

Textbook Evaluation: Exploring The Nature And Frequency Of Critical Thinking Questions In English Textbooks

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Abstract:

Background: Textbooks are at the core of any language teaching/ learning profession. They hold a paramount importance as official documents in the educational system and curriculum. Therefore, evaluating textbooks is deemed crucial to guarantee their efficacy and consistency with the goals defined in the pedagogical guidelines of teaching English as a foreign language in Morocco. The present study is an endeavor to explore closely the nature and frequency of critical thinking questions used in English textbooks, namely "Ticket 2 to English". The purpose of this study is also to investigate the extent to which the questions used in the four skills throughout "Ticket 2 to English" textbook develop students' higher order thinking skills. Also, of importance is to classify these questions into higher and lower order cognitive levels of thinking. Differently put, we will examine whether the questions included in the textbook in question trigger and boost students' overall critical thinking skills.

Materials and Methods: Our study is both exploratory and empirical. Data was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. As for our study sample, we randomly selected 3 units out of 10 from the textbook concerned, which represented 30% of the whole textbook. For data analysis and interpretation, we drew on content analysis method. Bloom's cognitive taxonomy revised version (2001) was adopted as a framework and a checklist for the assessment of the questions in the four skills. data was also analyzed through descriptive statistics.

Results: The findings revealed that more than 90% of the questions used throughout the four skills in the examined textbook target lower order cognitive and basic levels of thinking, namely remembering, understanding and applying. Overwhelming dominance of lower order questions were used across the board in the textbook.

Conclusion: Preponderance of lower order thinking skills (LOTS) over higher order thinking skills (HOTS) as well as lack of smooth transition from lower levels of thinking to higher ones.

Keywords: Textbook Evaluation, Critical Thinking Questions, Language Teaching/Learning, Bloom's Taxonomy.

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I. Introduction

Enhancing learners' Critical Thinking Skills (CTS) has become a primary objective in education overall, especially in the field of language teaching. It is widely agreed among educators worldwide that enabling twenty-first century learners to foster (CTS) is of utmost importance (Williams, Anderson, & Day, 2007). The aim is to educate proficient learners who can contribute productively as citizens and possess the necessary skills for their future labor market exigencies. Though the pedagogical guidelines stress the importance of instilling critical thinking skills in English textbooks in high schools, reality and close professional practice show that these textbooks could not develop higher order cognitive skills among Moroccan learners. Similarly, the Higher Council of Education, Training, and Scientific Research in Morocco acknowledges that the development of Critical Thinking Skills (CTS) among learners in Moroccan education is still lagging behind (Higher Council of Education, Training, and Scientific Research, 2014). English language teaching (ELT) in Morocco is not exempt from this trend. Several English language teachers argue that the existing ELT textbooks in Morocco have limited impact on fostering learners' advanced cognitive skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Enriching instructional materials with these skills (Bessick, 2008) can be a crucial impetus in promoting the development of learners' Critical Thinking Skills (CTS).

In the same vein, The Moroccan pedagogical guidelines (2007) emphasized the importance of developing critical thinking skills among Moroccan students, as it is stated in the guidelines “teachers should help learners to develop the ability to think through:

- Problem solving;
- Informed decision-making;
- Critical, creative, and analytical thinking” (The pedagogical guidelines, 2007, p. 6).

The pedagogical guidelines place a strong emphasis on cultivating critical thinking skills among students. According to these guidelines, teachers are encouraged to support learners in developing their capacity for problem solving, informed decision-making, and critical, creative, and analytical thinking. This underscores the magnitude of nurturing a reflective education that equips students with essential cognitive skills necessary for their personal and academic growth. Besides, the pedagogical guidelines encourage “using higher order skills such as selecting, analyzing, organizing, categorizing, evaluating, etc. to understand spoken texts.” However, our study clearly shows that the textbook examined gives priority to lower order thinking skills such as remembering, understanding, and applying at the expense of higher order thinking skills like analyzing, evaluating and creating.

This research aims to investigate the nature and frequency of critical thinking questions used in a specific English textbook entitled “Ticket 2 to English” for second-year baccalaureate students in Morocco and to what extent do these questions develop students’ critical thinking skills. The textbook was designed in 2007 by Moroccan authors (Hammani, M., Ahssen, S., & Tansaoui, L. 2007) for second-year baccalaureate students. The study is guided by two primary research questions:

RQ1: Do the questions used in “Ticket 2 to English” develop critical thinking skills among EFL learners in Morocco?

