JOURNAL OF APPLIED SCIENCE AND SOCIAL SCIENCE
eISSN 2229-3113 pISSN 2229-3205

Volume 15 Issue 12, December 2025
Impact factor: 2019: 4.679 2020: 5.015 2021: 5.436, 2022: 5.242, 2023: 6.995, 2024 7.75

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE "KNOW–UNDERSTAND–APPLY" STAGES IN IMPROVING READING LITERACY OF PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract: This article analyzes the methodological significance of the first three stages of Bloom's taxonomy — knowing, understanding, and applying — in organizing the learning activities aimed at improving reading literacy in primary school students. In literacy lessons, students not only read the text aloud but also develop the skills to comprehend it, reinterpret its content, and use its meaningful elements in specific situations, based on scientific evidence.
Keywords: primary education, reading literacy, Bloom's taxonomy, knowing, understanding, applying, working with text, methodology.

I. Introduction

In the Concept of the Development of the Education System of the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030, raising primary education to a qualitatively new level and forming functional literacy, independent thinking, creativity, and practical skills in students are defined as priority tasks. In this process, the development of reading literacy is particularly important because a primary school student's mastery of all subsequent subjects, level of thinking, and communication culture are formed precisely through reading activities. The "Uzbekistan–2030" Strategy, adopted on September 11, 2023, also emphasizes providing students with knowledge and competencies that meet modern requirements, enabling them to read independently, comprehend texts, and apply them in real-life situations as one of the main priority directions. In developing reading literacy in primary school students, education should be organized not only through traditional memorization-based methods but also based on modern pedagogical technologies aimed at sequentially forming thinking operations. From this perspective, the "Know–Understand–Apply" stages of Bloom's taxonomy are a very important methodological tool for properly directing the reading activities of primary school students. Analysis of scientific literature shows that the cognitive taxonomy developed by B. Bloom is one of the most universal didactic models, effectively applied not only in higher education but also in primary education. The consistent application of cognitive stages helps students understand the text they read, reconstruct its content, grasp cause-and-effect relationships, apply it in new situations, and develop independent reasoning skills.

II. The Main Part

In primary education, the "Know–Understand–Apply" stages are age-appropriate and most commonly applied in practice. These stages are aimed at developing skills such as basic comprehension of the text, understanding its content and extracting the main idea, expressing independent thoughts based on the material read, and connecting events in the text with real-life situations — forming the foundation of reading literacy development. Methodologically, tasks based on the taxonomy help students master learning material following the principle "from simple to complex." For example, a primary school student first learns to find specific facts in a text (knowing), then to understand the connections between events (understanding), and finally

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to apply the content to real life (applying). This process promotes careful, sequential thinking, develops a culture of working with texts, and enhances speech activity.

On the other hand, the age and psychological characteristics of primary school students show that difficulties in reading often arise at the comprehension stage. Therefore, teachers must correctly select the complexity of tasks, apply various forms of text work, and use visual, playful, and problem-based approaches that enliven the story content. Bloom's taxonomy serves as a methodological guide in this regard, teaching students to think sequentially, analyze questions, and draw logical conclusions. Thus, an approach based on the "Know–Understand–Apply" stages not only increases the effectiveness of reading literacy development in primary grades but also changes students' attitude toward texts, shaping them as active readers. As a result, students learn not only to read texts but also to read thoughtfully, comprehend them, and relate them to real-life situations.

Analysis of scientific literature shows that Bloom's taxonomy is one of the most effective methodological foundations for determining learning objectives, implementing them in a consistent sequence, and evaluating student outcomes in the educational process. Especially in primary grades, the targeted use of the "Know–Understand–Apply" stages consistently develops students' skills in working with texts. Primary school students are at the initial stage of cognitive development: they first recognize the text, then understand its content, and finally apply it to practical situations — which precisely corresponds to these taxonomy stages.

The six stages of Bloom's cognitive development — knowing, understanding, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating — allow teachers to monitor students' developmental dynamics, define lesson objectives clearly, and distribute tasks according to their complexity. In primary classes, the first three stages — knowing, understanding, and applying — are particularly crucial. Reading literacy initially develops from recognizing the text, understanding the content of events, identifying the main idea, assessing characters, and expressing opinions orally or in writing. The "knowing" stage reflects the student's first encounter with the text, during which they memorize words, characters, event sequences, and main facts, a process closely related to speech and phonetic skills, which is essential in literacy instruction. At the "understanding" stage, students learn to explain the text, retell it in their own words, and distinguish primary and secondary ideas, which is critical for shaping thinking and understanding cause-and-effect relationships. The "applying" stage develops skills such as drawing independent conclusions based on the text, linking content to real-life situations, and expressing opinions about characters' actions, forming the practical foundation of reading literacy. Students begin to apply learned knowledge through games, discussions, mini-creative tasks, role-plays, and graphic models.

Although the later stages — analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating — are fully developed in higher grades, applying simplified forms of these stages in primary grades fosters the initial development of independent thinking and reflection. For instance, students can compare characters' actions, draw conclusions from events, create their own endings (synthesis), and express opinions about characters (evaluation), thus developing early elements of critical thinking.

