

'HOTS' in Reading Comprehension Questions of English Textbook for Secondary School (Revised Bloom's Taxonomy study)

Sri Mujayanah¹, Dewi Rosaria Indah², Apsari Fajar Prihantini³, Yulis Setyowati⁴

^{1,2,3}Faculty STKIP Bina Insan Mandiri, Surabaya, Indonesia

⁴Universitas Wijaya Putra, Surabaya, Indonesia

srijaya558@gmail.com, dewirosaria@stkipbim.ac.id, apsari@stkipbim.ac.id, yulissetyowati@uwp.ac.id

Abstract

The objective of this research was to picture out the implementation of the three up levels of the cognitive domain of revised Bloom's Taxonomy used in the reading comprehension questions of Complete English for Cambridge Secondary 1, namely analyzing level, evaluating level, and creating level. Using the descriptive qualitative method, this study examined the questions in the reading comprehension questions of the Complete English for Cambridge Secondary 1 published by Oxford University Press – Oxford, United Kingdom, in 2016, arranged by Dean Roberts, Jane Arredondo, Annabel Charles, Alan Jenkins, & Tony Parkinson to categorize the reading comprehension questions into HOTS levels. A Revised Bloom's taxonomy-based checklist was utilized to gather, list, and classify these questions according to their cognitive levels. Then, for each level, the percentages were computed and finally described in account paragraphs. The findings of this study confirmed that Oxford University Press is a creditable publisher which accommodates HOTS in reading comprehension exercises based on the revised Bloom Taxonomy. The result showed that the most dominant level in the textbook was higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) was analyzing level in 50%. Then the evaluation reached 30% and creating reached got 20%. Additionally, this research has consolidated the confirmation base for using the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy as a framework for revealing cognitive processes included in the high-order thinking skills.

Keywords

HOTS; reading comprehension questions; the revised bloom taxonomy



I. Introduction

According to the revised curriculum 2013, students should be enhanced in four main integrated aspects in the lesson plan, comprising character building, literacy, 4C (creative, critical thinking, communicative, and collaboration), and higher-order thinking skill (HOTS). Higher-order thinking skill is now being crucial in the educational world, It emphasizes students have the ability to analyze, evaluate, and create an idea related to problems faced at school or in social lives. It should be improved by applying it in the teaching-learning process.

Since then, the government through the Educational Quality Insurance Institution (LPMP) requires the teachers to assist students to emphasize their critical thinking, which includes analyzing, evaluating, and creating which is usually called HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills), also the governments expect that the students will be more critical and analytical in their thinking to assist them to complete their tasks in reading comprehension

test and open their mind toward the occurring issues in the educational world and daily lives.

Besides, in this current curriculum, students are prepared to face both internal and external challenges. Development is a change towards improvement (Shah et al, 2020). According to Education and Culture Ministry, internal challenges fulfill eight standards of competencies and the development of Indonesian civilization especially human resources. Meanwhile, external challenges include globalization issues, information and technology development, social lives, adaptation ability, creative and critical thinking skills, pedagogical and knowledge development, and the negative phenomena surrounding the students (example: drug abuse, student fights, plagiarism, and cheating in final examination).

Because of these reasons, all parts of stakeholders in education need to improve students' higher-order thinking skills. One of the ways in improving higher-order thinking skills is by applying them in the teaching process. As we know that classroom activity consists of three main elements namely: teacher, students, and handbook. A handbook is really helpful for the teacher in preparing the lesson plan since many teachers use a handbook as the source of any activities for students. Therefore, it is expected that English handbooks provide some exercises with HOTS questions. According to Tayyehthe et al (2021), a good handbook should provide a useful resource for the teachers' course designers, and students as the one who learning English. An appropriate handbook that contains HOTS questions has an important role in encouraging students' critical thinking. According to Rozi et all (2021), a handbook is an essential source that provides the framework for activities to develop students' thinking and contains activities; not only does it transmit knowledge and information, but it also promotes and encourages higher thinking process.

