CRITICAL THINKING TASKS MANIFESTED IN THE INDONESIAN MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE AUTHORIZED EFL TEXTBOOK

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Abstract	Article Information
Critical thinking becomes a fundamental goal of higher education. Thus, critical thinking is a crucial competence in learning a foreign language. For this reason, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks support EFL learners and encourage their critical thinking ability. The present content analysis research investigates to what extent critical thinking is implemented in the EFL textbook used by senior high school students in Indonesia. It mainly determines whether the tasks in the EFL textbook promote students' critical thinking skills. The Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture (MONEC) authorizes the analysis of the EFL textbook. Freeman's critical thinking framework was used for the analytic categories. The findings found that the textbook promoted critical thinking from the affected aspect rather than the content and language questions in Freeman's framework. Moreover, the activities in the textbook mostly focused on how students delivered their responses to the topic in the EFL textbook. The findings recommend promoting critical thinking through affect questions, which has been considered one of the educational objectives in this country; textbook developers need to generate more tasks endorsing critical thinking in content and language. Furthermore, EFL teachers must be trained to vary the tasks that can encourage students' critical thinking skills.	

INTRODUCTION

In 2022, the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) with PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) reported that from 80 countries, Indonesia was 69th based on the quality of schools' educational resources. The PISA result

shows that Indonesia is still struggling to develop their education. One of the reasons Indonesia has a low score on PISA is because of the low critical thinking students' ability. Critical thinking (CT) becomes a fundamental goal of higher education, a crucial competence in foreign language (FL) learning, and a core lifelong skill, it is paramount to give it careful attention and to find different ways to foster it (Djamàa, 2018).

Critical thinking is part of Western education. It first advances attention during the digital era in which technology rapidly developed and freedom of speech and expression began (Lawton & Gordon, 2002). Nowadays, critical thinking also influences non-Western countries. The importance of critical thinking has become the reason for its adoption in education. Some studies in non-Western countries investigate the implementation of critical thinking in education. Some non-Western countries such as Malaysia (Salih, 2010), Singapore (Matthews & Lally, 2010), and Taiwan (Yang & Gamble, 2013) have publically stated the combination of critical thinking in their education system. With critical thinking popularity implemented in non-Western countries, many studies on critical thinking have been conducted in those nations, for example, Iran (Fahim & Nasrollahi-Mouziraji, 2013), Turkey (Korkmaz & Karakus, 2009), and Oman (Tuzlukova, Al Busaidi, & Burns, 2017)

The 2013 Curriculum has been developed since MONEC (Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia) released the 2013 Curriculum as a national curriculum 2013 for the first time. Widodo (2016) stated that the 2013 ELT Curriculum aims to prepare Indonesian students to become citizens who are religious, productive, innovative, and passionate, as well as who can contribute to societal, national, and global civilizations. The 2013 Curriculum highlights national education qualities to prepare individuals with hard and soft skills (e.g., English skills and values). Therefore, school graduates are expected to become global citizens who are capable of thinking creatively to make contributions at both national and international levels. Widodo (2019) stated that textbooks have always played an essential role in implementing a new curriculum. Guided by textbooks, teachers can manage teaching materials and utilize them in in-class and out-of-class activities. In implementing the 2013 ELT Curriculum, all schools have been instructed to use the authorized English textbook, *Bahasa Inggris* (English Language), published by the MONEC. This textbook aims to support the implementation of educational value as the main feature of the 2013 ELT Curriculum.

Epstein (2006) explained that critical thinking involves evaluation, specifically to be convinced that some statement is correct or some argument is good. Browne and Keeley (2007) consider that critical thinking contains an awareness of a set of interrelated critical questions, plus the ability and willingness to ask and answer them appropriately. Paul and Elder (2008) define critical thinking as the art of analyzing and evaluating thinking to improve it. Halpern (2003) also said critical thinking describes purposeful, reasoned, and goal-focused thinking. In education, critical thinking can help to encourage more in-depth learning. This happens because students are motivated to receive the information as it is and to question it. Besides this, critical thinking must be taught to students to make them compete effectively for educational opportunities, jobs, recognition, and rewards in today's world (Nickerson, 1987, p. 30). Critical thinking is not only taught by teachers but also represented

through textbooks. There is limited research that investigates critical thinking in EFL textbooks. To analyse the content of critical in EFL textbook, the study used the framework of Freeman.