The discussion shows that Bloom's taxonomy acts as a "navigator" for teachers to organize education effectively. It allows educators to systematically plan lessons, properly structure stages of working with texts, engage students in cognitive activities, and progressively develop reading

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literacy. Students, in turn, not only memorize the text but also comprehend, apply it, and express independent judgments — the main requirement of functional literacy. Today, improving education quality, providing students with modern skills, fostering interest in reading, and developing independent thinking are among the state's priority directions. In achieving these goals, scientifically grounded methodologies such as Bloom's taxonomy play a crucial role. Using the taxonomy not only increases the efficiency of the educational process but also ensures the development of students' creative potential, speech activity, and cognitive growth. Therefore, the consistent application of the "Know–Understand–Apply" stages in primary education is an essential factor in developing reading literacy and shaping students as competitive, conscious, and active individuals.

The process of forming reading literacy in primary grades involves many psychological, pedagogical, and linguistic factors. At this stage, students' thinking is just beginning to develop, relying more on imagination and figurative perception than on abstract thinking. Therefore, organizing the learning process according to scientifically based taxonomies facilitates students' reading, sequentially activates their cognitive activity, and ensures effective learning. Bloom's taxonomy stands out for its convenience, consistency, and practical efficiency. Reading literacy in primary school students primarily consists of accurate, fluent reading, understanding the text, drawing conclusions, expressing opinions, and answering questions. These skills do not develop spontaneously but are reinforced through specific pedagogical approaches. From this perspective, the "Know–Understand–Apply" stages fully correspond to the content of reading literacy and serve as its foundational basis. In the Knowledge stage, the student becomes familiar with the structural components of the text. Psycholinguists refer to this stage as the "initial text perception process." This process is associated with phonetic ability, attention span, visual imagination, and memory, as the student attempts to remember the main features, events, and characters in the text. The teacher's task at this stage is to present the text in an engaging way, explain the meanings of words, and clarify the structure of the text. In the Comprehension stage, the student delves into the content of the text. They not only memorize the events but also begin to understand their essence. At this stage, the following skills are developed: understanding the connections between events, distinguishing cause-and-effect relationships, grasping the main idea of the text, and responding to the characters' actions. This process aligns with the constructivist approach to education, as the student tries to connect the information read with their personal experience. The Application stage involves applying the text to real-life situations. At this stage, the student thinks independently, uses the content of the text, and confirms its ideas through real-life examples. For instance, the student can relate a moral topic from the text to daily life, evaluate their own behavior, or retell the story with a different ending. This process enhances the student's functional literacy.

In modern pedagogical research, reading literacy of primary school students is increasingly considered not simply as the ability to decode text, but as a complex set of cognitive, linguistic, and metacognitive skills that allow the learner to understand, interpret, and apply information from written texts. The traditional approach of teaching reading — emphasizing phonetics, letter- sound correspondence, and mechanical reading — often results in pupils being able to pronounce words yet failing to grasp deeper meaning. Modern research supports a shift from mere decoding to meaningful comprehension: students should not only read aloud, but also understand the text, link ideas, draw conclusions, and relate content to their own experience.

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According to the "simple view of reading" model, reading comprehension (RC) is a product of decoding ability (D) and language comprehension (LC). This model underlines that without both components — accurate decoding and understanding — reading literacy remains superficial. Hence, early reading instruction must integrate both phonics (for decoding) and comprehension strategies (for meaning). Recent studies show that applying structured, staged approaches to reading instruction — moving from basic decoding to comprehension and application — significantly improves reading literacy outcomes among primary-grade students. For instance, one study describes the progression as follows: beginning with letter-sound recognition and simple reading, then advancing to comprehension, interpretation, and finally application of text content. Another research emphasizes that reading instruction should incorporate pre-reading activities (activating background knowledge), during-reading monitoring (questions, discussion), and post-reading reflection (summaries, personal responses) to deepen comprehension and develop critical reading skills. In the digital era, integrating educational technologies with classical reading instruction further enhances reading literacy development. For example, combining phonics instruction with interactive digital platforms promotes student engagement, adaptive learning pace, and individualized support — thereby fostering reading comprehension in early grades. Moreover, involving families and home environments in reading practices (shared reading, interactive e-books, storytelling) magnifies positive results, supporting continuity and motivation. Importantly, reading literacy education built on comprehension and critical engagement provides a foundation for higher-order thinking skills: analysis, synthesis, inference, evaluation. Studies indicate that when learners are taught to question text, interpret meaning, compare ideas, and reflect on content, their overall academic success, cognitive flexibility, and lifelong learning abilities improve.

III. Conclusion

Forming reading literacy in primary grades is one of the most important processes that lays the foundation for students' successful learning in subsequent stages. Active participation in reading, comprehending and analyzing texts, and applying them in real-life situations directly affect students' cognitive, speech, and social development. Research has shown that the "Know–Understand–Apply" stages of Bloom's taxonomy serve as an effective methodological basis for developing reading literacy in primary students. The "knowing" stage introduces students to the structural components of the text; the "understanding" stage helps them grasp the meaning and identify logical connections between events; and the "applying" stage enables independent thinking, real-life application of ideas, and the development of functional literacy. Tasks based on the taxonomy also increase students' interest in texts and develop their logical, creative, and critical thinking skills. This approach allows teachers to organize lessons systematically, define objectives clearly, and evaluate students' individual developmental dynamics. In line with international research requirements, the "Know–Understand–Apply" model is invaluable for developing students' abilities to analyze texts, draw conclusions, and provide evidence. This enhances the quality of primary education and prepares students to work with more complex texts in higher grades. In general, the methodology of developing reading literacy based on Bloom's taxonomy broadens primary students' thinking, forms conscious reading skills, and contributes to developing functionally literate individuals capable of meeting modern educational requirements.

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