Since reading is one of four English skills that should be mastered by language learners, the writer chooses this skill to be investigated. Through reading, students as language learners are able to draw the meaning of words and get the information from a text (Hayikaleng, 2018). The researchers investigated the extent to which the three up levels of revised Bloom's taxonomy namely; analyzing, evaluating, and creating level are applied in the handbook.

This study was conducted to examine to what extent higher-order thinking skills are integrated into reading activities of Year X of *Complete English for Cambridge Secondary 1*- Unit 1, it is an exercise book used as a guide for teaching English in an international school in Surabaya. This book was published by Oxford University Press – Oxford, United Kingdom, in 2016, arranged by Dean Roberts, Jane Arredondo, Annabel Charles, Alan Jenkins, & Tony Parkinson. The book is used by some international schools in Surabaya. Most international schools are demanded by society to graduate with high international standards. One of the ways to reach those criteria is by having a qualified handbook. Handbook remains to have an essential part of the English teaching and learning activities in the classroom. Most teachers use Handbook as their main teaching reference. Especially in reading activities, many teachers still depend on the reading material and exercises provided by the Handbook. Some teachers even do not elaborate further to decide what strategies to be best used in a certain reading activity. Thus, developing a qualified textbook that facilitates teachers whose time and ideas are limited will need a careful analysis of its content not only to improve its quality but also to adjust to the current objectives of English education in general. Since Indonesian education has been encouraged to innovate with higher-order thinking skills, promoting students' higher-order thinking skills through Handbook is an important decision to take. Thus, evaluating to

what extent higher-order thinking skills have been adopted in the reading activities of the textbook, especially reading comprehension questions is vital. The evaluation will yield insightful feedback for the betterment of the textbook. A thorough analysis of the content of the textbook which specifies reading comprehension questions will benefit the improvement of the reading comprehension exercises to be used by teachers in classrooms.

According to Laila and Fitriyah (2022), Higher-order thinking skills have become a vital issue in education. Particularly in the English language teacher teach to think critically throughout specific English language learning exercises. They must think more deeply and solve their issues, while teachers insist that students be helped by giving higher-order thinking skills in the form of reading comprehension questions.

In terms of the degree of complexity of a thinking process, higher-order and lower-order thinking abilities are two sets of thinking skills. The two thinking processes are defined by experts in different ways yet agree on some common grounds. Higher-order thinking abilities are defined as reasoning or productive action, on the other hand, are classified as taught behavior or reproductive thinking. As reasoning or productive behavior, higher-order thinking skills enable a learner to work on problems that are not immediately recognized by his/her learned behavior. In other words, higher-order thinking skills are used to solve a problem where learned behavior is not applicable without reasoning. An example given is a learner's ability to manipulate the formula of a parallelogram by converting a parallelogram to a rectangle of the same area. The reasoning is thus used to solve the problem. Thus, a problem occurs when a target or a solution is not achieved by the first effort and therefore needs reasoning to work it out Lewis and Smith (2019).



Figure 1. *The revised Bloom Taxonomy*

Bloom's Taxonomy was named after Benjamin Bloom, then an Associate Director of the University Of Chicago Board Of Examinations, who convened a meeting of evaluation professionals from throughout the country to describe specific educational objectives and evaluations for schools to adopt (Krathwol, 2002). The revised Bloom's taxonomy introduces six grades of cognitive process, namely remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating, where the first three stages are classified as lower-order thinking skills and the remaining three upper stages are classified as higher-order thinking skills.

In the revised taxonomy, knowledge is at the basis of these six cognitive processes, but its authors created a separate taxonomy of the types of knowledge used in cognition:

- a. Factual Knowledge is the basic element students must know to be acquainted with a discipline or solve problems. This dimension refers to essential facts, terminology, details or elements students must know or be familiar with in order to understand a discipline or solve a problem in it.

