing learning activities to achieve educational goals (Sari, 2024; Sukmawati, 2021). In recent years, Indonesia has taken national initiatives to develop a transformative curriculum that values inclusivity and cultural relevance (Nimasari et al., 2025). This reflects a structured and policy-based orientation aligned with national education standards.

In this study, the curriculum is understood as an instructional plan encompassing objectives, content, the learning process, and evaluation. It is also defined as a structured document within a dynamic system that is responsive to the needs of society at large.

#### **B. The role of curriculum**

The curriculum plays a vital role in providing a framework for the educational process to achieve learning objectives. (Fauzan & Arifin, 2022). In this regard, the curriculum plays several multidimensional roles, as follows:

1. Learning guideline, the curriculum provides direction for teachers in planning, implementing, and evaluating learning by defining objectives, content, methods, and evaluation systems (Rustanto et al., 2024). In Indonesia's Independent Curriculum, this role appears in its flexibility, allowing educators to design learning based on student needs
2. Instrument of educational integration, the curriculum connects knowledge, skills, and values to form holistic learning (Pare & Sihotang, 2023). This entails integrating cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions (Aulia

et al., 2022), while simultaneously instilling cultural and national values and 21st-century competencies, including digital literacy and critical thinking (Susandi et al., 2025).

3. Tool for developing student potential and character, this curriculum fosters intellectual, emotional, social, and moral growth (Al-Jannah & Aly, 2023). Through a competency-based and student-centered approach, the curriculum cultivates creativity and inclusivity (Rahmatika et al., 2025).
4. Means of quality control, the curriculum ensures that education meets national standards through defined competency benchmarks, continuous evaluation, and teacher professional development (Ristianah et al., 2022; Wulandari & Windarto, 2023).
5. Bridge to national education goals, the curriculum translates the vision of education into classroom practice, supporting the formation of faithful, knowledgeable, and responsible citizens in line with Law No. 20 of 2003 (Istiqomah et al., 2023; Purwowododo & Zaini, 2023).

In essence, the curriculum serves not only as a structured plan but also as a dynamic framework that integrates learning, values, and quality assurance to realize national educational objectives.

### **C. Component of Curriculum**

Curriculum components are the main elements that form a complete curriculum. All curriculum components are interrelated and should be aligned to achieve educational goals (Rahayu et al., 2022). The following is an explanation and description of the components that make up the curriculum.

### 1. Curriculum Objectives

The curriculum objectives outline the expected outcomes of the educational process, serving as the foundational base for all curriculum components. These objectives emphasize not only academic achievement but also the development of character and competencies that meet societal needs (Susanna et al., 2023). By establishing clear objectives, educators can effectively design targeted learning experiences, ensuring that students have concrete guidance on their educational achievements (Rahayu et al., 2022).

### 2. Curriculum Content (Subject Matter)

The purpose of a curriculum is to articulate the expected outcomes of the educational process, serving as the foundation for all components of the curriculum itself. These objectives emphasize not only academic achievement but also the development of character and competencies that meet societal needs (Fadilah & Hamami, 2021). By establishing clear objectives, educators can effectively design purposeful learning experiences, thereby ensuring students have a concrete guide regarding their educational achievements (Mesra & Salem, 2023).

### 3. Learning Strategy (Learning Process)

The curriculum encompasses not only academic achievement but also the development of character and competencies that meet societal needs. By establishing clear goals, educators can effectively design purposeful learning experiences while ensuring students have concrete guidance regarding their educational progress (Simbolon & Naibaho, 2023). Additionally, effective strategies should allow for differentiation to cater to the varying abilities of students,

thereby fostering a conducive and explorative environment for learning (Koimah et al., 2024).

#### 4. Curriculum Evaluation

Additionally, effective strategies should allow for differentiation to cater to the varying abilities of students, thereby fostering a conducive and explorative environment for learning (Halim, 2024). The results of the evaluation are used to improve the curriculum, adjust learning strategies, or provide additional support to students in need (Nurjanah & Shouldofa, 2024). Additionally, effective strategies should allow for differentiation to cater to the varying abilities of students, thereby fostering a conducive and explorative environment for learning (Munaroh, 2024).

#### 5. Supporting Resources

Additionally, effective strategies should allow for differentiation to cater to the varying abilities of students, thereby fostering a conducive and explorative environment for learning (Laana, 2025). Additionally, effective strategies should allow for differentiation to cater to the varying abilities of students, thereby fostering a conducive and explorative environment for learning (Eliza et al., 2022; Puspitaningrum et al., 2024)

#### 6. Curriculum Organization

Additionally, effective strategies should allow for differentiation to cater to the varying abilities of students, thereby fostering a conducive and explorative environment for learning (Linda et al., 2024). Additionally, effective strategies should allow for differentiation to cater to the varying abilities of students, thereby fostering a conducive and explorative environment for learning (Irawan, 2024).

## 7. Local Context and Needs

Integrating local context and needs is crucial for ensuring the curriculum aligns with students' social, cultural, and economic environments. By incorporating local wisdom and culture, the curriculum becomes more relevant and engaging, helping to bridge educational disparities, particularly between urban and rural areas (Astuti et al., 2025). This contextual sensitivity enables educators to tailor materials and strategies to the resources and characteristics of the local community (Fitri et al., 2025).

### **D. History of Curriculum in Indonesia**

Curriculum policy in Indonesia has experienced complex and significant dynamics along with changes in social, political, and global needs. Since the early days of independence, the curriculum has been a state instrument in shaping national identity and responding to the demands of the times. Anas et al. (2025) noted that the development of the Indonesian curriculum from 1947 to the 2013 Curriculum reflects ongoing efforts to balance national interests with global demands. The history of the curriculum in Indonesia can be reviewed in Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1.** Comparison of Curricula that have been in effect in Indonesia

| No. | Curriculum Name                   | Year | Main Focus                                                     | Reason for Replacement                                   |
|-----|-----------------------------------|------|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | <i>Rentjana Pelajaran</i>         | 1947 | Nationalism, character                                         | Lack of structure, replaced in 1952                      |
| 2   | <i>Rentjana Pelajaran Terurai</i> | 1952 | Basic education, detailed syllabus                             | Not responsive to technology, replaced in 1964           |
| 3   | 1964 Curriculum                   | 1964 | Pancawardhana, ideology                                        | Political, replaced in 1968                              |
| 4   | 1968 Curriculum                   | 1968 | Pancasila, science, mathematics                                | Less adaptive to technology, replaced in 1975            |
| 5   | 1975 Curriculum                   | 1975 | Efficiency, Instructional System Development Procedures (PPSD) | Heavy teacher burden, replaced in 1984                   |
| 6   | 1984 Curriculum                   | 1984 | Active Student Learning Method (CBSA), active students         | Ineffective, replaced in 1994                            |
| 7   | 1994 Curriculum                   | 1994 | Globalization, quarterly                                       | Solid material, replaced in 2004                         |
| 8   | Competency Based Curriculum (KBK) | 2004 | Competence, global standards                                   | School burden, replaced in 2006                          |
| 9   | KTSP or Curriculum 2006           | 2006 | Decentralization, flexibility                                  | Less globally competitive, replaced in 2013              |
| 10  | 2013 Curriculum                   | 2013 | Character, competence, technology                              | Too complicated, replaced by Independent Curriculum 2022 |
| 11  | Independent Curriculum            | 2022 | Flexibility, interest, Pancasila Profile                       | Not yet available, evaluation in 2024                    |

The evolution of educational curricula in Indonesia from 1947 to 2022 illustrates a response to societal and technological changes. Beginning with the nationalism-focused *Rentjana Pelajaran* in 1947, subsequent curricula from 1952 to 2022 were introduced to address deficiencies in structure, adaptability, and relevance.