Freeman (2014) introduced a taxonomy to examine question types and tasks in EFL textbooks, categorizing them into content, language, and affect questions. Content questions encompass textually explicit, textually implicit, and inferential comprehension types, promoting critical thinking by integrating background knowledge with textual information. Affect questions, including personal response and evaluation types, align with Bloom's taxonomy, encouraging students to express opinions with reasoning. Language questions involve reorganization, lexical, and form types, requiring sequence restructuring, word meaning inference, and grammar focus. These categories facilitate critical thinking development by prompting students to engage with the text, justify viewpoints, and analyze language structures.

The studies show that non-Western students critical thinking skills can be enhanced, and the teaching of critical thinking in those countries has the potential to be conducted, questioning the notion that teaching critical thinking in non-Western countries might be challenging since they have different cultures (Atkinson, 1997). Although the previous studies showed that critical thinking could be successful in non-Western countries, they did not explain to what extent critical thinking has been implemented in non-Western education, especially the implementation of critical thinking in school textbooks. Studies on the textbooks are still uncommon; to date, only three studies (Birjandi & Alizadeh, 2013; Ilyas, 2015; Solihati & Hikmat, 2018) have investigated how critical thinking is represented. However, two studies explored critical thinking in English textbooks in the context of EFL (English as a Foreign Language). There has been limited discussion about adopting critical thinking into English language textbooks, especially in non-Western education settings. This study investigates the elements of critical thinking incorporated into English textbooks used by senior secondary school students in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design was content analysis. Thus, this research uses the qualitative method. Some research methodology authors argue for the advantages of content analysis. They have a similar opinion that texts contain some information with a specific intention. Meanwhile, the data of the texts provided are permanent, revealing the intended meaning of the data - which is the objective of content analysis - and can be a cost-effective, transparent, and flexible method that can be easily replicated.

The writers focus on investigating the tasks promoting critical thinking in the textbook. The textbook analyzed for this research was the EFL textbook entitled *Bahasa Inggris untuk SMA Kelas X* [English for Senior High School Grade X], published by the MONEC in 2014. The textbook was authored by a team of ELT textbook developers accustomed to ELT practices in Indonesia. Since the textbook is nationally used, it is available and can freely be downloaded from the MONEC website. To guarantee the quality of the textbook, it was also

peer-reviewed by a board of Indonesian experts in ELT. These readers are also university members who are used to discussing ELT contexts in Indonesia.

FINDINGS

In the Findings section, summarize the collected data and the analysis performed on those data relevant to the issue that is to follow. The Findings should be clear and concise. It should be written objectively and factually and without expressing personal opinion. It includes numbers, tables, and figures (e.g., charts and graphs). Number tables and figures consecutively by their appearance in the text.

Table: 1 The Result of Critical Thinking Potrayed in EFL Textbook

Freeman's Framework	Total of the task	Percentage
Content Question:		
Textually Explicit	5	5%
Textually Implicit	3	3%
Inference Question	3	3%
Language Question:		
Reorganization	7	7%
Lexicon	22	21%
Form	14	13%
Affect Question:		
Personal Response	33	31%
Evaluation	19	18%
		3
Total	106	

As Table 1 reveals, there were 106 tasks within the Indonesian textbooks used by senior secondary school students. All the tasks are represented to foster the students' skills in English. There are speaking, listening, writing, and reading. Moreover, pronunciation and grammar activities make the students understand clearly. According to Freeman (2014), there are three main aspects of critical thinking which are content, language, and affect aspect. The curriculum of 2013 aims to boost the students' critical thinking. The government document has not declared the critical thinking percentages or kinds of critical thinking that should be included in the textbooks. Furthermore, the categories of critical thinking represented in the EFL textbook were not distributed equally in the text.

Content Aspect

Table: 2 The Result of Content Aspect

Content Question		
Textually Explicit	5 activities	5%
Textually Implicit	3 activities	3%
Inference Question	3 activities	3%

Content aspects about the textually explicit, textually implicit, and inference question are discussed. Based on the results of the writers' content analysis, the distribution of those questions is not the same. There were 5 % textually explicit, 3% textually implicit, and 3 % inference questions in the textbook. The aspect that mostly appears is textually explicit questions. This kind of question does not promote critical thinking because the answers are already found in the text. The examples of textually explicit are in the following:

Answer the following questions briefly

1. *How does Hannah contact Alila? Is there anybody introducing Hannah to Alia?*

2. *Does Hannah want to be Alia's friend?*

3. *Where does Hannah study?*

Both textually implicit and inference questions have the same percentage in the textbook. There are 3% of the tasks contain textually implicit and inference questions. The percentage is less than the textually explicit, although both textually implicit and inference questions promote critical thinking. The difference between textually explicit and implicit is the vocabulary used in the text and the question. In textually explicit, the question has the same vocabulary as the text. So it will be easier for the students to find the answer.