- b. Conceptual Knowledge is the interrelationships among the basic elements within a larger structure that enable them to function together. This knowledge of classifications, principles, generalizations, theories, models, or structures pertinent to a particular disciplinary area.
- c. Procedural Knowledge refers to information or knowledge that helps students to do something specific to a discipline, subject, or area of study. It also refers to methods of inquiry, very specific or finite skills, algorithms, techniques, and particular methodologies.
- d. Metacognitive Knowledge is the awareness of one's own cognition and particular cognitive processes. It is strategic or reflective knowledge about how to go about solving problems, cognitive tasks, including contextual and conditional knowledge and knowledge of self.

The above exploration will be summed up in the following table:

Table 1. The Cognitive Process Dimension

The Knowledge Dimensions	The Cognitive Process Dimension		
	C4	C5	C6
	Analyze	Evaluate	Create
Meta-cognitive Knowledge	Construct	Reflect	Create
Procedural Knowledge	Integrate	Judge	Design
Conceptual Knowledge	Differentiate	Determine	Assemble
Factual Knowledge	Select	Check	Generate

Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) state that the process of a dimension of thought, higher-order thinking skill questions are highly suggested for usage in various types of classroom assessment. Higher-order thinking skills enable a greater appreciation of art and literature, enrich our enjoyment and experience of life, promote essential skills such as critical thinking and problem-solving, and involve transferable skills that can be essential in a wide variety of contexts.

The cognitive level of HOTS covers analyzing, evaluating, and creating. Analyze refers to breaking information into parts to explore connections and relationships. The operational verbs commonly used in the analysis are categorized, classify, compare, contrast, discover, divide, examine, group, inspect, sequence, simplify, make distinctions, relationships, function, assume, or conclusions.

Justifying or defending a position or course of action is evaluating cognitive skill. The operational verbs commonly used in evaluating are award, choose, defend, determine, evaluate, judge, justify, measure, compare, mark, rate, recommend, select, agree, appraise, prioritize, support, prove, disprove, assess, influence, or value.

Creating is the highest cognitive skill in Bloom's taxonomy. Creating is generating new ideas, products, or ways of viewing things. The operational verbs commonly used are design, construct, produce, invent, combine, compile, develop, formulate, imagine, modify, change, improve, elaborate, plan, propose, or solve.

HOTS in Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is frequently described as the process of understanding and deriving meaning from a text. It is the process of simultaneously extracting and forming meaning through interaction with written language (Tayyehthe et al., 2021). In addition, reading comprehension entails first decoding the terms, then applying prior knowledge to form a convergent understanding of the text. Comprehension is a dynamic and interactive process of forming meaning by combining previous experience and knowledge with textual information. Past knowledge is the most important determinant of reading comprehension because we add meaning to the print in order to get meaning from the reading paragraph (Toyoda, 2005)

There is a rising emphasis on teaching and testing higher-order thinking skills in kids. Many individuals feel that essay items are the sole way to measure higher-level thinking skills. As a result, the writer just looks at the essay items in the reading question to check if the higher-order thinking level is present in the reading exercises. The question that commonly begins with WH in an essay is referred to be an essay question (What, Who, When, Where, Why, How). "Essay questions provide an important tool to assess higher-level thinking," explains Airasian and Miranda (2014) Because students must use their own words to respond to essay questions, this means that essay items may allow students to develop distinctive responses that provide greater insight into their thinking and learning. Essay questions are particularly effective at assessing complicated learning and higher-order thinking skills. As a result, in the essay reading assignments, it is appropriate to examine the distribution of higher-order thinking skills. Essay items urge students to relate their grasp of a topic in the book, make up their reasoning, and show it through written text in order to measure higher-order thinking levels in reading exercises. The essay items are useful in assessing for understanding and allowing students to employ critical thinking, especially in the reading exercises (Airasian and Miranda, 2014). Furthermore, the questions can be divided into two categories: higher and lower levels of thinking. While lower thinking requires pupils to recollect information, higher thinking requires them to perform in more complex situations.