RQ2: To what extent do these questions promote higher order thinking skills among the learners?

The aim of the current study is to investigate the nature and frequency of questions used in an English textbook entitled “Ticket 2 to English”, with more focus on the hierarchical order of questions used in this textbook. The aim is also to detect the extent to which these questions trigger higher order cognitive skills among the Moroccan students.

II. Literature Review

Textbooks hold a strong position in the process of teaching and learning since they are considered as the main medium for imparting knowledge to learners. Sheldon (1988) highlights the importance of textbook evaluation in the field of English language teaching (ELT). Selecting a textbook is a significant decision for institutions and organizations, as it involves a considerable investment of resources such as time, money and effort. Rea-Dickens & Germaine (1992) stated that evaluation is an ongoing process which examines the appropriateness and suitability of a practice in use. It is an important tool for both instructors and materials designers as a key element in the development of amendments and modifications in the learning/teaching sphere. Nonetheless, despite its worthwhile role in fostering different aspects of teaching/ learning programs, evaluation is not given due importance and support as a project in teaching/ learning process (Hargreaves 1989). Thus, textbook evaluation’s usefulness as a key component of English language teaching is indisputable among educationalists, experts and practitioners in the realm of education.

Sheldon (1988) has presented several explanations for the assessment of textbooks. He proposes that choosing an English Language Teaching (ELT) textbook is often a significant decision for both educational and administrative purposes, with substantial professional, financial, or even political investment involved. Hence, conducting a comprehensive evaluation would allow the managerial and teaching staff of a particular institution or organization to differentiate among all the ELT textbooks available in the market (David, 2002).

Textbook evaluation refers to “the process of collecting and analyzing information about a textbook for the purposes of decision-making” (Es-Salhi & Elfatih, 2019). This operation can be implemented through 3 phases: *initial evaluation*, *detailed evaluation* and *in-use evaluation* (Grant, 1987). Besides, textbook evaluation uses methods such as the impressionistic, the in-depth and the checklist methods. Two Approaches to materials evaluation are to be mentioned: retrospective and predictive approaches.

According to Grant (1987) textbook evaluation consists of three phases: the first phase is called *initial evaluation* which lies in separating out obviously inappropriate materials. As a rule of thumb, it is not easy to evaluate a textbook in a limited lapse of time. In fact, it is a challenging task to implement. Sometimes, teachers are tempted by physical appearance and layout of some textbooks or by some publishers; they bring with them beautifully designed and fascinating textbooks and they ask them to quickly examine these textbooks and to come up with a decision. In such a situation, applying a test and abiding by textbook evaluation criteria and checklists is of great use. Answering a few questions about the components of the textbook in question to see if it is communicative? Does it respect the pedagogical guidelines? Does it foster critical thinking skills among learners? Is the layout and format of the textbook appropriate? The second phase of the process is the *detailed evaluation*.

The third phase is the *in-use evaluation* which is an ongoing process as it is only through continuous evaluation that one can guarantee that the teacher is the master of his own rather than a slave to the confinements of the textbook.

Abdelwahab (2013) mentioned three fundamental methods for textbook evaluation. The first is named the impressionistic method and it entails analyzing a textbook on the grounds of a general impression. The latter would be obtained by examining the blurb and the contents page and then skimming through the coursebook to feel a sense of cohesion and coherence among topics, visuals, layout and organization. This method is not appropriate in itself but it can prove its efficiency when combined with the second method which is called the checklist method. The latter is characterized by a systematic approach where the criteria on the list are examined in a specific order. It allows for straightforward comparisons between different materials and is relatively time-efficient compared to alternative methods. The third method, the in-depth method, proposes a meticulous examination of representative features such as the design of specific unit or activity, or the conception of a given language component. One clear drawback of this method is that the selected section may not accurately represent the entire textbook. For the current study, the second method was employed.

According to Ellis (1997), two types of materials evaluation can be identified: predictive evaluation and retrospective evaluation. Predictive evaluation involves making a decision on which materials to use based on their suitability for predetermined purposes. On the other hand, retrospective evaluation occurs after the materials have been utilized to assess their effectiveness in achieving the predetermined purposes. It is obvious from these definitions that both predictive and retrospective evaluations intend to enhance the effectiveness of the teaching and learning environment. However, for the current study, only retrospective evaluation was employed.