The evolution of the curriculum in Indonesia began with the 1964 Curriculum, which emphasized a holistic approach. This was subsequently refined into the more efficient 1975 Curriculum, followed by the 2004 Competency-Based Curriculum, which aligned with global standards. While each revision aimed to enhance the quality of education, they also faced various challenges, ultimately leading to the introduction of the Independent Curriculum in 2022, a framework that embodies lessons learned from the past by prioritizing flexibility and student interests.

The Independent Curriculum has not been replaced, with an evaluation planned for 2024. This progression highlights ongoing efforts to align education with contemporary demands, with each curriculum addressing the shortcomings of its predecessor.

#### **E. The Independent Curriculum**

The Independent Curriculum was introduced by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemdikbudristek) in 2022 as part of the "*Merdeka Belajar*" policy to create a more flexible, student-centred education system. This Curriculum was developed in response to challenges in the national education system, which was previously considered too dense in material and provide space for students to develop deep understanding and critical thinking skills (Anggraena et al., 2022).

According to Kemdikbudristek (2022), the Independent Curriculum emphasizes the material's essence, allowing students to understand concepts more comprehensively without being burdened with excessive learning burdens (Wulandari, 2022). This aligns with the theory of constructivism in education, which emphasizes that students should be actively involved in the learning process to build their understanding (Piaget, 1970).

Support for implementing the Independent Curriculum is also supported through various digital resources, such as the *Merdeka Mengajar* platform, which provides teaching materials, teacher training, and educators' learning communities (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). This effort reflects the shift in the educational paradigm towards technology-based learning and digitalization of education, which has become a global trend in the modern education system (Judijanto & Yulianti, 2024). With more than 140 thousand educational units that have chosen to implement the Independent Curriculum, this policy is expected to improve the education quality in Indonesia (Daulay & Fauzidin, 2023).

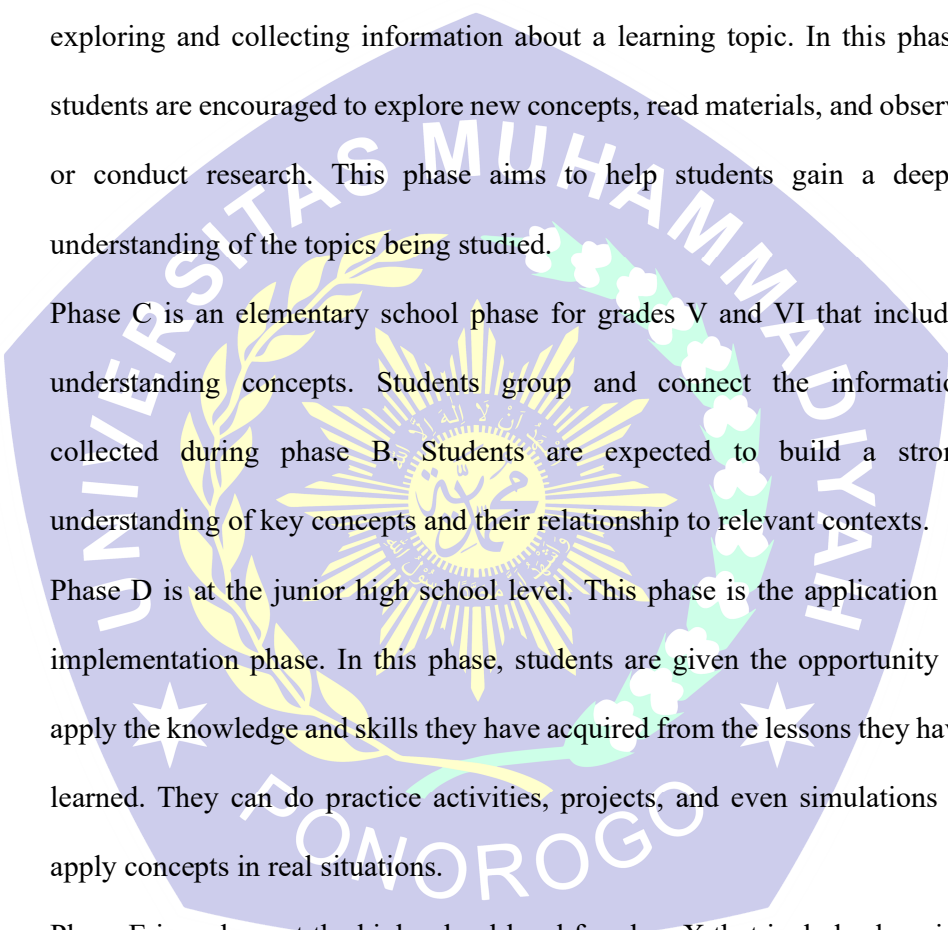
#### **F. Characteristics of The Independent Curriculum**

In the Independent Curriculum, developing content standards, process standards, assessment standards or curriculum structures, CP (Learning Achievements), learning principles and learning assessments should refer to the PPP (Pancasila Student Profile).

The government has provided seven themes that can be developed into topics in the P5 activity (Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project), namely 1) Build Your Soul and Body, 2) Engineering and Technology in Building the NKRI (Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia), 3) Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, 4) Local Wisdom, 5) Sustainable Lifestyle, 6) Voice of Democracy and 7) Entrepreneurship (Zulhaida & Widiyanto, 2023). So, each school is given the freedom to develop their work programs. This is done with the aim that the competencies possessed by students can be developed and programs adjusted to each school's vision and mission (Irawan et al., 2022).

The independent curriculum replaces the terms Core Competencies (KI) and Basic Competencies (KD) with Learning Outcomes (CP). Learning Outcomes (CP) is a learning competency that students should achieve at each phase (Bali & Koten, 2023). Therefore, when teachers develop learning assessments, they should refer to Learning Outcomes (CP). In this independent curriculum, schools have the convenience of arranging lesson hours because, in this independent curriculum, a subject in the odd semester can be taught in the even semester or vice versa (Barlian et al., 2022). For example, the Natural Sciences (IPA) subject in grade VIII is only taught in the odd semester. This is allowed as long as the lesson hours per year are met.

The structure of the independent curriculum consists of seven phases. The explanation of each phase in the structure of the independent curriculum, according to Salamah & Listiyani (2024), is as follows:

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- a. Phase A is an elementary school phase for grades I and II that includes an introduction to learning topics, learning objectives, and their context. The purpose of phase A is to build a strong foundation or readiness for students before they enter deeper material.
- b. Phase B is an elementary school phase for grades III and IV that includes exploring and collecting information about a learning topic. In this phase, students are encouraged to explore new concepts, read materials, and observe or conduct research. This phase aims to help students gain a deeper understanding of the topics being studied.
- c. Phase C is an elementary school phase for grades V and VI that includes understanding concepts. Students group and connect the information collected during phase B. Students are expected to build a strong understanding of key concepts and their relationship to relevant contexts.
- d. Phase D is at the junior high school level. This phase is the application or implementation phase. In this phase, students are given the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired from the lessons they have learned. They can do practice activities, projects, and even simulations to apply concepts in real situations.
- e. Phase E is a phase at the high school level for class X that includes learning assessment. Students are assessed according to the learning objectives that have been implemented. This assessment activity can be carried out through tests, assignments, and projects.

- f. Phase F is a phase at the high school level for classes XI and XII that includes learning reflection. Students analyze what they have learned, difficulties they faced in the learning process, and ways to improve their learning in the future. This reflection aims to help students gain a stronger understanding and prepare them for future learning.

### **G. The Independent Curriculum in English Language Learning**

In the context of English language learning, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum has a significant impact on teaching methods and approaches. One of the main aspects is improving communication skills, both oral and written (Manik et al., 2024).

Students are given more opportunities to interact in English through discussions, presentations, or simulations of real situations using project-based and task-based learning approaches (Purnamawati & Abbas, 2024). This approach is in line with Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which emphasizes the use of language in the context of meaningful communication (Kusumawati & Syamsi, 2023).