It indicates that students must engage their higher-order thinking skills in more intricate processes in order to complete the reading exercises. Lower order thinking questions are more common in test formats or exercises because they are more familiar, easier for students to answer, and much easier for teachers to create, whereas higher level questions are less common because they often require the teachers to wait a long time for the students to answer those questions. This study is focused only on the level of competency cognitive of analyzing, evaluating and creating since that this level cognitive level refers to HOTS and critical thinking (Setyowati, 2019, 2021; Aghaei, 2018; Thomas, 2017; Zuhri, 2018; and Abadi, 2016) found that in particular, the skills of analyzing, evaluating and creating are the indicators of HOTS. Thus, the usage of taxonomy Bloom is shown in the increment of HOTS. HOTS and critical thinking skill only happens when students activate in analyzing, evaluating and creating (Aghaei, 2018).

Finally, based on the preceding definitions of higher order thinking in reading exercises, the writer believes that in reading exercises, the questions that require higher order thinking are usually essay questions that require the ability to analyze, evaluate, and create. Those questions typically include phrases like distinguish, determine, relate, solve, and a variety of others, all of which need students to use critical thinking in order to respond.

Currently, some studies had been conducted on the implementation of HOTS (higher-order thinking skills) in English language teaching not only in Indonesia (Laila and Fitriyah, 2022); (Rozi et al, 2021); (Zaini, et, 2019), but also in Melbourne (Toyoda, 2015); Malaysia (Hayikaleng, 2018); (Panicker et al, 2019);, Iraq (Tayyeh et al, 2021) and some others countries. Nevertheless, the studies on HOTS in English language teaching are easy can be browsed on the internet, the research which examined HOTS and reading comprehension questions in English Textbooks are not still available abundantly. The following account will discuss some previous studies dealing with HOTS and question of reading comprehension.

The first study is done by Singh and Shaari (2019) which investigated HOTS skills in English reading comprehension tests in Malaysia. Singh and Shaari employed eighty reading comprehension problems from different Malaysian final examination examinations. They discovered that most reading comprehension questions in English test papers need further adjustments to meet the standard of HOTS that have become part of the new curriculum and national education strategy, using content analysis based on Bloom's Taxonomy's cognitive levels.

An Analysis of Reading Comprehension Questions In English Textbook " English For Iraq" According To Revised Bloom's Taxonomy is the title of the second research conducted by Tayyeh et al (2021). This study examined reading comprehension questions in "English for Iraq" for 2nd intermediate grade. A combined method of content analysis and the Revised Bloom Taxonomy was used. A Bloom's taxonomy-based checklist was utilized to gather, list, and classify these questions according to their cognitive levels. Then, for each study unit, the percentages of each level that appeared were computed. The results revealed that the reading comprehension tasks encompassed all cognitive levels. However, lower-level cognitive processes controlled the majority of the queries.

The last is the Implementation of High Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) assessment to evaluate the students' reading comprehension achievement done by Amali and Rozi (2022). The research method was a sequential exploratory design that involved two English instructors. Besides, semi-structured interviews, document analysis, classroom observations, and tests were applied to collect data. The results were all of the findings matched teachers' expectations, implementations, assessments, and student progress. Despite the teachers' excellent performance, they faced challenges due to the needs and motivation of the students. In this study the writer recommended further study to investigate more valid and complete information about HOTS assessment.