When selecting a textbook, various factors need to be considered. McGrath (2002) identified several learner and teacher factors to consider. Learner factors include age range, proficiency level in the target language, reasons for studying the language, and gender distribution. Additionally, learner needs such as dialect, language skills, language systems (grammar, vocabulary, phonology), and mechanics (spelling, punctuation) are important. Teacher factors encompass language and methodological competence, teaching awareness, and experience. It's also important to gather information about the institution and the specific program, including educational level, class size, program objectives, syllabus, and more. Similarly, Skierso (1991) suggests establishing necessary information about students, teachers, and institutions before beginning the evaluation process. Like McGrath, she recommends an initial evaluation or survey to eliminate unsuitable textbooks.

Providing a definition for Critical Thinking (CT) can be a challenging undertaking due to the elusive nature of the concept. Furthermore, CT is a subject of interest and research in various fields such as philosophy, cognitive psychology, and education. A thorough examination of existing literature on CT reveals a diverse array of definitions. For instance, Butterworth & Thwaites (2013) propose that "CT is a fair and open-minded, active and informed, sceptical, and independent process" (pp. 8-9). The definition provided by Butterworth and Thwaites (2013) highlights several important aspects of critical thinking. By emphasizing fairness and open-mindedness, it suggests that critical thinking involves approaching information and ideas without bias or preconceived notions. The mention of being active and informed implies that critical thinking requires actively engaging with and seeking knowledge about a subject before forming judgments or conclusions. The inclusion of skepticism indicates the importance of questioning assumptions, seeking evidence, and evaluating arguments critically. Lastly, the emphasis on independence suggests that critical thinking involves relying on one's own reasoning and analysis rather than relying solely on others' opinions and viewpoints.

Nakkam & Khamoja (2020) examined the reading comprehension questions used in the EFL coursebook in Morocco, entitled "Ticket 2 to English" and "Gateway to English 2". This paper sought to work out the extent to which higher order questions are imbued in reading comprehension questions. This study draws on a descriptive quantitative design. The researchers opted for this method to assess reading comprehension questions and examine the frequency of high order questions using Bloom's taxonomy. The researchers used the pre- and post-reading questions of "Ticket 2 to English" textbook as a source of data. A checklist was employed based on Bloom's taxonomy to evaluate the cognitive domains of the reading comprehension questions. The data was analyzed using coding categories such as knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. The results gleaned show that 77% of the questions in "Ticket 2 to English" and 84.12% in "Gateway to English 2" are grouped as lower-order questions. We can infer that the two coursebooks failed to develop higher order thinking skills via reading comprehension questions.

Likewise, Jebbour (2019) investigated the existence of elements of critical thinking in a Moroccan coursebook of English "Ticket 2 to English". His research question was framed as follows: what critical thinking (CT) elements can be found in "Ticket 2 to English?". This textbook was chosen as a case study to gauge the demonstration of critical thinking in "Ticket 2 to English"; content analysis was employed as a research method for this study. A checklist based on Bloom's taxonomy was developed to see whether the elements of CT are found in the textbook: the cognitive domain of Bloom's taxonomy, cognitive maturity, problem solving, critical thinking, the dispositions of inquisitiveness, open-mindedness, and thought-seeking. Descriptive analysis was

used as the key procedure to examine the textbook. The analysis of the textbook was done by recording instructions and tasks that strengthen the inclusion (exclusion) of CT. results revealed that the textbook in question contained the bulk of skills found in Bloom's taxonomy, key critical thinking dispositions, and a few activities for instructing CT. However, textbook designers are called on to supplement textbooks of the English language with additional materials and to implement novel teaching materials and practices to help foster students' level of critical thinking.

Es-salhi & Elfatih (2019) used a mixed method design to evaluate critical thinking skills (CTS) in a Moroccan textbook of English entitled "Gateway to English 2" adopting Bloom's taxonomy as a framework. Added to this, a survey is run to examine the attitudes and perceptions of a cohort of Moroccan high school teachers vis-à-vis critical thinking skills and their incorporation in the aforesaid textbook. Three instruments were utilized to gather data: content analysis, document analysis, and a questionnaire. The findings showed that the used textbook targeted mostly lower order thinking skills, especially comprehension and application.

Similarly, Mrah (2017) investigated to what extent EFL textbooks support learners build skills in compliance with the modern era requirements of the twenty-first century skills. It sought to evaluate the efficacy of "Ticket 2 to English" textbook series regarding how well they trigger critical thinking and problem-solving among learners. The study used content analysis as a research method for data analysis and interpretation. The analysis was conducted to describe the types and levels of questions employed in reading comprehension activities and to investigate cases of higher order thinking skills. The researcher assessed the questions based on Bloom's revisited taxonomy of learning objectives. Results show that the majority of the questions targeted the three lower-cognitive levels of the taxonomy. The findings gleaned testify that the examined textbooks do not efficiently qualify students to be independent lifelong critical thinkers, thus the necessity for a rethinking of EFL textbooks in Moroccan secondary schools.