Creativity is also important in English language learning under the Independent Curriculum. A more explorative learning approach allows learners to develop creative thinking skills in using language (Utami et al., 2025). For example, in tasks such as writing short stories, making vlogs in English, or participating in debates, learners learn structure and vocabulary and develop self-expression and argumentation skills. This supports strengthening critical thinking skills, one of the main focuses in 2nd-century education.

Furthermore, learner autonomy is a key aspect emphasized in the Independent Curriculum. This aspect aims to encourage students to take a more active role in managing their own learning. Such autonomy can be fostered through the use of technology and digital learning resources, such as online platforms, podcasts, or interactions with native speakers via global communities (Rianita, 2024). Thus, learners not only rely on instructions from teachers but can also develop independent learning skills that will be useful in various academic and professional situations.

### **2.1.2. Textbooks in English Language Learning**

#### **A. The concept of textbook**

Textbooks are one of the main learning resources in the formal education system. As teaching aids, they deliver lesson materials in a structured manner, support the learning process, and help students achieve educational goals (Azhar et al., 2024). Learning materials are usually summarized in a book commonly known as a textbook (Vitta, 2023). Textbooks have the same words as textbooks, which are translated into textbooks or textbooks. According to Prastowo, textbooks contain knowledge derived from basic competencies and are included in the curriculum used by students to learn (Tohari et al., 2024). Textbooks are considered very important in determining the level of student opportunities to learn. Thus, textbooks are the best indicator to measure the learning opportunities experienced by students (Lee & Hwang, 2022).

Henry Guntur Tarigan and Djago Tarigan explained that textbooks in certain studies are standard books compiled by experts in the field for instructional purposes and objectives. They are equipped with appropriate teaching aids that are easy to understand by users in schools and universities so that they can support a teaching program (Subekti, 2022; Sukino & Rahim, 2021).

Government Regulation Number 32 of 2013 states that textbooks are the main source of learning to achieve Core Competencies and Basic Competencies (Hanifah et al., 2023). In the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia No. 2 of 2008, Article 1 Paragraph 3 states that elementary, secondary, and tertiary textbooks, hereinafter referred to as textbooks, are mandatory reference books for use in elementary and secondary education units or universities that contain learning materials in order to increase faith, piety, noble morals, and personality, mastery of science and technology, increase sensitivity and aesthetic abilities, increase kinesthetic abilities and health which are compiled based on national education standards (Sulanjari et al., 2021).

According Risager (2021), textbooks are a tool for students to understand and learn from what they read and understand the world (outside themselves). Textbooks are written for instructional purposes and equipped with learning facilities, arranged systematically following certain learning strategies to support learning (Sriasih et al., 2024). This can affect students' knowledge and have certain values.

Textbooks are sources of information arranged with a structure and sequence based on a particular field of science. The contents of the textbook must be suitable for use as a reference book for students following the learning of a related discipline or subject. This meaning emphasizes that a textbook is anything that can facilitate learning in the teaching and learning process (Tomlinson, 2011).

A further opinion was conveyed by Banowati (2007), who said that textbooks are one of the educational media that have a strategic position and also influence the quality of education because they can function as a learning resource and a very important media to support the achievement of competencies that are the objectives of learning (Mulyani & Dafit, 2024). The selection of textbooks needs to consider various things, including the main one is advantages of textbooks, namely as a source of information as well as a provider of stimulation when needed, considering that the presentation of certain materials can influence the reader's attitude (Djuraini et al., 2022). The latest year of publication is considered in the selection, but what is more important is the data and content of the textbook.

From the many definitions above, the researcher concludes that a textbook is a standard book in a particular field systematically compiled, containing learning materials, based on the curriculum, function as the main learning resource to support student competency achievement. They are equipped with relevant teaching tools and are used as a mandatory reference in the teaching and learning process in formal education units.

## **B. The characteristic of textbook**

In general, textbooks are scientific papers, and a textbook is the same as that of a scientific paper (Tri et al., 2023). The character can be seen in the following:

1. In terms of content, textbooks contain knowledge or information that can be scientifically accounted for.
2. In terms of presentation, the material contained in the textbook is described by following a certain reasoning pattern, as with the reasoning pattern in scientific presentation, namely inductive, deductive, or mixed reasoning patterns (inductive-deductive combination).
3. Regarding format, textbooks follow the conventions of scientific books, both in writing patterns, citation patterns, division patterns, and discussion patterns.

According to Akbar (2013), a good textbook or teaching book has several characteristics, namely (1) accurate, (2) appropriate, (3) communicative, (4) complete and systematic, (5) student-centered, (6) in favor of the ideology of the nation and state, (7) correct language rules, and (8) readable (Mukti et al., 2024).

Amalia & Fajar (2021) explain that the material presented in a textbook can be in the form of the main material and supporting material that can be sourced from videos, photos, texts, or other learning sources, while supporting material is another learning material that is specifically compiled by the textbook compiler (Ramadhani et al., 2022). The writing pattern of a textbook can affect its quality, so it is necessary to pay attention to the writing pattern of the textbook.

Banowati (2007) explains that quality textbooks must meet the following criteria: 1) Attract students who use them, 2) Be able to motivate their users, 3) Contain illustrations that are attractive to their users, 4) Consider linguistic aspects so that they are by the abilities of students who use them, 5) Can stimulate personal activities of students who use them, 6) Have a clear and firm point of view so as not to confuse students who use them, 7) Be able to provide reinforcement, emphasis on material for their users (Rohim, 2022).

From the material above, it can be concluded that textbooks are scientific papers that contain structured knowledge according to the curriculum, are arranged with scientific reasoning patterns (inductive, deductive, or mixed), follow scientific writing conventions, and have special characteristics such as orientation to learning objectives, certain subject areas, students' intellectual development, and the ability to direct teacher teaching, motivate, and trigger students creativity.

### **C. The Criteria for Young Learners Textbooks**

Textbooks for young learners play an essential role in creating a practical and enjoyable learning experience. The textbook criteria for this age group should consider their cognitive, emotional, and social development and curriculum needs (Behl et al., 2022). Generally, textbooks for young learners should be designed to support interactive, engaging, and relevant learning processes for children. The main criteria include:

## 1. Simplicity of Language

The language in textbooks for young learners should be adjusted to the child's level of linguistic development, which is usually still limited in terms of vocabulary, sentence structure, and comprehension skills. According to Rafiqa (2024), clear, concise language that uses familiar vocabulary can reduce children's cognitive load, so they can focus on the material's content without feeling overwhelmed. Short sentences with a simple structure (subject-predicate-object) help children understand the main idea (Qolbi & Sawardi, 2025). In addition, the use of words that are often encountered in children's daily lives, such as "home", "friends", or "play", increases their engagement.

## 2. Attractive Visual Design

Visual design is a key element in textbooks for young learners because children at this age are very responsive to visual stimuli. According to Tomlinson (2011), colourful illustrations, images relevant to the material, and neat layouts can increase children's interest and engagement. Visuals serve as decoration and tools to explain abstract concepts, such as the water cycle or numbers, which are difficult to understand through text alone. Tomlinson (2011) emphasises the principle of affective engagement, where attractive visuals can arouse positive emotions, such as curiosity or joy, which are important for children's learning motivation.

### 3. Interactivity

Interactivity is an important element in textbooks for young learners because children learn best through activities that actively engage them. Cameron (2001) states that textbooks should include puzzles, games, open-ended questions, or creative tasks (e.g. drawing or colouring) to encourage participation. Interactivity increases engagement and helps children develop critical thinking and collaboration skills. Cameron (2001) recommends a task-based learning approach, where textbooks provide short tasks. Ramadhani et al. (2023) emphasize that activities should encourage social interaction, such as small group discussions, to build communication skills.

### 4. Contextual Relevance

Textbook content should be relevant to children's worlds, reflecting life values and everyday experiences. Contextual relevance helps children connect new material with their existing knowledge, thereby facilitating understanding and retention (Meilina et al., 2024). Brewster et al. (2002) recommend using stories, songs, or examples related to children's lives; specifically, incorporating stories about traditional culture meets the need to enhance cultural relevance.