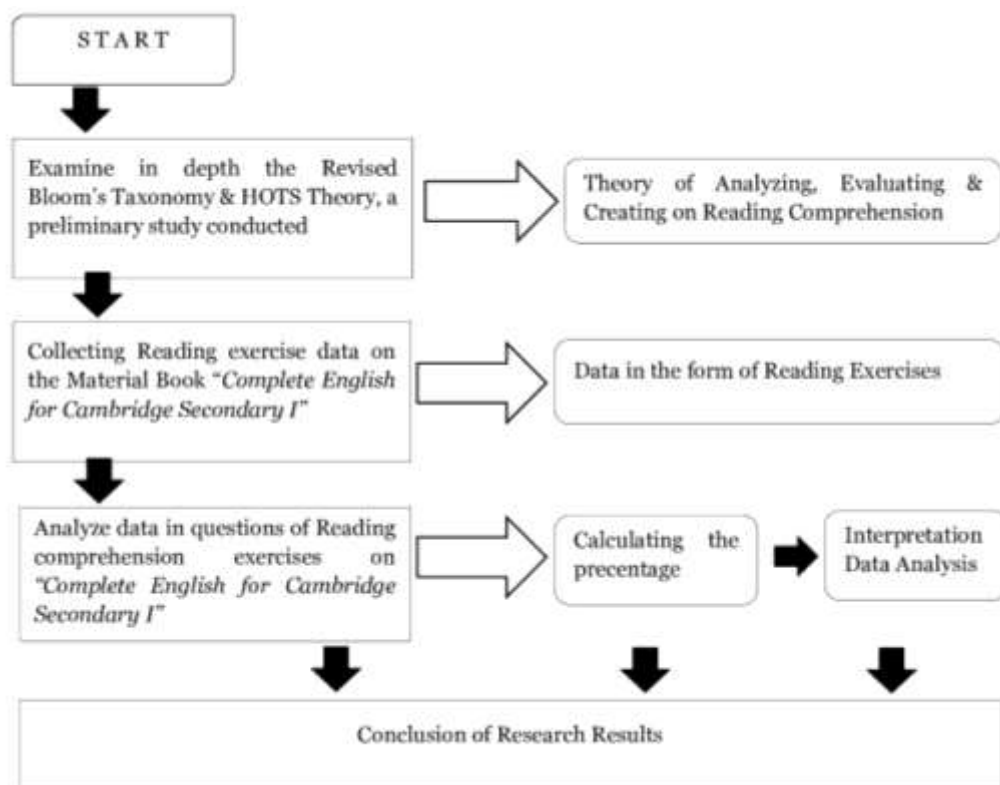
Furthermore, this current study differed from earlier studies in terms of object, method, and the way of presenting the findings. This study concentrated on describing the used of reading comprehending questions for analyzing level, evaluating the level and creating level. The description will explain to what extent those reading comprehending questions employed HOTS level.

II. Research Method

This research was a descriptive qualitative study that used content analysis as the research approach. The approach was used to describe the handbook's content by using the updated Bloom's taxonomy. One of the goals of this strategy was to discover higher-order thinking skills in reading questions in *Complete English for Cambridge Secondary 1* published by Oxford University Press – Oxford, United Kingdom, particularly Unit 1.

The source of the data in this study was the reading questions available in the exercise book Complete English for Cambridge 1. The reading question which consists of ten questions to be used as the data of the study was the ones given after some functional and short functional texts. The data was in the form of reading comprehension questions in Unit 1 which applied HOTS. The smaller unit analysis of the reading questions will include the grammatical form of the questions and the action verbs used in the questions. In qualitative studies, the human investigator is the primary instrument for the gathering and analysis of data (Ary et al, 2010). Therefore, in this study, as the researcher, the researcher played the roles of a data collector and analyst. As a data collector, the researcher collected the data utilizing a number of instruments and analyze the data by referring to Bloom taxonomy (Bloom, 1956; Anderson, & Krathwohl, 2001; Nuttall, 1996) and as presented by Day and Park (2005) in relation with reading questions.

Two forms of the checklist were used to assess the availability of higher-order thinking skills of the collected reading comprehension questions. The first one is a checklist classifying the questions according to revised Bloom's taxonomy then putting them into The HOTS level. The next step was then to analyze the HOTS indicators based on bloom's taxonomy which was revised by Anderson. Analyzing the HOTS fulfillment component through questions of reading comprehending exercise. A simple percentage calculation was done to get the highest numbers of the implementation HOTS. The last step was describing data interpretations based on the results of the analysis to draw conclusions. The researcher herself will be the reviewer who performs analysis of the questions based on the criteria provided in the checklist form. The flow of analysis of HOTS fullness can be presented in Figure 3.