Laabidi & Nfissi (2016) investigated Moroccan teachers' attitudes on the EFL textbook named "Visa to the world", which is designed for common core high school students in Morocco. The study intends to evaluate the effectiveness of the textbook, which was suggested by the Moroccan ministry of national education as an instructional coursebook for high school students. The researchers plan to highlight teachers' attitudes towards the textbook and assess its effectiveness based on seven main criteria: the physical appearance and format of the textbook, the accompanying materials, the content and topics covered, the exercises and the activities, cultural presentation, the four language skills and the language methods used in the textbook. A questionnaire was used as a data collection instrument. A total number of the participants 50 teachers of English. Findings revealed that the teachers' perceptions and attitudes about the textbook are negative in general.

Igharia (2013) investigated a study that analyzed the cognitive level of wh-questions in the English language textbook "Horizons" for ninth grade students in mixed ability classes. The study aimed to determine the variety of cognitive levels represented by the wh-questions according to Bloom's taxonomy and to investigate whether the textbook aids students in developing cognitive skills. The study conducted content analysis of the six study units in the textbook and analyzed the questions according to low and high order thinking skills. The results showed that the majority of questions emphasized lower order thinking skills, with fewer questions emphasizing higher order thinking skills.

Finally, Assaly & Smadi (2015) aimed at assessing the cognitive levels of the reading questions used in "Master class" textbook. The researchers adopted a checklist based on Bloom's taxonomy as an instrument to classify the cognitive levels of these questions. Proper statistics are also employed to rank the cognitive levels of the comprehension questions. The findings revealed that the author of "Master Class" stressed the cognitive level of comprehension featuring 52% of the questions, while pointed out only 3.7% and 6% of the questions on the cognitive levels of knowledge and application. The frequency of questions corresponding to the cognitive levels of evaluation and analysis were roughly closer to the expected frequencies. The results demonstrated that about 40% of the textbooks questions fostered higher order thinking skills.

III. Materials and Methods

Study Design: This exploratory research adopted a mixed method design to evaluate the content of Moroccan ELT textbook, currently used in teaching the twelfth-grade students in public schools, namely "Ticket 2 to English". In this study, Content Analysis (CA) method was used as the primary research method for data analysis and interpretation. The textbook was analyzed to explore the nature and frequency of critical thinking questions in English textbook, and the extent to which these questions promote higher order critical thinking skills among the students. Krippendorf (2004) defined content analysis as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts to the contexts of their use" (p.18). Content Analysis is a valuable research technique utilized to statistically manage substantial amounts of textual data and methodically discern features or attributes (Patton, 2002).

Study Location: This study is based on an evaluation of a textbook that is used to teach English in some Moroccan public high schools.

Study Duration: March 2023 to May 2023.

Procedure methodology

The researchers built a checklist method based on Bloom’s revised taxonomy (2001) of learning objectives as a criterion for the evaluation process of the questions used in the four skills throughout the three units examined. This checklist was the instrument used to categorize the cognitive levels of these questions as Bloom’s taxonomy helps educators develop critical thinking and higher order cognitive abilities in students. This method has been used to analyze and classify questions used in “Ticket 2 to English” into lower order and higher order critical thinking questions. The quantitative analysis was conducted through the frequencies and percentages of occurrences of items in the data. The purpose of the quantitative analysis was to identify whether the number of the questions examined promote higher order cognitive skills among the students. To this end, a systematic random sample was utilized to ensure a fair representation of the data and avoid bias in the selection of the study’s sample. Three units out of ten were randomly selected (about 30% of the total number of units). Data were subjected to analysis through descriptive statistics.

To gather data, we made an inventory of the questions used throughout three units, namely unit 1, unit 3 and unit 9 in the textbook in question. Then a content analysis based on Bloom’s taxonomy was used to investigate “Ticket 2 to English” textbook. The information collected is organized into categories related to the two research questions guiding this study. In other words, the information is organized according to the six cognitive skills following Bloom’s taxonomy. We align the questions collected with Bloom’s descriptive verbs and then classify these questions into the corresponding cognitive level of thinking. Descriptive statistics made it possible to describe and summarize data collected in a meaningful way through the use of a table and graphical representations.