### 5. Clear Structure

The textbook's structure should be well-organized, with a logical sequence of material and instructions that are easy for children and teachers to follow. According to Richards (2001), a clear structure helps children understand the learning flow and allows teachers to plan instruction

effectively. Elements such as tables of contents, subheadings, and visual icons to indicate types of activities (e.g., a pencil icon for writing tasks) enhance navigation. Richards (2001) emphasizes that the textbook's structure should follow the principle of scaffolding, where material is arranged from simple to complex to support children's development.

Textbooks for young learners should be designed with children's developmental needs in mind, aligned with the curriculum, and with a student-centred approach. A quality textbook should be motivating, relevant, and support children's creativity, with an aesthetic design and clear structure. Although resource constraints and cultural relevance exist, effective textbook development can be overcome through collaboration between educators, designers, and local communities.

#### **D. The role of textbook in classroom**

Learning is a conscious human effort to change behaviour through interaction with learning resources. Teaching materials consist of all media containing information that can be used as a reference for learning, including textbooks (Sidiq & Syaripudin, 2022). Muslich (2008) explains that books are part of the continuity of education.

Teachers can manage learning activities effectively and efficiently through books. Students also participate in learning activities optimally with books (Muslich, 2008). The textbooks used in schools are assessed by the National Education Standards Agency (BSNP) and determined by the Minister of National Education. The assessment determines their content, language, presentation, and graphics

suitability. The position of textbooks, which is so important in the learning model and is reinforced by the Regulation of the Minister of National Education, makes it necessary to know more about the function of the book in the learning process.

### **2.1.3. Textbook Assessment**

#### **A. The Importance of Textbook Assessment**

Student textbook assessment is a crucial step in ensuring the quality of education because textbooks function as the primary source of learning that shapes students' knowledge, attitudes, and skills.

According to Tomlinson (2011), textbooks are learning materials and pedagogical tools representing certain ideologies, values, and learning approaches. Therefore, the quality of content, presentation of materials, and choice of language greatly determine student learning outcomes. It is important to systematically assess textbooks because not all textbooks on the market or used in schools meet pedagogical and academic standards (Susanto et al., 2022). The UNESCO report (2018) underlines the importance of textbook evaluation in the context of equal access to quality education, especially in developing countries (Faiza et al., 2025).

Textbook evaluation can refer to a framework such as that proposed by (Cunningsworth, 1995), which assesses books based on suitability to learning objectives, content to the curriculum, and ease of use by teachers and students. In addition, the instructional evaluation theory by Dick & Carey (2001) also provides a systematic approach to assessing the effectiveness of teaching materials in achieving learning objectives (Julaeha et al., 2022).

Considering the above studies, it can be concluded that textbook assessment is not just an administrative activity, but is an integral part of efforts to improve the quality of education. Textbooks that are not properly evaluated are at risk of conveying incorrect information, ideological bias, or being irrelevant to students' learning needs. Therefore, the involvement of teachers, material experts, and pedagogical experts in textbook assessment is essential to ensure that every book used in the classroom truly supports effective, fair, and contextual learning.

#### **B. Principles of Textbook Assessment**

The principles applied in the evaluation of student textbooks serve as a crucial foundation for ensuring that the books used in the learning process effectively support the achievement of educational goals. Key general principles to consider include:

1. Alignment with the curriculum: An ideal textbook must reflect the learning outcomes, learning objectives, and indicators established by the curriculum.
2. Objectivity and accuracy: Textbooks must be developed based on scientific principles and a neutral stance.
3. Completeness and integration of content: Completeness covers all knowledge relevant to the learning topic, while integration refers to the logical relationship between chapters or learning units.
4. Readability and language: good books must use language that is appropriate to the level of cognitive and linguistic development of students.

5. Character and value development: In line with national policies related to Strengthening Character Education (PPK), textbooks must integrate moral values, local culture, and national spirit.
6. Scientific validity and up-to-dateness of materials; textbooks must be routinely updated to not present information that is no longer relevant or proven wrong.
7. Ease of Implementation for Teachers: a good textbook must support learning planning and provide instructions for implementing learning activities, sample questions, and applicable worksheets.

The principle of assessing student textbooks must be carried out comprehensively, considering aspects of the curriculum, science, language, readability, character values, and practicality (Marlina et al., 2021). This assessment guarantees the material's quality and ensures that textbooks can become effective, fair, contextual educational transformation tools. Therefore, multidisciplinary involvement from curriculum experts, language, educational psychologists, and field practitioners is essential in assessing and developing textbooks.

### **C. McDonough & Shaw Framework for Textbook Assessment**

Assessment of textbooks cannot be done carelessly but must be based on a systematic, tested, and consistently applicable framework. The textbook assessment framework is a conceptual and practical reference in evaluating the quality and effectiveness of a textbook based on specific dimensions such as content, presentation, language, and pedagogy (Marlina et al., 2021). Therefore, a deep

understanding of various assessment frameworks is important for educators, researcher, and curriculum developers in determining the suitability of a textbook.

McDonough & Shaw (2003) propose a widely recognized framework for evaluating English language teaching (ELT) materials that emphasizes practicality, relevance, and classroom applicability. This framework is designed to assist teachers, researchers, and materials developers in making informed decisions regarding the suitability of textbooks for specific learning contexts. McDonough and Shaw's evaluation framework bridges the gap between curriculum expectations and classroom realities by focusing on how textbooks function in actual teaching-learning situations. The framework comprises two main evaluation stages: external evaluation and internal evaluation. These stages enable evaluators to examine textbooks from both macro and micro perspectives, thereby ensuring a comprehensive and systematic analysis.

#### 1. External Evaluation

External evaluation serves as an initial assessment of a textbook; this process does not yet involve an in-depth content analysis. This stage evaluates the book's overall profile and its intended purpose. According to McDonough & Shaw (2003), external evaluation focuses on external aspects such as the target learners, general learning objectives, methodological orientation, syllabus alignment, and physical layout. Additional elements, such as the availability of supplementary materials and visual design, are also assessed.

External evaluation is conducted to determine whether a textbook is potentially suitable for a specific educational context. By analyzing surface-level features, evaluators can identify whether the textbook aligns with curriculum goals, learner characteristics, and the specific requirements of the user institution. This process helps determine the appropriate course of action for the subsequent analysis stage. In the context of primary-level English language education, external evaluation is crucial for ensuring that the chosen textbook is appropriate for the learners, particularly regarding vocabulary usage, task design, and the overall presentation of supplementary materials.

## 2. Internal Evaluation

Internal evaluation constitutes the next stage in analyzing a textbook. This evaluation phase involves a more in-depth examination of the textbook, encompassing its content and the activities within each learning unit. At this stage, the evaluator analyzes how language skills are presented, the structure of tasks, and the language components utilized in the materials. McDonough & Shaw (2003) explain that this internal evaluation phase should focus on the textbook's pedagogical value rather than solely on learning objectives.

Key aspects of internal evaluation include the nature of learning activities, the balance between controlled and communicative tasks, the integration of language skills (reading, listening, writing, and speaking), and the role tasks play in fostering specific language aspects within the book. Furthermore, internal evaluation offers an opportunity to assess whether learning activities support students' cognitive development by engaging them in a progressive thinking process.

For primary-level English textbooks, internal evaluation is crucial in determining whether learning activities meet the students' need for meaningful learning experiences. Through this stage, evaluators can assess whether the textbook enables students to apply, analyze, and reflect on language use in an age-appropriate manner.

### 3. Strengths of McDonough and Shaw's Framework

One of the key strengths of the McDonough and Shaw framework lies in the balance between structure and flexibility. The framework provides clear evaluation categories while allowing researchers to tailor indicators to specific educational contexts. This flexibility makes it suitable for a variety of learning environments, including primary education settings implementing the Independent Curriculum.