It is different from the textually implicit question. The vocabulary used in the question is different from the stated sentence in the text. The students need to analyze the question and the answer in the text. They need to comprehend what is being asked from the question. It measures how well they can understand a sentence with different vocabularies.

The inference question is also represented limitedly in the textbook, although how to infer the question does promote critical thinking. In this inference question, the answer is not specified explicitly in the text but alluded to. The students have to collaborate their background knowledge with the provided information in the text and make the related connections. It aims to capture the need for the students to comprehend what is not written but what is inferred. In this category, the student combines their knowledge base and personal experiences with the information presented in the text to arrive at the answer.

Based on the analysis of a 3% percentage in the inference question, it seems that the curriculum developers do not focus on how the students infer the passage. Although the 2013 curriculum focuses on how students become critical, the reading passages in the textbook do not support the goal of the curriculum. The analysis results show that the curriculum developers

should add more activities/tasks emphasizing the inference question to make the students practice and comprehend more about inferencing a text. Regarding content, the activities in the textbook do not promote critical thinking significantly. The total of each aspect in the content question needed to be improved. The inference question is the most important aspect that needs to be improved. The inference is important in their critical thinking skills list (Norris and Ennis in Ilyas, 2015).

Language Aspect

Table: 3 The Result of Language Aspect

Language Question		
Reorganization	7 activities	7%
Lexical	22 activities	21%
Form	14 activities	13%

The language category involves question types that require students to *do* something with the information or language. The three question types of this category are reorganization, lexical, and form. *Reorganization,* which explains *reordering* information in the text (e.g., putting events in chronological order) or *transferring* information/language from the text into a chart or table; *Lexical* q-types, which focus on *vocabulary* (e.g., guessing the meaning of a word from its context in the passage); and *Form* q-types, which focus on *grammar* (e.g., identifying/justifying the use of one tense rather than another).

When we examine the three different Language q-types (*Reorganization, Lexical*, and *Form*), the occurrence and frequency graphs in Table 3 inform us that the most dominant is the lexical aspect among the three aspects. Comparing the aspect with the other categories, we can also figure out in the table that *Lexical* question types occur in 22 activities. The second dominant aspect is form. The form is related to grammatical function. Some activities allow the students to compose a specific grammatical thing, as in the following example.

Participles (pp 100)

*All over the globe are historical mysteries left to us by the ancient world – **lost civilizations, abandoned cities, and puzzling monuments.***

Study the following examples.

lost civilizations *= civilizations which are lost*

abandoned cities *= cities which are abandoned*

puzzling monuments *= monuments which are puzzling*

boring classes *= classes which are boring*

bored students *= students who are bored*

annoyed people *= people who are annoyed*

exhausted workers = workers who are exhausted

Do like the examples

1. *annoying noise*

2. *annoyed people*

3. *exhausting work*

4. *exhausted workers*

5. *embarrassing experience*

6. *embarrassed people*

7. *a frustrating situation*

8. *frustrated learners*

Classify the words from the above exercise into the categories below.

Past (V-3)	*Present (V-ing)*
Annoyed	*Annoying*

Affect Aspect

Table: 4 The Result of Affect Aspect

Affect Question		
Personal Response	33 activities	31%
Evaluation	19 activities	18%

The Affect aspect is the most common aspect of the result of analysis in the textbook. The percentage of affect aspect contains the highest score. The Affect category covers question types that need various kinds of engagement with responses or reactions about the material in the textbook. This category is divided into two question types which are personal response and evaluation. The percentage of personal responses (31%) is higher than the evaluation (18%). The result shows the focus of the aspect that the textbook developer wants the students to learn. The textbook developer tries to pay attention to how the students engage in the material by expressing their personal response.

The personal response is not about the certainty of the answer. Moreover, the answers could be different, and there is no right or wrong answer as long as they are able and can explain their opinions related to the material that is being discussed (Solihati, 2018). That is the reason and the main focus of the critical thinking aspect, which is dominant in this textbook. Personal response can build students' confidence in giving and elaborating their preference for the issue. Furthermore, it will give them chances to become autonomous learners.