Statistical analysis

Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS (version 20) and Excel.

IV. Result

Table 1 Display of cognitive levels in the four skills in “Ticket 2 to English” textbook

Four skills	Frequency	Percentage
Reading		
Remember	7	26,9
Understand	14	53,8
Apply	3	11,5
Analyze	0	0,0
Evaluate	1	3,8
Create	1	3,8
Listening		
Remember	14	53,8
Understand	8	30,8
Apply	2	7,7
Analyze	1	3,8
Evaluate	1	3,8
Create	0	0,0
Speaking		
Remember	6	35,3
Understand	8	47,1
Apply	0	0,0
Analyze	2	11,8
Evaluate	1	5,9
Create	0	0,0
Writing		
Remember	10	71,4
Understand	1	7,1
Apply	3	21,4
Analyze	0	0,0
Evaluate	0	0,0
Create	0	0,0

The findings in table 1 above show high frequency of the three first skills of remember, understand and apply throughout the three units analyzed in “Ticket 2 to English” textbook. On the contrary, analyze, evaluate and create are less frequent. According to the frequencies observed, we conclude that lower order thinking skills are the most dominant, while the higher order thinking skills, which represent critical thinking are the least dominant. The bulk of the four skills analyzed throughout the three units places a considerable emphasis on lower order thinking skills, namely remembering (46.85%), understanding (34.7%) and applying (10.15%). while higher order thinking skills such as analyzing (3.9%), evaluating (3.37%) and creating (1%) are not being developed. The examined textbook does not effectively enable learners to be autonomous lifelong critical learners.

Table 2 Display of receptive skills frequencies in “Ticket 2 to English” textbook

Cognitive Level	Frequency	Percentage
Remember	21	40,4
Understand	22	42,3
Apply	5	9,6
Analyze	1	1,9
Evaluate	2	3,8
Create	1	1,9

Table 2 above clearly shows that the questions examined in the receptive skills (reading and listening) throughout the three units in “Ticket 2 to English” give importance to lower order thinking skills, namely remembering (40.4%), understanding (42.3%), and applying (9.6%). Higher order thinking skills represented by analyzing (1.9%), evaluating (3.8%) and creating (1.9%) were only deemed minor importance. Differently put, more than 90% of the questions used in the receptive skills only target lower order cognitive skills, while less than 10% of these questions barely touch upon higher order thinking skills. Overall, the table provides an overview of the distribution of cognitive levels and highlights the predominant focus on remembering, understanding and applying in the given context, with relatively fewer instances of higher-level cognitive tasks such as analysis, evaluation, and creation.

Table 3 Productive skills’ frequencies in “Ticket 2 to English”

Cognitive Level	Frequency	Valid Percent
Remember	16	51,6
Understand	9	29,0
Apply	3	9,7
Analyze	2	6,5
Evaluate	1	3,2
Create	0	0,0

Table 3 demonstrates that the questions tackled in the productive skills (speaking and writing) in the three units in consideration lend themselves to lower order cognitive levels of thinking, namely remembering (51.6%), understanding (29%), and applying (9.7%). Higher order thinking skills, however, are only depicted by (6.5%) in analyzing, (3.2%) in evaluating and (0%) in creating, respectively. In other words, (90.3%) of the questions found in the productive skills place emphasis on lower order thinking skills and (9.7%) of these questions aim for higher order critical skills. All in all, the table reveals again the predominance of lower cognitive levels of thinking over higher order level ones across the board in the textbook in question.

V. Discussion

RQ1: Do the questions used in “Ticket 2 to English” develop critical thinking skills among EFL learners in Morocco?

The current study’s findings obviously reveal that lower order thinking skills (remembering, understanding and applying) are predominantly prevalent in “Ticket 2 to English”. These cognitive levels really take the lion’s share in the three units investigated. Though the Moroccan pedagogical guidelines stress the importance of promoting other critical thinking skills such as problem solving, conceptualizing, system making, informed decision-making and logical reasoning, their existence in “Ticket 2 to English” is restricted or almost inexistent. The textbook examined does not foster students’ critical thinking abilities as mentioned in the pedagogical guidelines. The careful examination of the textbook has shown the contrary. Added to that, we can deduce that an overwhelming majority of the questions used in these units do not target principally the

development of lower order cognitive levels of thinking (remembering, understanding and applying). The textbook investigated could not cater for the requirements of fostering higher order critical skills of analyzing, evaluating and creating. That said, this textbook does not seem to help students engage in in-depth learning experiences conducive to developing their critical thinking skills that move them up from knowledge levels to higher level thinking skills. One last remark is that we notice consistency in the results throughout the four skills examined across the three units in question.