Another strength is the framework's strong orientation toward classroom practice. McDonough and Shaw explicitly acknowledge that textbooks are rarely used in isolation and that teachers often adapt materials during the course of instruction. As a result, their framework encourages evaluators to consider how textbooks are likely to be used in real classrooms, making it particularly relevant for studies that examine the alignment between instructional materials and teaching practices.

### 4. Relevance of McDonough and Shaw's Framework to This Study

In this study, McDonough and Shaw's framework is employed to evaluate the quality and pedagogical design of elementary English textbooks used under the Independent Curriculum. External evaluation is used to assess the suitability of textbooks in terms of their alignment with the curriculum, learner characteristics,

and learning objectives. Internal evaluation is applied to analyze the nature of learning activities and their potential to support students' cognitive development.

By integrating the McDonough and Shaw framework with Bloom's Taxonomy, this study not only evaluates the structure and content of the textbooks but also examines the cognitive demands inherent in the learning activities. This combined approach enables a comprehensive analysis of textbook quality and its alignment with classroom teaching practices, thereby addressing both theoretical and empirical gaps identified in previous studies.

#### **2.1.4. Taxonomy**

##### **A. Definition of Taxonomy in Education**

Taxonomy means an activity that classifies rules (Alwalss, 2023), while the definition of taxonomy, according to the term, is a process of classifying levels of thinking that can increase from the lowest to the highest level and contain the entire potential of human thinking power (Nirmala et al., 2024).

According to Julianti et al. (2024), Taxonomy is a framework for classifying statements that predict students' learning ability due to learning activities. This taxonomy of educational objectives uses a psychological approach, namely, what psychological dimensions change in students after receiving that education (Irvine, 2021). Educational taxonomy is an effort to classify the objectives of education. In ancient times, these goals were known as objectives, aims, purposes, goals, and others, but currently, educational goals are referred to as content standards or curriculum standards (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). In educational taxonomy,

classifying objectives is a formulation for achieving an educational goal by using verbs or nouns; the verbs usually describe the knowledge intended to be mastered or constructed by students (Rampeng et al., 2021).

From several definitions that have been presented, this study defines Taxonomy in education as a hierarchical classification system that classifies learning objectives based on the level of students' thinking abilities, from the lowest to the highest, using a psychological approach to predict behavioral changes through precise goal formulations, based on scientific research data and stated in content standards or curriculum.

#### **B. Bloom's Taxonomy**

Educational taxonomy is a classification system that organizes learning objectives, processes, and educational outcomes (Lactona & Cahyono, 2024). This taxonomy is critical in learning planning, assessment, and curriculum evaluation because it helps teachers and educators design learning activities appropriate to students' ability levels (Marta et al., 2024).

One type of educational taxonomy used in this research is Bloom's taxonomy. Bloom's Taxonomy is a foundational framework in educational theory used to classify learning objectives into hierarchical domains. Bloom et al. (1956) developed the taxonomy that categorizes educational objectives into three major domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. The domain represents a different dimension of learning, this because learning outcomes reflecting the complexity.

## 1. Cognitive Domain

The cognitive domain relates to mental processes involved in knowledge acquisition, comprehension, application, analysis, evaluation, and creation. The affective domain focuses on learners' attitudes, values, emotions, and levels of internalization. Meanwhile, the psychomotor domain addresses physical skills and motor activities related to coordination and manipulation. Among these domains, the cognitive domain has been the most extensively developed and widely applied in curriculum design, assessment, and instructional material evaluation, particularly in language education.

The cognitive domains is the most widely known and used is the cognitive domain, which groups thinking processes into six hierarchical levels: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating. In 2001, Anderson and Krathwohl revised this taxonomy by changing the terms to verb forms and rearranging their order, emphasizing higher-order thinking processes and active learning (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001).

The main benefit of Bloom's Taxonomy is in learning planning, especially for compiling learning achievement indicators and questions based on thinking levels (Chandio et al., 2021). Teachers can easily determine learning objectives that are appropriate to students' cognitive development levels and align effective learning and evaluation activities (Arsana et al., 2023). Because of its systematic and simple form, Bloom is the taxonomy most often integrated into Learning Implementation Plans (RPP) and curricula at various levels of education, from elementary school to college.

Bloom's Taxonomy was first developed by Benjamin Bloom and his team in 1956 as a framework for classifying learning objectives in the cognitive domain (Nafiati, 2021). This taxonomy is designed to help educators develop more systematic learning by organizing the thinking process from the most basic to the most complex levels (Dabney & Eid, 2024).

The initial structure of this taxonomy consists of six levels of thinking, arranged hierarchically from the lowest to the highest level (Marta et al., 2024):

1. Remembering (C1) – this level involves remembering essential information without understanding its meaning more deeply. Activities at this stage include memorizing facts, remembering definitions, or recognizing specific terms. An example of its application in learning is when students repeat mathematical formulas or remember a list of words in a foreign language vocabulary.
2. Understanding (C2) – this level is where students begin to understand the information they are learning by explaining, classifying, or summarizing concepts in their own words. At this stage, students can translate a text, compare the main ideas in a reading, or explain scientific concepts more simply. Good understanding at this stage allows students to connect new information with existing knowledge.
3. Applying (C3) – at this level, students apply concepts or rules they have learned in new situations. For example, in language learning, students use the grammar they have learned to write essays, or in science, they apply physics principles to solve problems in experiments. The ability to apply shows that

students not only understand the material but are also able to use it in relevant contexts.

4. Analyzing (C4) – at this level, students begin to dissect a concept into its smaller parts and understand the relationships between the parts. They can identify patterns in a reading, compare two theories, or find cause-and-effect relationships in a phenomenon. Analytical skills are essential in critical thinking, allowing students to assess information more deeply before concluding.
5. Evaluating (C5) – at this level, students are expected to be able to make judgments based on specific criteria. At this stage, students understand and analyze information and can justify an opinion or decision. An example is when students evaluate arguments in a debate or criticize the effectiveness of a research method. Evaluation requires high-level thinking skills because objective and subjective considerations are involved in assessing a concept or problem.
6. Creating (C6) – this level involves the ability to compose or create something new by combining various elements that have been learned. Activities at this stage can include designing a research project, writing a creative story, or developing an innovative solution to a problem. The ability to create shows that students have mastered the concept in depth and can use it in more complex and original situations.

Anderson & Krathwohl (2001) revised Bloom's Taxonomy to suit the development of modern education better. One of the main changes is the replacement of terms at each level from nouns to verbs to emphasize further the cognitive processes that occur in learning, including the following:

1. Use of active verbs

The name of each category was changed from nouns to verbs to highlight cognitive processes. For example, "Knowledge" in the original version was changed to "Remembering," and "Synthesis" was changed to "Creating" (Lactona & Cahyono, 2024).

2. Reorganization of levels

The highest level of this revision is "Creating" (C6) which replacing the position of "Evaluating" in the original version. This shows that the ability to create something new is a highest achievement of learning process than evaluate or analyze something (Setyowati et al., 2022).

3. Emphasis on the knowledge dimension

This revision also introduces two dimensions: the cognitive dimension (six levels of thinking) and the knowledge dimension, which includes factual, conceptual, procedural, and metacognitive knowledge (Gun & Bossé, 2025).

The original

The original and revised Bloom's Taxonomy is an essential tool that teachers may utilize to delineate learning objectives and promote higher-order thinking. The revision uses active verbs and reorders the levels to emphasize the constantly changing nature of cognitive processes of remembering, understanding, applying,

analyzing, evaluating, and creating. The revised taxonomy offers a more sophisticated approach, which enables educators to plan learning experiences for a variety of cognitive and knowledge-based objectives. This framework enables systematic teaching as well as providing students with the opportunity to develop critical and creative skills that are vital to solving real world problems.