As explained before, thinking independently is one of the criteria of critical thinkers (Ruggiero, 2012). Furthermore, Indonesian teachers must expand and vary the tasks to reading and other skills, such as speaking. Personal response is more superficial than evaluation. Personal response aims for the students to express their opinions freely and independently. It requires the student's willingness to express a purely personal point of view when discussing an issue in the textbook, such as preference, surprise, or amusement, to which there can be no correct answer.

The second category, *Evaluation*, requires a deeper, more considered response to the text, with some kind of judgment or assessment, and involves the reader applying criteria to support or justify their answer. Evaluation is the second aspect, and the percentage is quite high (18%). Evaluation needs to be given to the students to make them apply what they have learned, such as giving judgments on the task by using their understanding. It can encourage the students to be critical because they will answer the tasks with evidence of their understanding. The point is how they can prove and give the answer critically.

DISCUSSION

The result of Freeman's Framework in ELT Textbook Authorized by MONEC
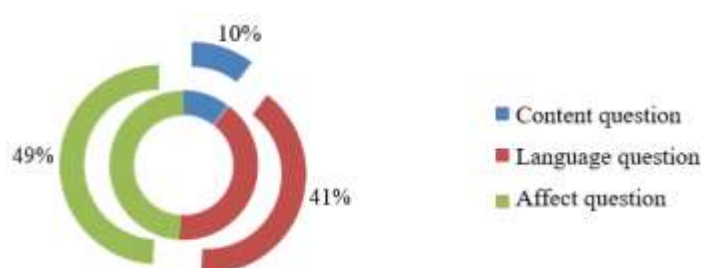
The result of this study was that the book promoted critical thinking. It differs from Solihati's (2018) study in that the EFL book does not contain many critical thinking tasks. Only 17 % of the book endorsed critical thinking. Moreover, the result has a different finding from Ilyas (2015. The finding from Ilyas's research was, aside from textually explicit questions, which may not promote students' critical thinking, that the textbooks contained a few questions that have the potential to facilitate the teaching of critical thinking skills. In the writers' research, the textually explicit questions are only 5% of the tasks in the EFL textbook. Accordingly, the textbook already contains more critical thinking tasks. Ilyas found that the most dominant task in his research was textually implicit. On the other hand, in the present study, personal response is the most common task in the textbook.

Based on the diagram above, the general aspects of Freeman's framework in the textbook are content, language, and affect questions. As explained before in detailed form, the most dominant aspect is the personal response in the affected aspect. Overall, the affect question is the first position in which the percentage is 49% of the activities in the textbook. The second is the language question, which is 41 % of all the activities in the textbook. The last

is the content question, which the percentage is only 10% of the whole activities in the textbook. The percentage result is based on Freeman's analysis of the critical thinking framework. There will be a reason why the percentage of each aspect is different. The more dominant an aspect, the more exposure the textbook writer tends to emphasize. The affect question is the most dominant aspect of activities in the textbook. So, the goal is to make the students able and enthusiastic to express their ideas. The textbook contains many personalization topics to encourage them to speak or write their personal response. The examples are in the following.

Task 3:

What do you need to consider before visiting a place? Destination? Budget? Safety? Usefulness? Time? Discuss with your friends. (pp 35)

At the end of this chapter, ask yourself the following questions to know how effective your learning process is.

> 1. *What have you learned from this chapter?*
>
> 2. *Have you been able to do all the exercises here?*
>
> 3. *What is your plan to improve your ability in congratulating others? (pp 53)*

CONCLUSION

Critical thinking is one of the objectives of the 2013 curriculum in Indonesia. Critical thinking is the art of analyzing and evaluating thinking to improve it. Critical thinking can be implemented in every skill in EFL. The textbook is a learning source designed based on the curriculum of MONEC (Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia). The study revealed the critical thinking portrayed in the EFL textbook authorized by MONEC. The result of the textbook analysis by using Freeman's framework is that the textbook does not vary the critical thinking proportion. The most dominant aspect is the aspect of effect, which is 49%. The percentage is analyzed from the textbook's portion of activities or tasks. The affect aspect percentage is the highest among the language (41%) and content aspect (10%). The most dominant task is a personal response. A personal response is part of the affect aspect that aims to encourage the students to express their ideas, thoughts, and opinions about the material that is being discussed. The proportion of personal response tasks is aimed at motivating the students because this kind of task does not emphasize the correct and wrong answers. Every answer is acceptable because the student is only asked to deliver their opinion. This is one of the critical thinking aspects that can boost the students' confidence to criticize some issues. Furthermore, this study's result is used to evaluate the textbook authorized by the MONEC and the textbook developer. The other important aspect that needs to be added is the inference question aspect.

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