III. Results and Discussion

The book consists of twenty Units, each unit covers more than two reading texts. As stated earlier that this study focused only on Unit 1. It discovered that there were ten questions of reading comprehension in Unit 1 that applied HOTS. In addition, there were five questions categorized as analyzing, three items as evaluating, and two questions as creating. Then it can be described in the following:

Reading comprehension questions based on HOTS

Table 2. Reading Comprehension Questions identification based on HOTS

No.	Data	Identity	C4	C5	C6
			Analyzing	Evaluating	Creating
1.	How do you know the blog writer is an expert on the subject?	U. P4.4		√	
2.	Explain in your own words how you know some students in the school aren't happy about this decision.	U. P9.4	√		
3.	Identify the text type of this extract. Explain your answer.	U. P9.6	√		
4.	Explain how each word in the word cloud tries to create a negative impression of sugary drinks.	WB. P9.1		√	
5.	This article also contains positive language to show why sugary drinks are attractive to young people. Write down all the words from the article in the positive lexical field.	WB. P9.2	√		
6.	Look at the article on page 8 and write down the key idea in each paragraph.	D. P9.1	√		
7.	Find two paragraphs in the article that start with a topic sentence. Write down the topic sentences.	D. P9.2	√		
8.	Look at the first paragraph. Suggest why it is so short.	D. P9.3		√	
9.	Write a short newspaper article, of no more than 300 words, with the following headline.	D. P9.4			√
10.	When you have written your article, swap with a partner and check each other's sentences and paragraphs. Experiment by re-ordering your paragraphs-which order is the most effective.	D. P9.5			√

As the table presented, it is found that there are ten reading comprehension questions in unit 1; 5 questions of analyzing, 3 questions of evaluating, and 2 questions of creating. In analyzing level, the first question, "Explain in your own words how you know some students in the school were not happy about this decision" this question requires the students to analyze their response and feelings about the decision on consuming soft drinks. In this exercise, the teachers ask the students to make a simple analysis of their real surroundings about what happened to them. "Identify the text type of this extract. Explain

your answer", these exercises ask the students to categorize the contents of that paragraph. The next analyzing skill is demonstrated, "This article also contains positive language to show why sugary drinks are attractive to young people. Write down all the words from an article in the positive lexical field". The question asks the students to distinguish the positive lexical words from the text. This exercise develops students' skills in distinguishing lexical words. "Look at the article on page 8 and write down the key idea in each paragraph" is the next question for analyzing skills asks the students to find the key idea in its paragraph. The exercise let the students demonstrate their skills in distinguishing the idea. The last analyzing question can be found in "Find two paragraphs in the article that start with a topic sentence. Write down the topic sentences", in this question we can see that the students demanded to analyze a paragraph in the article which starts with the topic sentence.

As seen from the table above, the next level of the question is evaluating skills. The first question appeared "How do you know the blog writer is an expert on the subject?", this question demands the students to check whether the blog writer is an expert or not. The students must evaluate the content of the blog writer then they can decide and present their idea. Then in "Explain how each word in the word cloud tries to create a negative impression of sugary drinks", this instruction urges the students to criticize and grade the word on the paragraph. The next evaluating skills are shown in "Look at the first paragraph. Suggest why it is so short", the question asks the students to judge and appraise the article.

The last analysis is creating Skills, it can be found in "Write a short newspaper article, of no more than 300 words, with the following headline", this instruction requires the students to design and write the paragraph with the determined topic sentences. "When you have written your article, swap with a partner and check each other's sentences and paragraphs. Experiment by re-ordering your paragraphs-which order is the most effective", it is a requirement to modify and re-write the Student's partner paragraph and find the most effective ones.