## 2. Affective Domain

The affective domain, as conceptualized by Krathwohl et al. (1964), addresses learners' emotional engagement, attitudes, motivation, and value formation. Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia (1964) developed this domain in systematic form as an extension of Bloom's original taxonomy. The affective domain emphasizes learners' internalization of values and their emotional engagement with learning experiences; this differs from the cognitive domain.

The affective domain is based on the belief that learning is not merely a cognitive process but an emotional and attitudinal process as well. Learners' motivation to engage, interest in a subject and attitude toward learning have a great impact on the learning outcomes. Affective learning outcomes are thus considered necessary for learning to be meaningful and lasting. Krathwohl et al. (1964) conceptualized the affective domain as a hierarchy of five levels arranged in a continuum, with each level representing an increasingly internalized attitude.

- a. Receiving is the lowest level of the affective domain; receiving is when learners are aware of and are willing to attend to learning stimuli. In language learning, this could be listening to the teacher's instructions or being interested in learning English at first.

- b. Active participation in learning activities is referred to as responding. Learners respond by discussing, answering questions or completing tasks, they are not just pay attention to stimuli. This level of learner shows some engagement and motivation.
- c. Valuing is the process of accepting the worth or importance of a particular object, phenomenon or behavior. Learners might start to see how it can be useful for them in social or academic interactions and the value in English communication.
- d. Learners synthesize different values into a consistent value system at the level of the Organization. They start to discriminate some values and to resolve conflicts among them. In the educational context, learners can organize their learning priorities and develop consistent attitudes toward learning.
- e. Characterization by Value Set, this highest level represents the internalization of values that consistently guide learners' behavior. Learners' actions are characterized by stable attitudes and value systems, such as sustained motivation to learn English or a commitment to lifelong learning.

In English language education, the affective domain plays a crucial role in shaping learners' motivation, confidence, and willingness to communicate. Positive affective factors can facilitate language acquisition, while negative affective factors may hinder learning.

Affective learning outcomes are usually indirect and build up gradually, appearing over time as a result of continuous classroom interaction, teacher support, and collaboration among peers. Because of this, affective development is affected

not just by the instructional materials but also by other contextual factors in the learning environment.

A main difficulty when evaluating the affective domain is its subjective and internal character. Affective outcomes cannot easily be observed by means of written tasks or an analysis of textbooks. Assessment of affective learning usually makes use of qualitative approaches, such as interviews, report questionnaires, or observations in the classroom. These requiring long-term and context-sensitive research design.

### 3. Psychomotor Domain

The aspect of the psychomotor domain concerns learning outcomes that are connected with physical movement, motor skills, coordination, and the use of the body in carrying out tasks. Although Bloom's original taxonomy had mainly concentrated on the cognitive domain, the psychomotor domain was subsequently developed by people such as Simpson (1972) and Harrow (1972) in order to deal with skill-based learning. In the psychomotor domain, stress is placed on the combination of cognitive processes and physical performance, and learning in this area involves the acquisition of motor coordination together with the capacity to carry out actions with growing precision, efficiency, and control.

Various psychomotor taxonomies have been suggested, one of the more frequently quoted being Simpson's. Simpson's psychomotor taxonomy consists of seven levels:

- a. The ability to perceive sensory cues and be aware of them in order to guide motor activity

- b. Set, which includes being mentally, physically, and emotionally ready to act
- c. Guided response, involving the early stages of skill acquisition by means of imitation and practice
- d. The mechanism, which is an intermediate stage, is when movements become habitual
- e. A complex overt response, demonstrated with confidence and proficiency
- f. The adjustment and modification of skills to fit new situations
- g. The formation and creation of new movement patterns in order to solve problems

In the educational fields, psychomotor skills are demonstrated in pronunciation exercises, writing practices, role-plays, and responding to verbal cues. Such activities call for a learner's ability to perform psychomotor skills.

However, psychomotor learning in language education is best assessed through direct observation and performance-based assessment, as it involves real-time demonstration of skills rather than written representations. Consequently, psychomotor outcomes are often underrepresented in textbook content and are more dependent on teacher facilitation and classroom interaction.

Assessing psychomotor learning outcomes presents methodological challenges, as it requires observation of learners' physical performance in authentic contexts. In terms of ensuring reliable assessment, the use of rubrics, performance tasks, and repeated observation is common. However, in studies that rely on analysis of textbooks for educational materials, and so forth, these approaches may not be feasible due to the focus of the studies.

While the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains are ideally interconnected, research designs typically emphasize one or more domains based on some factor related to data type and purpose of study. Through analysis of instructional materials such as textbooks, the cognitive domain provides researchers with the most direct observation and systematic approach to analysis. The affective and psychomotor domains, on the other hand, require a different methodological approach, such as ethnographic observation and experimental designs.

This study deliberately focuses on the cognitive domain of Bloom's Taxonomy due to methodological and contextual considerations.

1. The primary data source of this research is English textbooks and documented teaching practices, which predominantly reflect cognitive learning objectives through written instructions and learning tasks. The cognitive domain allows for systematic, objective, and replicable analysis of learning activities based on clearly defined indicators.
2. The affective and psychomotor domains are highly context-dependent and are influenced by factors such as teacher mediation, classroom interaction, and learners' individual characteristics. As a result, these domains are more appropriately examined through ethnographic observation or longitudinal classroom studies, which fall beyond the scope of this research.
3. Focusing on the cognitive domain ensures analytical depth and coherence, as it aligns directly with the study's objective of examining cognitive level distribution and alignment between textbook content and teaching practices under the Independent Curriculum.

### **2.1.5. English as a Subject**

#### **A. English Language Learning**

Language is the primary tool for communication in human life, both individually and socially. Finnochiaro defines language as a system of arbitrary vocal symbols that allows people in a particular society or others who have learned the system to communicate or interact (Ulfa, 2023). According to Kridalaksana (2001), a foreign language is a language mastered by linguists, usually through formal education, and is not considered a sociocultural language (Haq et al., 2024).

English is one of the languages used internationally to communicate orally and in writing. The ability to communicate in a complete sense is the ability to discourse, namely the ability to understand and/or produce oral and/or written texts that are realized in four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Fadly et al., 2020). These four skills are used to respond to or create discourse in community life. Therefore, with the existence of English subjects, students are directed to develop these skills so that graduates can communicate and discourse in English at a certain literacy level (Aini, 2022).

Foreign language learning is learning a language used to communicate in a person's environment. In Indonesia, the language is only taught in educational institutions and is not used in daily communication by students (Ginting et al., 2024). According to Ghöring in Hardjono (1988), the general goal of learning a foreign language is cross-cultural communication and mutual understanding between nations (cross-cultural understanding) (Ginting et al., 2024).

Students are said to have achieved this goal if they have foreign language knowledge and skills per the objectives formulated. A foreign language in language learning is a language learned by a student in addition to the student's language (Sariakin & Faizah, 2023).

Mastery of a foreign language orally or in writing is a productive activity, not a reproductive one, as students usually do in using expressions, phrases, and sentences that have been learned previously. In productive activities, students can choose the words and language structures needed to express their thoughts (Ginting et al., 2024). Furthermore, Hardjono (1988) explains that foreign language lessons must be based on the basics of educational science (Ginting et al., 2024). For example, the principle of awareness using visual tools, teaching principles such as conducting exercises, arousing students' learning motivation, etc. This aims to ensure students can develop their language skills to the maximum. In addition, teachers as teaching staff must follow the rapid development of science and technology and demand increasingly high knowledge, abilities, and language skills (Akbar, 2023). In terms of classroom teaching practice, the collaborative teaching model is also a very effective model in providing teachers with the opportunity to practice teaching with direct assistance from another teacher (Maghfiroh et al., 2025). In addition, students' creative thinking activities and responsiveness must also be developed.

Based on several theories explained above, it can be concluded that foreign language learning is a process of learning a language that learners do intentionally in a formal or informal forum. The language learned by language learners is a

language other than their mother tongue. Learning a foreign language for learners means learning all aspects of the language that are the same.