RQ2: To what extent do these questions promote higher order thinking skills among the learners?

The study also reveals that the textbook examined prioritizes lower order thinking skills (LOTS) over higher order thinking skills (HOTS). This is illustrated by the fact that LOTS questions represent more than 90% of the units evaluated. HOTS, on the other hand, account only for less than 10%. Overall, these numbers show the dominance of basic cognitive levels of thinking, which do not enable students to boost their own critical thinking skills and logical reasoning. Also, the results obtained testify that the examined textbook does not effectively enable learners to be autonomous lifelong critical learners, hence the need for a reconsideration of EFL textbooks in Moroccan high schools. Another interesting finding in the study is that there is absence of smooth transition from lower order thinking skills into higher order thinking skills. In other words, we do not feel a hierarchical order in the development of critical thinking questions. Most of the four skills examined tend to focus on what happened instead of questioning why or how it happened. As such, students' mental processes operate according to Bloom's bottom three low order thinking skills (remembering, understanding, and applying) rather than trying to explain and reflect on beliefs, actions and experiences.

The aforementioned findings support the conclusions of previous research conducted in Morocco and elsewhere. The studies conducted by the Moroccan researchers (Essalhi & Ffatihi, 2019; Jebbour, 2019; Mrah, 2017) align with the results obtained in this study. After evaluating second year baccalaureate textbooks, the researchers concluded that Moroccan ELT textbooks do not foster high order thinking skills. Elsewhere, Igbaria (2013) found out that the majority of questions emphasized lower order thinking skills, with fewer questions emphasizing higher order thinking skills. All in all, the bulk of the studies examined found out that ELT textbooks employed in Moroccan high school institutions focus mainly on the first three cognitive levels of critical thinking, the second three levels are mostly marginalized.

VI. Conclusion

The current study attempted to explore the nature and frequency of critical thinking questions used in "Ticket 2 to English" and the extent to which these questions develop students' critical thinking skills. The aim in the Moroccan pedagogical guidelines is to develop students' critical thinking, problem solving and decision-making and many more other skills. However, the authors of this textbook place emphasis mainly on the lower thinking processes of remembering, understanding and applying. In this regard, teachers are requested to provide supplementary materials to compensate for the lacunae in this textbook and cover the HOTS among students.

Several recommendations are made by the authors of this study: the questions in textbooks for English instruction must be designed carefully and more focus should be laid on questions that encourage higher order thinking skills among twenty-first century students. English Inspectors should also organize workshops to train teachers on how to enhance students' thinking skills as well as train textbook authors how to design all levels of questions. It is important to engage educators who possess the necessary expertise in question formulation when creating textbooks. Similarly, to ensure a diverse range of perspectives and question styles, textbooks should ideally be authored by multiple authors.

Concerning future research, the authors suggest an array of recommendations: other textbooks used to teach English in high schools in Morocco should also be analyzed to come up with more generalizations about critical thinking questions in these textbooks. Furthermore, it is essential to conduct further studies that investigate the nature and level of questions utilized by teachers in their classes. A survey to be administered to students and teachers is highly needed as it may uncover more valuable results on textbook evaluation. English language teachers need to provide enrichment materials, with more tasks that cover higher order thinking skills.

This study sought to explore the content of Moroccan ELT textbooks in terms of their incorporation of the critical thinking skills required in the twenty-first century. The objective was to examine the extent to which "Ticket 2 to English" textbooks currently utilized in second year baccalaureate foster students' higher order critical thinking skills that facilitate the development of essential skills for the modern era. Additionally, the study proposed recommendations for future textbooks to enhance their content by incorporating more advanced critical thinking questions and activities that target higher order thinking skills (HOTS) in teaching. The findings of the content analysis conducted on "Ticket 2 to English" reveal the preponderance of LOTS over HOTS across the board throughout the three units examined. These results suggest the need for EFL curriculum designers and language teachers to include appropriate tasks and activities that not only enhance learners' lower order critical thinking skills but also foster their higher order critical thinking abilities.

Overall, the outcomes of this study could be valuable for both EFL curriculum designers and language teachers, providing insights into incorporating suitable higher order thinking questions and tasks that effectively develop learners' critical thinking skills, logical reasoning and problem-solving strategies.

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