Factual knowledge, conceptual knowledge, procedural knowledge, and metacognitive knowledge are the four types of knowledge dimensions. These dimensions were also demonstrated by the reading comprehension questions in the book. There was one question with a percentage of 10% for factual information, another with a percentage of 10% for conceptual knowledge, three questions with a percentage of 30% for procedural knowledge, and five questions with a percentage of 50% for metacognitive knowledge. Thus, the Meta-cognitive knowledge with 5 questions is the most commonly utilized here (50 percent). The percentages of knowledge dimensions are as follows:

Table 3. The Total of Knowledge Dimensions

	C4 (ANALYZE)	C5 (EVALUATE)	C6 (CREATE)	TOTAL QUESTIONS	PERCENTAGE
METACOGNITIVE	2	2	1	5	50%
PROCEDURAL	1	1	1	3	30%
CONCEPTUAL	1	-	-	1	10%
FACTUAL	1	-	-	1	10%
	5	3	2	10	100%

The findings address higher-order thinking skills by challenging pupils to complete tasks (collecting facts, applying knowledge, making a prediction, solving a problem, or evaluating theory). As a result, Bloom's taxonomy affected how a speaker designed the final evaluation and described the learning outcome. It is specified on the verb, which

denotes the type of exercise and grading done by the pupil. During the creation exam, lecturers may keep a close eye on the exercise and students' conduct throughout the test. The verbs employed in the evaluating and generating tests describe the ability to apply knowledge to a practical situation, analyze competitive interpretation, and create new knowledge or an alternative interpretation of a problem, among other things.

According to the findings, HOTS fulfillment show in high numbers implying that the Anderson HOTS level has been applied sufficiently. Thus learning process has been achieved to develop student HOTS and supported by textbooks as a source of student learning. According to several research, the growth of HOTS is more than just thinking; it can also be utilized in the real world of pupils. The creating level necessitates innovative thoughts that cannot be generated in a conventional manner. At the HOTS level, learning resources become natural determinants that can be developed in tasks of the learning materials.

HOTS are difficult to identify in a short period of time since they are not immediate, but they can be identified through a succession of activities that are associated with HOTS. When continuously evaluating, analyzing, and inventing, the activity in issue is an activity of high-level thinking habits through the cognitive dimension. The realms of analyzing, evaluating, and creating are all covered by HOTS. Students must be able to grasp facts, categorize them, draw conclusions, relate them to other facts and concepts, make generalizations, and apply them by discovering new answers to new issues as a result of the development of modules or textbooks (Setyowati, 2022, Rozi et al, 2021; Hayikaleng, 2018). To overcome educational issues, students must think critically and be proficient at addressing difficulties. To reach the stated learning completeness, the instructor will construct learning materials in accordance with the context and condition of the pupils (Hayikaleng, 2018). There are adaptations to learning in the twenty-first century to address global concerns, rather than simply following the material in textbooks. To overcome the problems and challenges of modernization, HOTS must be used to prepare the millennial generation.

IV. Conclusion

The findings indicated an adequate exposure to HOTS - higher-order thinking-questions presented in practically all reading comprehension questions examined in this study. Due to the appropriate usage of cognitive domain levels, this study demonstrated the use of HOTS in the reading comprehension questions offered in the textbook. This showed that the levels of HOTS were evenly distributed. It indicates that the textbook's writers urge pupils to practice higher-order thinking skills. The writers were successful in recognizing the importance of training learners at higher-order levels, which will eventually help to improve thinking at higher educational levels or even for everyday requirements.

The current study is intended to serve as a starting point for teachers to analyze and improve their teaching practices in order to improve HOTS in their pupils. Higher-order thinking has been identified as one of the key components of the twenty-first century, as it elevates thinking to a whole new level. In order to become great future leaders and thinkers, learners must be able to apply strategic and complex ways of thinking.

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