## **B. The Use of Bloom's Taxonomy in English Subject**

Bloom's Taxonomy is widely used in designing and evaluating learning materials because it provides a systematic structure for developing students' low to high-level thinking skills. (Hasanah et al., 2023) This taxonomy helps educators formulate learning objectives, design appropriate activities, and objectively assess students' learning outcomes.

In learning design, Bloom's Taxonomy helps educators ensure that the material taught does not only focus on memorization or basic understanding (low-level thinking). Bloom's Taxonomy includes more complex thinking skills, such as analysis, evaluation, and creation (high-level thinking) (Septiana et al., 2024). For instance, if new vocabulary is being taught in English learning, learners can memorize the vocabulary during the Remembering (C1) level, while they can discuss what the vocabulary means in various contexts during the Understanding (C2) level. The Applying (C3) level would involve students using the vocabulary appropriately in conversation, while the Analyzing (C4) level would require them to compare the selection of words in one scenario against that in another different scenario. Then, they can Evaluate (C5) by criticizing the style of language in a text, and finally, Create (C6) by writing an essay or story using the vocabulary they have learned (Thohir et al., 2024).

In learning evaluation, Bloom's Taxonomy allows educators to assess the extent to which students have achieved various cognitive levels. This taxonomy-

based evaluation can be carried out through various assessments, such as multiple-choice questions to test remembering, essay questions to measure understanding, project assignments to assess applying, and case studies to test analyzing and evaluating. With this approach, evaluation focuses on lower cognitive aspects and challenges students to think critically and creatively (Andari et al., 2021).

Marzano & Kendall (2007) developed a more complex model by linking Bloom's Taxonomy with critical thinking skills and standards-based learning development. They proposed a new model that includes broader dimensions of knowledge and thinking processes, aiming to improve teaching and learning quality (Yıldırım, 2021). This model focuses on three central thinking systems: the cognitive system, which reflects the levels of thinking in Bloom's Taxonomy; the metacognitive system, which emphasizes how students organize and evaluate their thinking; and the affective system, which relates to students' motivation and engagement in learning (Putra, 2024).

The use of Bloom's Taxonomy in English learning at the Elementary School level plays a strategic role in forming children's language skills from an early age systematically and in a directed manner. In the context of English learning for elementary school children, the application of this framework is adjusted to the stage of children's cognitive development, which is still in the concrete operational phase according to Piaget's theory. Therefore, this taxonomy is more focused on the first three levels, but it still allows teachers to gradually encourage the gradual exploration of higher levels.

### **2.1.6. English for Young Learners**

#### **A. Definition and Characteristics of Young Learners**

Young Learners (YLs) generally refer to children aged 5 to 12 years who are in rapid cognitive, affective, and social development. In the context of English language learning or education in general, this definition can vary depending on the national curriculum of each country but generally refers to elementary school students (Jannah, 2024). Scott & Ytreberg (1990) divide young learners into two groups: the Younger group aged 5–7 years and the Older group aged 8–10 years (Septiana et al., 2021). Young learners are learners who not only need academic learning but also social and emotional guidance in a fun and supportive context.

Young learners have several unique characteristics that distinguish them from adult learners. Understanding these characteristics is essential for teachers to design appropriate learning (Naibaho, 2023). Characteristics of Young Learners according to Cameron (2001), Young learners learn through play and direct experience; students in this situation are sensitive to the classroom atmosphere and interpersonal relationships and pay more attention to meaning than language form, with their learning process highly dependent on context. According to Scott & Ytreberg (1990), students will have different characteristics from both types of young learners (Septiana et al., 2021). Younger learners like to play and imitate, have a short attention span, and learn from physical and sensory activities. The older learners type has the character of starting to be able to think logically, being more interested in reality and facts, and still likes to play but also likes challenges. Another opinion from Rachmawati (2025) emphasizes that young learners have

high intrinsic motivation but depend on teachers' emotional support and a fun learning environment.

From the existing explanation, it can be concluded that Young learners are children aged 5-12 years with a distinctive learning style: They learn through direct experience, play, and activities involving emotions and social interaction. They need a learning approach that is creative, contextual, and emotionally supportive.

### **B. Approaches for Teaching Young Learners**

Teaching English to young learners or children aged between 5 and 12 years requires a different approach than teaching adult learners. Children at this age have unique developmental characteristics, so teachers must choose and apply teaching approaches appropriate to their cognitive, social, and emotional developmental stages (Yuliarsih et al., 2024). Some practical teaching approaches for young learners have been proven in educational research and practice.

1. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT); Rather than simply teaching grammar or vocabulary in isolation, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) encourages students to use language in authentic situations that are relevant to their daily lives (Qasserras, 2023).
2. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT); This approach supports language learning through authentic experiences and provides students with opportunities to actively practice the language in the form of everyday activities such as making a shopping list, planning a vacation, or having a simple conversation, all of which involve using the language in a more real context (Milon et al., 2023).

3. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL); helpful in introducing English in a more holistic and meaningful context so that students can relate language learning to real experiences outside the language classroom, allowing children to learn English while gaining knowledge about other subjects, such as science, mathematics, or art (Khoiriyah, 2021).
4. The Total Physical Response (TPR); This approach is very popular for teaching English to young learners, especially to younger children (aged 5–7 years), by involving the use of body movements to help children understand and remember vocabulary and phrases in the target language (Xie, 2021).
5. Play-Based Learning; This approach emphasizes learning through play. Children learn in a fun way, where the game not only functions for entertainment but also as a tool to develop their cognitive and social skills (Yin et al., 2022).

## **2.2. Related Studies**

In recent years, several researcher have published their research results on the analysis study of English textbooks. Many studies have assessed the suitability of Elementary School English textbooks in education. In this study, the researcher used 10 sources, namely previous studies conducted by other researcher, as references in writing this study.

First research by Chandio et al. (2021) highlights the use of Bloom's Taxonomy to reform pedagogy through assessment by analyzing English exam questions for grade XII designed by four Secondary Education Boards in Sindh

Province, Pakistan. The research indicates that majority of questions, especially MCQ questions, were based on lower cognitive domains, such as “remembering,” with a percentage above 70%. On the other hand, cognitive domains such as “analyzing,” “evaluating,” and “creating,” were very limited, and sometimes absent. This lack of distribution limits the potential development of students’ critical thinking abilities. The researcher stressed the importance of improving the question preparation pattern for the learning experience, and to not limit practice based only on memorizing but also focus on reasoning and problem-solving.

In a subsequent study, Rustiyani et al. (2021), in their study of the “Pathway to English” textbook for grade XII in Indonesia, also used the Revised Bloom’s Taxonomy to analyze 271 instructional activities. The results showed that 84.5% of activities were included in the low-level thinking (LOTS) domain, with “remembering” as the most dominant category (38.7%). Activities that hone high-level thinking skills (HOTS), such as “analyzing,” “evaluating,” and “creating,” only amounted to 15.5%, which is considered inadequate to support the development of 21st-century skills, especially critical thinking. The researcher suggests that teachers do not only rely on this textbook in the learning process but complement it with strategies and materials that are more cognitively challenging.

Meanwhile, in the study, Sianturi (2021) conducted a quantitative analysis of the WH questions in the “English Class X” book published by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Of the 145 questions analyzed, the majority (49.65%) were at the “remembering” level, followed by “understanding” (24.13%) and “analyzing” (17.94%). The “creating” level was not even found at all. This shows that although

the book is designed within the framework of the 2013 Curriculum, which emphasizes the development of creativity and critical thinking, the book's content is still too focused on factual basic skills. The researcher concluded that this book does not fully support the curriculum's goal of developing high-level thinking skills.

Meanwhile, Kencana et al. (2022) examined the alignment between learning objectives, learning activities, and assessment tasks in junior high school teacher lesson plans based on Bloom's Taxonomy. This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach by analyzing the RPP of English teachers from an Islamic school in Sidoarjo. Although technically, the RPP shows good connectivity between components (constructive alignment), the learning objectives have not been described in detail based on Basic Competencies. As a result, learning activities and assessment tasks become less relevant to accurately measuring the achievement of objectives. This shows that teachers' understanding of designing RPP still needs to be improved, especially in applying Bloom's Taxonomy consistently and structure.

Research by Malik et al. (2022) conducted a comparative analysis of English textbooks for grades X and XI published by the KPK Education Council (Pakistan) using the revised version of Bloom's Taxonomy. The study discovered that most textbooks were dominated by LOTS (77.6% for grade X and 76.9% for grade XI). Although there was an increase in the percentage of HOTS from 22.4% to 23.1%, the distribution of these types of questions was still far from ideal. The findings suggest that the learning objectives (SLOs) for these textbooks do not promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which are needed for students in the

21st century. The researcher suggests that the curriculum and textbooks need to be re-planned to incorporate more HOTS-based learning objectives.

The study by Ahmed (2023) aimed to evaluate the suitability of elementary English textbooks in Pakistan based on Bloom's Taxonomy. The study employed a qualitative research method through content analysis of the textbooks published by the Single National Curriculum (SNC) 2021 policy. The results revealed that 88.8% of the textbook questions only covered Lower-Order Thinking Skills (LOTS), while only 11.2% of the questions developed Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). The emphasis of the textbooks on lower-order thinking skills shows a lack of effort from the authors of the textbooks to develop the communicative language competencies, critical thinking and creativity that are the main objectives of the national curriculum. Therefore, the authors recommend revising textbooks with more emphasis on developing higher-order thinking skills and including representatives from all provinces to reflect the needs of multicultural learners.

Rahmi & Ahsani (2024) analyzed 86 reading comprehension questions in two packages of the Final School Exam in Bima using the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy. The results showed that only six questions (6.9%) were categorized as HOTS, while the rest were LOTS. The "analyzing" level is the most dominant in the HOTS category (4 questions), followed by "evaluating" (2 questions), while "creating" was not found at all. The cognitive processes often appearing in all questions are "interpreting" and "recognizing." This study highlights the low proportion of HOTS in the final assessment and the importance of improving the quality of questions to encourage students' critical thinking skills.

A study by Stevani & Tarigan (2022) used a qualitative approach with content analysis to evaluate reading comprehension questions in three English textbooks. The results showed the distribution of cognitive levels as follows: “understanding” (26%), “remembering” (17%), “applying” (16%), “synthesis” (14%), “analysis” (13%), “evaluation” (11%), and “creating” (3%). This study highlights that although all levels in Bloom’s Taxonomy have been represented, higher thinking skills are still lower than LOTS. Therefore, it is recommended that teachers be more aware of the role of each cognitive level when developing learning materials and assessments.

A study by Kuloğlu & Tutuş (2024) evaluated the English curriculum of junior high schools in Turkey using the knowledge and cognitive process dimensions of the Revised Bloom’s Taxonomy. An analysis of 245 learning outcomes from grades 5 to 8 showed that most of the outcomes were in the category of “conceptual knowledge” and at the cognitive level of “applying.” Although there was an increase in higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) in grade 8—such as analysis and creation—there was no significant increase between grades 5 and 7. The researcher recommend adjusting the distribution of learning outcomes to students’ cognitive development levels gradually, not only focusing on one type of dimension or level of thinking.

Skaf (2024) analyzed 11th-grade English textbooks in Syria and found that evaluation questions covered all levels in Bloom’s Taxonomy. However, the distribution was very uneven: “remembering” (51.65%) dominated, followed by “understanding” (14.89%), “applying” (9.02%), “analyzing” (2.8%), “synthesis”

(7.48%), and “evaluating” (2.63%). This shows that the majority of questions still focus on low-level thinking skills. The researcher emphasized the need for question design to facilitate high-level thinking skills to encourage more meaningful and cognitively challenging learning.

From the previous research presentation, this research has a strong potential to fill an important gap in previous studies. Most previous studies have focused on secondary to upper secondary levels (junior high school and senior high school) and curricula and textbooks from abroad, such as Pakistan, Turkey, and Syria. Meanwhile, studies on English textbooks for elementary schools in Indonesia, especially in the context of the Independent Curriculum, are still minimal or have not been covered by previous studies.

Furthermore, as this study will do, many previous studies only analyze the proportion of LOTS and HOTS in general without linking them in depth to the suitability between learning objectives, teaching materials, and evaluations. By emphasizing the alignment between components in elementary school textbooks with cognitive targets based on Bloom’s Taxonomy in the context of the latest curriculum in Indonesia, this research contributes significantly to answering the need for contemporary and local analysis.

In addition, this approach is specific to the Independent Curriculum, which emphasizes differentiated learning and strengthening critical and reflective thinking competencies from an early age, providing relevant actual contributions to the development of educational policies and the selection of teaching materials that are in line with 21st century learning objectives. Thus, this study not only broadens the

scope of the educational levels studied but also deepens the analysis by considering the dimensions of the latest national curriculum and the context of early childhood learning.

### 2.3. Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework serves as the foundation for guiding the analysis in this study. It provides the conceptual basis and scholarly perspectives that inform the evaluation of the elementary English textbook within the scope of the Independent Curriculum. Two main theories are adopted in this research: Bloom's Taxonomy and McDonough and Shaw's (2003) textbook evaluation framework.

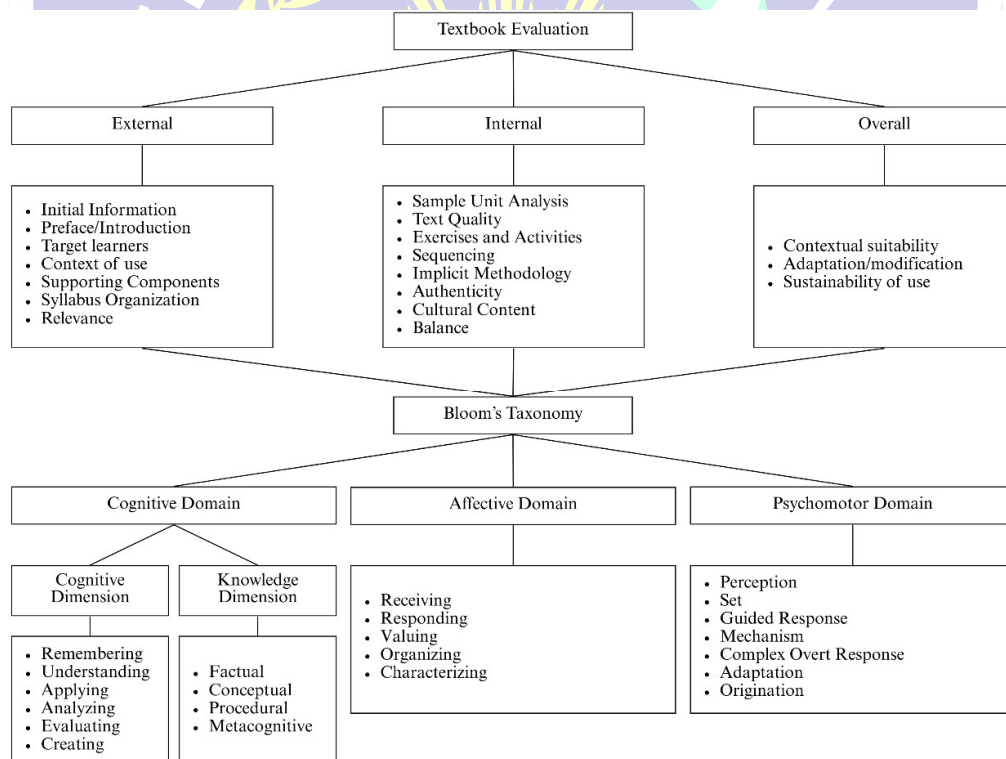


Figure 2. 1. Theoretical Framework